EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING DEGREE PRIMARY SCHOOL HEAD TEACHERS IN MANAGERIAL LEADERSHIP. THE CASE OF CHIPINGE DISTRICT, MANICALAND PROVINCE.

BY

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THE ABSTRACT

This study is an evaluation of the degreed primary school head teachers in Chipinge District of Manicaland Province. The study used a qualitative case study research design, with philosophical underpinnings of constructivism and phenomenology. A sample of 163 participants was used. Purposive sampling technique was used to select participants until saturation point. The researcher, interview guide, questionnaire with open ended questions and an observation checklist were used to generate data. Data were presented, analysed and interpreted using the Grounded Theory Approach. The major findings of the study were that, ODL degreed head teachers were more effective leaders and managers of primary schools than those who had no degrees. There has been marked development in infrastructure and notable improvement has also been noted in supervisory and management styles pass rate and positive head teachers-teacher relations. There are good working relationships between Head Teachers and School Development Committees. The study concluded that ODL has been successful in capacitating educational personnel to be effective leaders and managers of primary schools in Chipinge District. The controversy surrounding the credibility of ODL educational management degrees is no longer a cause for concern in the district judging by the accolades showered on the graduates and the programme. The study recommends that policy makers re-think corporal punishment and school fees polices. Another recommendation was for trainers to adopt a more practical approach in ICT and financial management courses. Finally it was recommended that ODL district offices be set up.
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DEDICATION

This research effort is dedicated to my loving husband Regis Frank Fanuel, my children Laetitia, Tatenda, Regis Jnr., Constance Jnr. and my father for their unwavering support, love, faith and encouragement.
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ODL: Open and Distance Learning
SDC: School Development Committee
T: Teacher
FOC: Focus Group
HT: Head teacher
EI: Education Inspector
ECD: Early Childhood Development
ICT: Information Communication Technology
ZOU: Zimbabwe Open University
SCSC: Skills, Content, Social and Change (Competences)
IGNOU: Indira Gandhi National Open University
OUT: Open University of Tanzania
UNISA: University of South Africa
RBM: Result-Based Management
ISLLC: Interstate School Leaders’ Licensure Consortium (USA)
B Ed: Bachelor of Education
M Ed: Master of Education
CE: Certificate in Education
Dip Ed: Diploma in Education
UNESCO: United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organisation
G T: Grounded Theory
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The effectiveness of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) in the acquisition of educational management degrees in comparison to the conventional mode has for a long time been a bone for contention among members of educational organisations such as schools in Zimbabwe. A research carried out on distance training for teachers in Brazil revealed that ODL had increased the quality of classroom teaching (Bof, 2004). In contrast, a study carried out in South Africa showed that the majority if the teachers who were trained through the ODL mode lacked the prerequisite skills and competencies (Shah, 2005). Research, globally and regionally, has not concluded this controversial debate (Kirkpatrick, 2005). The thrust of this research effort was to evaluate the effectiveness of primary school head teachers who had attained educational management degrees through Open and Distance Learning (ODL) institutions in their leadership and managerial roles in Chipinge District primary schools. The study acknowledges the important role this learning mode has played in staff development and capacity building in the education system of Zimbabwe.

1.1.1. ODL and Educational Staff Development: The Global Perspective

United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation, (UNESCO, 2002) defines distance learning as an educational process in which a significant proportion of teaching is conducted by someone removed in space and/or time from the learner. Open learning is defined as an organised educational activity, based on the use of teaching materials, in which constraints on study are minimised in terms of access, or of time and place, pace, method of study, or any combination of these (UNESCO, 2001). The two terms ‘distance’ and ‘open
learning’ culminate into the broad concept of open and distance learning. Open and Distance Learning is further recognised by UNESCO (2002) as an umbrella term to cover educational approaches of the kind that reaches students without them attending conventional colleges.

International and regional countries have hailed the usefulness of ODL in educational manpower development. Kour (2013) has remarked that India, through the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) has demonstrated commitment to providing access of university education to all segments of society. In Uganda, the ODL intervention has been critical in expanding the supply of teachers who are equipped with professional skills (Gabona, 2011). Closer to Zimbabwe, the University of South Africa (UNISA) has been the pioneer in the provision of educational degree courses through ODL in South Africa and outside. UNISA (2008) has acknowledged the value of the ODL intervention in staff developing educational personnel.

However, globally, research has indicated that tensions still remain between supporters for distance education and those for quality control in education systems. Perraton and Potashnik (1997) assert that globally, accreditation agencies often do not recognise teaching qualifications that have been achieved over extended periods or in a somewhat piecemeal manner. They argue that many traditional teacher education providers and teachers themselves query whether a distance-educated teacher could be as competent as one who graduated from the conventional. The observation of Perraton and Potashnik (1997) was of special interest to the researcher since it identified a gap that had to be filled by the study.
A study was carried out by Lim, Fadzil, Latif, Goolamally and Mansor (2013) of the University of Malaysia in an article entitled “Producing graduates who meet employer expectation”: Open and Distance Learning Is a Viable Option.” The study emphasises that in this global world, higher education now plays a significant role in the preparation of a workforce that satisfies the increasing demands placed on organisations. Lim et. al (2013) advance that ODL programmes which have the capacity to contribute significantly to lifelong learning efforts have constantly been regarded as ‘the lower quality alternative’ with their flexible entry policy and flexible learning modes. Kirkpatrick (2005:02) also highlight the gap in ODL degreed personnel effectiveness by arguing , ‘...despite a generally long track record, open and distance learning is still required to prove that the quality of student learning is at least equivalent to face to face teaching.’ Based on the above research studies the researcher viewed it critical to evaluate the effectiveness of ODL degreed head teachers in Chipinge District.

Perraton (2010) posits that research evidence has revealed that the knowledge and skill delivery mode made no difference. This observation was based on a comparative study of ODL and conventional delivery modes and led to the conclusion that ODL graduate compared well with conventional graduates. The result was of significant importance to this research effort even though the study is not a comparative one.

Harreveld (2009) in an article, “A capability Approach to Open and Distance Learning for In-Service Teacher Education,” claims the ODL mode of learning has been used for in-service teacher education over many years and it has been noted to contribute responsively to social, cultural and economic forces and it is therefore perceived to be a cost-effective solution to
address problems of up-skilling scarce teacher resources especially in regional, rural and remote communities.

Sen (1999) used what is referred to as ‘The Capability Approach’ to analyse the value of ODL in professional development arguing that individually, committed teachers can use ODL to seek out opportunities for professional development. Past and contemporary research studies (Okumbe, 1999, UNESCO, 2002, Kirkpatrick, 2005, Lunenburg, 2010) indicate that the debate rages on regarding whether or not ODL as a higher education learning strategy can produce effective personnel. Attention will now focus on the utility of ODL as a staff development strategy

1.1.2. Research on the utility of ODL as a professional development strategy.

UNESCO (2002) argues that initial teacher education was no longer sufficient and that the ODL strategy is commonly being used to raise skills, deepen the understanding and extend knowledge of teachers in countries that have been case studied. In the report, “Using Open and Distance Learning Technology-Curriculum-Cost-Evaluation,” UNESCO (2002) cited India, China and South Africa as countries that had adopted and supported ODL as a staff development intervention. Chale (1993) in UNESCO (2002) posit that researches on the utility of the ODL mode of learning in countries such as Tanzania, Burkina Faso and Nigeria indicate that the strategy has facilitated teacher promotion. In Zimbabwe, the above observation could be said to be applicable. The attainment of educational degrees through ODL has provided the gateway to achieving professional aspirations.
Chale (1993) observed that Tanzania recruited 45,000 potential teachers through ODL and of these 38,000 graduated. Mbwette (2013) confirms this popularity of Open University of Tanzania (OUT) by asserting that it was established in 1992 with the key objective of providing access to affordable and quality education. In a similar study carried out in Burkina Faso, very few drop outs were noted UNESCO (2000) and a quarter (1/4) of the country’s head teachers developed new knowledge and skills through ODL within four years. In Nigeria the dropout rate varied from 29% - 39% with pass rate ranging from 55% - 64% while in West Africa as a whole, a multinational distance education project is said to have developed a training programme in school management for head teachers and aspiring heads (Calvert, 2006).

In Zimbabwe, educational management degrees have also been offered to head teachers and aspirants as well. ODL has been embraced as a more practical mode of acquiring professional degrees by head teachers, deputy head teachers, and teachers-in-charge as compared to the conventional one. Calvert (2006) asserts that ODL is considered nowadays as the most viable means of broadening educational access while improving the quality of education, advocating peer to peer collaboration and giving learners autonomy and responsibility for learning in developing countries.

In the foreword of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, UNESCO (2002) publication on Open and Distance Learning-Trend, Policy and Strategy Considerations, it was observed that ODL was now viewed as a force contributing to social and economic development. UNESCO also acknowledges that the learning mode was fast
becoming an accepted and indispensable part of the mainstream of educational systems especially in developing countries. However, UNESCO (2000) concludes by emphasising the need to evaluate ODL arguing that there is limited data on the performance of the strategy in producing effective managers of schools. This research was focused on filling the gap of limited data from the Zimbabwean context.

1.1.3. ODL, the Zimbabwean experience

In Zimbabwe ODL has been viewed with some misgivings in a society that appears to be biased in favour of acquisition of degrees conventionally. This observation is not only peculiar to Zimbabwe and is supported by research. Sukari, of the University of Swaziland quoted in the International Journal of Open and Distance Learning, Volume 2, April 2009 argued that as distance education gathered momentum, concerns of its effectiveness have increased. Sibanda (2005) and Gulah (2008) in the above journal also express concern about the credibility of qualifications obtained through open and distance education. Mugridge (2006) and Librero (2004) imply that the ODL mode was below the conventional learning approach by suggesting the need to provide a rich learning environment for distance education learners and provision of high quality materials respectively. In a similar study on the usability of the ODL mode in training teachers, Samkange (2013) asserts that the mode should be supported by resources and modern technology.
It is not a secret in Zimbabwe that there is a ‘mixed bag’ of perceptions concerning the effectiveness of ODL graduates with some appreciating their role while others remain sceptical. This called for a scientific verification to establish the current views of educational personnel with regard to the effectiveness of educational management degree holders in managerial leadership at primary school level. As a former teacher and currently a lecturer, the researcher acknowledges the need to evaluate the effectiveness ODL trained head teachers in Zimbabwean primary schools. The researcher’s desire to carry out this study is supported by Noll (2005) who posit that teacher education continues to be under spotlight worldwide.

1.1.4. The ODL and conventional degrees controversy in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe is a country where conventional universities have been key players in offering degrees to educational personnel. There has been a shift in paradigm whereby ZOU; the sole ODL state university became a dominant player in upgrading educational personnel. The offer of educational management degrees to head teachers, deputy head teachers and teachers has not been well received by some conservatives within and outside the education system. Negative comments have been passed with regard to the effectiveness of ODL graduates in work places particularly within the education sector. Considering the time that has elapsed since ODL was initiated by ZOU and the number of graduates leading and managing primary schools that have attained educational management degrees through the ODL learning mode, the researcher was convinced that it was imperative that this evaluation be carried out. In highlighting ZOU as the dominant provider of ODL management degrees, the researcher did not aim to downplay the input or contributions of other universities within the country which
have also taken the ZOU route through Block Release Programmes which are basically, modes of ODL.

In the foreword to Zimbabwe Open University students, Nyamuda (2002) concurs with UNESCO (2002) by positing that open and distance learning is fast becoming an acceptable mode of education and training throughout the world. Nyamuda (Ibid) argues that Zimbabwe Open University since its establishment on the 1st of March 1999 has been committed to providing students with flexible, relevant and cost effective education and training that would enable the recipients to contribute creatively to the development of Zimbabwe.

The foreword to the students is also consistent with UNESCO’s (2002) assertion that a person may go through various experiences in order to improve one’s effectiveness as a leader. There is no doubt that ZOU, as the torch bearer in offering management degrees to educational personnel has provided them with modern and progressive leadership and management ideas to put into practice as they were learning and after they had graduated. It was therefore of interest to establish the extent to which the education and training received by these primary school leaders and managers have contributed towards effectiveness in the way they lead and manage their subordinates and activities aimed at developing their respective schools.
The enrolment numbers of ODL students has been reassuring to the providers of the programmes in Zimbabwe. According to the Evaluation report of the Bachelor of Educational Administration, Planning and Policy Studies (EAPPS) Degree Programme (ZOU, 2001) there was an unprecedented growth in student enrolment for the degree since 1993 reaching beyond ten thousand by the end of 2000.

The growth is echoed by Chiome (2012) who asserts that by 2006 the overall ZOU enrolment had risen to 21000. ZOU, as the leading provider of the distance education mode of learning has since 1st March 1999 taken charge of developing course outlines, readers and modules aiming at equipping undergraduate and graduate students with the necessary knowledge and skills to transform them into effective leaders and managers of schools they administer

Kurasha, (2005), The Vice Chancellor of Zimbabwe Open University, in a paper presented at the Zimbabwe Universities Library Consortium concurs, that societies were looking at promoting development in one way or another and that training and education were important components of the process. She argued that for Higher education providers, this could only be realised through making education and training available and accessible to as many people as possible in a way that was convenient to circumstances and life stylesof learners. This sums up the critical role of open and distance learning in the development of educational personnel and meeting the need for competent leaders and managers of Zimbabwean primary schools.
Indeed ZOU has remained focused on the above vision as an ODL university. As the years progressed, the popularity of educational management degrees gathered momentum and became an attraction to ordinary classroom practitioners as well. Perhaps the assumption was that, if ordinary teachers were also allowed into the programmes, a pool of skilled future school head teachers and deputy head teachers would have been created, ready to lead and manage schools when their time to be promoted arrives.

In Zimbabwe the Government has clearly shown its preference for educational management graduates as leaders and managers of primary schools. Currently no teacher is being promoted to headship without a relevant university degree. Research has also revealed the completion rate of students to be high where attainment of qualifications was accompanied by improved status or pay (Chale, 1996).

The launch of educational management degree programmes as well as the conditions put in place by the line Ministry suggests that university degree holders were more effective leaders and managers in the promotion and realisation of academic excellence in primary schools. Considering the vast number of students who have acquired the Bachelor of Educational Management degree as well as the Masters in Educational Management, the researcher was convinced that the focus of this proposed research study was justified.

The issue of the effectiveness of educational personnel in leadership and managerial capacities remains critical and a cause for concern judging by the attention given to it by policy makers in Zimbabwe. It continues to be echoed in this background to the study that in Zimbabwe, all educational personnel who occupy administrative positions like head teachers
in primary schools are preferred to be holders of management degrees in particular. ZOU, the dominant higher institution of distance learning has not been found wanting in this need. The university which is a state university, has facilitated the acquisition of the degrees at both under-graduate and graduate levels by bringing the university to the “door step” of all interested head teachers, deputy head teachers and even to those teachers who aspire for the posts.

The action of the Zimbabwean government is in line with Kitavi and Van Der Westhuizen, (1997), Huber and West, (2002) and Frank (2005) who point out that many countries would come up with institutions and programmes to develop head teachers in developing countries. They further argue that preparation and development of head teachers would lead to achievement of school and national goals. The provision of degreed head teachers was achieved by ZOU through the setting of ODL centres in all regions of Zimbabwe including Manicaland where Chipinge is located, the district that was of interest to the researcher.

Robbins, Judges and Campbell (2010) identify planning, organising, leading and controlling as important roles of managers. These are indisputably some of the indicators of head teacher effectiveness as leaders and managers of primary schools as shall be explained in the conceptual framework of the study inChapter 2. In a Zimbabwean primary school scenario, the researcher acknowledges that a head teacher plays a key role in planning various school activities on individual basis as well as a team. In his/her capacity as advisor to School Development Committees members, a head teacher should be considered as effective. It is also generally assumed that human, material, time and infrastructure are important scarce
resources which need to be efficiently and effectively organised, controlled and managed for successful attainment of educational goals. To be effective managers in their respective school, head teachers also need to be developed in leadership and management skills (Cole, 2004).

The contemporary environment is an unpredictable one which challenges the old ways of running schools and where new demands continually impact on head teachers in the school system. Hallinger and Snidvongs (2008) echo the above view by asserting that the 21st Century sees schools operating in a complex environment and that head teachers are key to ensuring that schools are more improved and effective. Bush and Oduro (2006) also believe the shift has been brought about by factors such as the decentralisation of education systems, expansion of head teachers’ roles. These changes have also been attributed to increasing environmental demands and recognition of the importance of skill and knowledge development in bringing about the required change in schools. Zimbabwe has not been spared from the needs of the 21st Century complex environment.

The above is the environment the Zimbabwean primary school organisation is operating in; hence need to evaluate the effectiveness of the leaders and managers. It is without doubt that theory is linking effectiveness to skill development. This is in tandem with the purpose of the study which sought to explore the impact ODL management degrees has had on head teacher effectiveness in primary schools. It was of great interest to the researcher to establish how effective the ODL graduates were as leaders and managers within the decentralised education
system of Zimbabwe where there is increased school autonomy in the day to day running of business.

Head teachers are also looked upon as leaders who are supposed to live up to the definition of leadership by being able to influence members of the school towards goal achievement (Sergiovanni and Starratt, 1993). The issues of vision realisation and goal attainment are of paramount importance to schools and the state of Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwean government utilises Result Based Management System (RBM) to evaluate civil servants. This means that the effectiveness of head teachers is assessed against the educational goals of the state. It is therefore imperative that the effectiveness of ODL degreed head teachers who are the majority leaders and managers of primary schools is assessed.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Against the background of the popularity of ODL as an educational staff development intervention in many developing countries and the debate that surrounds its credibility in Zimbabwe it was the researcher’s to answer the following research problem:

Has the effectiveness of primary school head teachers in Chipinge District in Manicaland Province been improved by the acquisition of educational management degrees through the ODL mode of learning?
1.3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to establish the effectiveness of ODL educational management degree primary school head teachers using schools in Chipinge District, Manicaland Province as a case.

1.4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

In carrying out the study, the researcher was guided by the research objectives which sought to:

1.4.1. Establish how educational management degrees have improved the effectiveness of primary school head teachers in Chipinge District.

1.4.2. Identify benefits realised by education stakeholders in primary schools headed by degreeed head teachers in Chipinge District.

1.4.3. Identify indicators of head teacher effectiveness from the perspectives of education stakeholders in Chipinge District primary schools.

1.4.4. Assess other factors that might militate against primary school head teacher effectiveness despite having a degree qualification.

1.4.5. Assess the justification for the scepticism about the credibility of ODL in capacitating primary school head teachers in Chipinge District.
1.4.6. Determine how ODL educational management degrees could contribute to improved leadership and management in primary schools.

1.5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study opted to use research questions to guide the study. This is in tandem with Cresswell (2003) who says that in a qualitative research, researchers state research questions. The research questions are therefore as follows:

1.5.1. How does the attainment of educational management degrees improve head teacher effectiveness in leading and managing primary schools?

1.5.2. In what ways does the provision of management degrees to head teachers through ODL beneficial to education stakeholders?

1.5.3. What are some of the indicators of head teacher effectiveness in a school?

1.5.4. What are some other possible threats to ODL degreeed primary school head-teachers’ effectiveness as leaders and managers despite attaining management degrees?

1.5.5. How justified is the scepticism about the credibility of ODL graduates effectiveness as leaders and managers of schools?

1.5.6. How best can ODL educational management degree programmes contribute towards head teacher leadership and management proficiency?
1.6. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study could be of great benefit to head teachers and teachers who have acquired degrees through the ODL mode who should naturally be interested in the results of the study as a way of identifying possible gaps in their performance that might need addressing.

Educational policy makers and the line Ministry could benefit through the findings and recommendations that the study provided with regard to the effectiveness of these important educational personnel.

Providers of educational management degrees through ODL could also be in a position to evaluate the impact of the courses they offer in the degree programmes under study and would be in a position to make decisions such as improving or maintaining the status quo.

As anticipated, the study generated data leading to the propositioning of a new model relating to the training of head teachers for effectiveness through ODL.

The researcher also benefitted immensely from this study in terms of the research skills and the knowledge she acquired in the process of carrying out the study. The success of this DPhil thesis would be a landmark achievement in her professional development
1.7. DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was focused on assessing the performance of primary school head teachers who had attained educational management degrees through ODL in their leadership and managerial roles. Participation in the study was delimited to education inspectors, primary school head teachers, teachers and parent committees of Chipinge District schools in Manicaland Province.

The selection of Chipinge district as the focal point of the research effort did not seek to suggest in any way that the effectiveness of head teachers who attained educational management degrees through ODL in the district was questionable. The researcher consciously targeted Chipinge District for this particular research due to the fact that, it is one of the regions in Zimbabwe that are generally assumed to be lagging behind in developmental issues. The researcher was confident that, it was in these socially and economically disadvantaged regions that, the impact of ODL on the effectiveness of head teachers who are holders of educational management degrees through ODL could be satisfactorily assessed.

As a former educational administration, planning and policy studies student of ZOU and a current part-time lecturer in the ZOU programmes, the researcher also acknowledged that a significant number of head teachers, deputy head teachers and teachers from Chipinge district passed through ODL acquired management degrees and is presently heading schools in the district. Currently, a significant number of students from the same district is also in the process acquiring the (ZOU) Bachelor or Masters of Education degree in Educational management. This shows that the district has educational personnel that appreciates and has
the zeal to professionally develop themselves through the ODL mode. It was therefore pertinent for the researcher to carry out this study as a way of establishing the value of ODL in skilling head teachers. This was achieved through a thorough investigation of the perceptions of education officers, head teachers, teachers and school development members in the district.

The study did not include head teachers who might have acquired degrees conventionally or through block release which is a fairly new mode of distance education in Zimbabwe. It was not the researcher’s objective to make this a comparative study though it difficult some participants who tended to want to compare the two modes during fieldwork.

1.8. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

In carrying out the study, it was acknowledged that there were bound to be some limitations not of the researcher’s making. It was therefore important to identify them and plan on how to deal with them in a way that protected the credibility, confirmability and transferability (trustworthiness) of the study. Below are some of the anticipated limitations and how they were mitigated.

1.8.1. Access to accurate data from respondents

The researcher who has been in the teaching service for thirty-three years a long time knows that teachers are usually jittery when asked questions about the performance of their head
teachers. The reluctance usually emanates from fear of being victimised. This made me realise that it was important to build trust and confidence by assuring the respondents that confidentiality and anonymity. It was also necessary to inform them on the main purpose of the study, which was for professional development purpose and not for exposing participants to punitive measures in their work places. In addition to assuring participants anonymity, triangulation of data and data sources were used as strategies to help in securing accurate data.

1.8.2. Respondents’ co-operation

There was a high probability that the exercise could have been misconstrued for a witch hunting exercise targeting to weed out nonperforming school head. The researcher was aware that respondents could not be taken for granted. It was possible that some selected respondents might not have been in a position to participate or might have decided not to participate. Participants were kindly requested for co-operation and the researcher was prepared to re-schedule interviews so that data was generated from a representative sample size. This was not much of a limitation however because most of the participants were eager to be part of the study.

1.8.3. The philosophical challenges

The selected research methodology was labour intensive since the study the main data generation tool and that the philosophical perspective was also considered to be subjective. However, credible, transferable, and confirmable research findings were yielded through the
employment of correct qualitative data generation and analysis procedures. There was also strict observance of research ethics such as assuring the participants their right to remain anonymous. Rapport with participants was struck to build trust. These measures increased confidence with regard to the trustworthiness of the generated data.

1.8.4. The threat of data overload

One of the challenges of qualitative research is the danger of generating more data than what is actually required. This was found to be true. Voluminous data was generated from the participants. The threat was minimised by constructing clear, unambiguous and relevant questionnaire and interview items which could be easily understood by the participants. The generated data was also edited so as to take care of this threat and remain with data relevant to the study. The researcher’s supervisor also helped in suggesting data that needed trimming. In addition to these strategies, the thematic approach was adopted so that the generated data could be grouped, analysed and interpreted under specific categories and themes.

1.8.5. The possibility of researcher bias

The researcher was conscious that qualitative research the data that is collected can be subjective. To overcome this there was active verbal interaction between the researcher and the participants. During interaction with the participants there were chances of the researcher’s personal values filtering into the generated data. The danger was mitigated by adopting what Hoberg (1999) refers to as “disciplined subjectivity” which refers to making
sure that there was zero tolerance to researcher bias in the construction of the data generation tools and during the actual fieldwork.

1.8.6. The low levels of literacy among the parent representative committees

With the inclusion of School Development Committee (SDC) members as participants, this limitation was a reality and could have possibly posed some challenges in the field. The problem was averted by translating questions into vernacular for those who could not understand English. This is evidenced by some direct quotations in vernacular in the data presentation, analysis, interpretation and discussion. The use of vernacular also provided participants with room for free expression of opinions and experiences.

1.9. ASSUMPTIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was guided by some relevant research assumptions. The assumptions were an important component of the study as they guided the selection of relevant literature in chapter two. They were also helpful in the construction of data generation tools. Research assumptions are viewed to be of significant importance in the discussion of findings in chapter four. Below are some of the research assumptions which were considered to be relevant to the proposed research study:
1.9.1. ODL management degreed head teachers are effective leaders and managers of primary schools.

This assumption was proved to be partially correct; some gaps in head teachers’ performance were identified mainly in areas such as use of ICT, knowledge of content subjects and basic communication skills.

1.9.2. A person’s professional effectiveness can be developed.

This assumption was proved to be accurate. The majority of the participants hailed the success of the ODL mode of learning in professionally developing teachers.

1.9.3. ODL is on-the-job training which provides easy transfer of learning.

On this assumption the general participant view was that a system should be put in place by ODL service providers to assess and improve effective transfer of learning in schools.

1.9.4. ODL trained primary school administrators are committed to their work.

The assumption was proved beyond doubt to be correct. The education inspectors who testified on this considered ODL degreed head teachers to be the most committed school heads in the district.

1.9.5. Some primary schools have developed under the leadership of ODL degreed head teachers.
The majority of the participants in all categories agreed that primary schools headed by ODL degreed head teachers tended to be more developed than those under non-degreed head teachers.

1.9.6. Some academics question the effectiveness of ODL graduates.

The assumption was found to be correct. There are still traces of mainly teachers, who doubt the effectiveness of the ODL learning mode in producing effective head teachers.

1.10. DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

To facilitate adequate comprehension of the research study, it was necessary to define some key terms that were used considerably in the thesis. The terms worth defining were:

**Effectiveness:** The term is defined as the extent to which a school achieves its goals or objectives within a specific time frame (Krouse and Loise, 2009). The researcher also views it as the extent to which identified problems are solved.

**Head teacher:** The term refers to a teacher who is in charge of leading and managing people and learning activities in a school (Kruger, 2003).

**Leadership Role:** The term refers to the action of influencing and persuading followers towards the achievement of school goals (Weaver, 2005).
Managerial Role: This is refers to exercising daily organisational functions such as planning, supervising, organising and controlling for the purpose of achieving set goals (Stoner and Gilbert, 2003).

Open and Distance Learning: It is a flexible mode of learning which enables learners to access education and training without the restrictions of time and place (UNESCO, 2009).

1.11. SUMMARY

Chapter 1 of this study addressed background issues such as identification of knowledge gaps, statement of the problem, research questions that guided the study and the significance of the study to education policy makers and providers of ODL educational management degrees. It also reported on the assumptions that the researcher held prior fieldwork and the limitations that had to be dealt with. Other pertinent issues addressed included delimitations of the study and definitions of key term. Having accomplished that, the study progresses to Chapter 2, which reviews literature related to the study.
CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 presented background to the study. Chapter 2 presents the related literature review in order to expose the gaps that this study sought to fill. The reviewed literature was related to the role that ODL institutions, mainly Zimbabwe Open University; have played in equipping primary school head teachers with the necessary leadership and managerial skills through the degree programmes in educational management they offer.

The reviewed related literature covered the extent to which research has addressed issues of management and leadership of schools in general. The review dwelt on some leadership and management practices and theories covered in educational management courses on offer which should guide head teachers in the roles of leading and managing primary schools. The discussion of relevant literature was guided by sub-questions that contributed towards answering the main research question as well as towards useful recommendations. The reviewed concepts included ODL as a staff development intervention in developing countries, effectiveness and its measures, leadership, management, development and factors that might challenge ODL degreed head teacher effectiveness. It was imperative to focus first on the conceptual framework that guided the study.
2.2. THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

The study focused on evaluating the effect ODL educational management degrees has had on the effectiveness of primary school head teachers. Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) support the inclusion of a conceptual framework arguing that it identifies the research variables and the relationships between or among the variables. The definition is in line with one provided by Aldridge and Goldman (2002) who consider a conceptual framework as being a set of coherent ideas or concepts organised in a manner that makes them easy to communicate to others. Kurasha (2013) defines conceptual framework as a type of perception or belief that is influenced by a person’s understanding of a major concept.

The major concepts in the study are effectiveness, leadership; management and ODL. In addition to the concepts highlighted, Aldridge and Goldman (2002) further argue that the conceptual framework can help one to decide and explain the route to take in the study as well as explaining why one would use certain methods in the inquiry. The researcher was confident that the conceptual framework of this study would provide a base and guide on the related literature. This was proved to be correct because the researcher actually referred to the conceptual framework of the study in selecting issues to discuss in the review of related literature in Chapter 2. The methodology that was adopted, how the generated data was presented and analysed and how the researcher arrived at new findings, conclusions and recommendations were all influenced by the conceptual framework of the study.
2.2.1. The concept of effectiveness

Effectiveness is defined as the degree to which organisational objectives are achieved or fulfilled and the extent to which targeted problems are solved (Breare and Caldwell, 1989). The researcher views the term effectiveness to be linked to goal attainment and achievement of objectives. It was therefore considered to be of paramount importance to include the expectations of the Zimbabwean Ministry of Primary and Secondary education in the study as standards against which the effectiveness of primary school head teachers could be evaluated. Effectiveness of school personnel has strong links with the national vision concerning education.

2.2.2. The line ministry’s vision and mission statements.

In its mission statement, Zimbabwe’s Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education articulates its objectives and goals for education and training. The statement, says, ‘... the ministry is committed to the provision of good quality, basic, secondary and continuing education to all children and adults through schools, other learning centres and multi-media approaches so as to produce individuals with potential to contribute towards development.’

In the quest for efficiency and effectiveness, the ministry cherishes in its clients and employees the values of critical thinking, innovativeness, self-discipline and self-actualisation. The ministry also values consultation and involvement, team work, transparency, professionalism and the roles these values play in development.
The implication of the above mission statement is that its main thrust is on development through education. It is also implied that a primary school head-teacher who was to be considered as effective was supposed to possess values that contribute towards achievement of educational goals.

Thomson (2002) also echoes the same view by arguing that an effective manager should be able to manage themselves through among other things developing themselves and living up to the expectations of superiors in an ever changing environment. It was critical in his study to capture the views of participants regarding their definition of head teacher effectiveness within the current Zimbabwean context. It was also of interest to show how ODL could contribute to the national vision by bringing about head teacher effectiveness. Focus turns to the relationship between ODL and head teacher effectiveness.

2.2.3. The relationship between ODL and head-teacher effectiveness

Research has indicated that there is a relationship between ODL training and head teacher effectiveness. In an article, “The role of ODL in human resource development in India,” Gaba (2007), a senior research officer at Staff Training and Research Institute of Distance Education, Indira Gandhi National Open University posits that research evidence shows that continuing education which includes on the job training and upgrading courses can be done through ODL.

The general assumption in the contemporary competitive environment is that knowledge is a resource which is important in ensuring the survival of any organisation. In support of this observation, Leonard-Barton (1992) in Gaba (2007) asserted that managers who access and
manage knowledge will dominate competitively. The researcher holds the view that teachers and head teachers who have staff developed themselves through ODL should be leading and managing primary schools more effectively than their counterparts who have not been exposed to new leadership and management theories at degree level. In addition to the above observations, Elangovan and Karakowsky (1999) advance that organisations gain from training programmes through improved performance and increased productivity that accompanies employee development. Finally, Cheng and Ho (2001) are of the view that organisations are constantly seeking to improve on effectiveness and return on their investment. The observations could be said to be true of Government of Zimbabwe which is supporting ODL endeavours in developing the effectiveness of primary school head teachers. The government and all stakeholders expect improved leadership and management of primary schools as a result of degreeed head teachers heading the schools. Attention will now be directed towards some of the indicators of effectiveness in school leadership and management.

2.2.4. Indicators of effectiveness in school leadership and management

Researchers in organisational behaviour have wrestled with the issue of developing measures of effectiveness. The concept of effectiveness and how it can be measured can best be understood through Kirkpatrick’s (1994) Four Level Training Evaluation Model. The model assumes that, the effectiveness of a training programme can be measured at four levels as follows:

Level 1
There should be focus on how the recipients of a training program feel about the programme they have gone through. They are the ones to say whether the programme was of value or not. As they do so, they also pass judgement on material covered in relation to the work they do. The significance of this level in this study was the need to include some questions where respondents expressed their views about the usefulness of the educational management degrees they attained in improving their day to day operations in schools. The study included questions which were aimed at evaluating the ODL educational management programme. The participants were really keen to answer questions on this and passed their judgements. The majority felt that it was a programme that had helped Zimbabwe staff primary schools with knowledgeable and skilful head teachers countrywide. Very few participants thought the programme was not serving any purpose. This shows that in selecting this training model as a base for assessing the effectiveness of ODL degree head teachers’ performance in Chipinge District was appropriate.

Level 2

The second level of the model requires that there should be questions on whether the objectives of a programme were achieved or not. It was the assumption of the researcher that providers of open and distance learning institutions introduced the educational management degrees out of the desire to equip graduates with educational leadership and management knowledge and skills. It was therefore pertinent to establish if or not the objectives of the universities and the line ministry were achieved. The usability of this second level was confirmed because in their responses, education inspectors, head teachers and teachers were referring to the objectives of ODL educational management degrees as being in tandem with those of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education.
Level 3

At the third level in the assessment process, questions should be asked as to whether or not there has been behaviour change as a result of the staff development intervention. According to psychologists, if there is no observable desirable behaviour change, learning has not taken place. The participants confirmed the existence or absence of the desired behaviour change with regard to how primary school are being led and managed. In this study, behaviour change was noted in Chipinge district primary schools as a result of ODL educational management degree attainment amongst head teachers as leaders and managers of the primary schools. The applicability of this level in the study was unquestionable since there were testimonies of behaviour change in ODL degreed head teachers from SDC members, education inspectors and the teachers who work with them on day to day basis.

Level 4

The fourth level is concerned about establishing whether or not the training programme has been translated into tangible benefits. Training is expected to bring about difference as a result of improved competency. In a school, some of the tangible benefits would be, improved morale, improved pass rate or productivity, enhanced reputation, lower staff turnover, increased stakeholder satisfaction, reduced waste of resources, increased teamwork and other benefits. Tangible benefits from having educational management degreed head teachers were highlighted by the participants who comprised education officers, head teachers, teachers and SDC members. The participants responded in line with what this level is concerned with. A wide range of tangible benefits were highlighted and observed by the researcher during data generation exercise. The tangible benefits were the scientific evidence
that showed that, by large margin, ODL degreed head teachers were effective leaders and managers of primary schools in Chipinge district.

Modern theorists now link leadership and management effectiveness to institutional effectiveness. The argument is that that leadership and management effectiveness cannot be separated. Bush and Jackson (2002) concur with this line of thought when they argue that the head of a school plays the most crucial role in ensuring school effectiveness. The conception of head teacher effectiveness is therefore influenced by how the school is perceived to be performing in the environment that surrounds it. This angle of measuring educational effectiveness is supported by Birnbaum (2000) in the assertion that effective measures are often developed because of external pressures on the institution to improve their performance and accountability. Head teachers as leaders and managers of primary schools are constantly under assessment from ministry officials, their subordinates, pupils, parents and other societal groups.

It was clear from the data generated that one could not talk of head teacher effectiveness in leadership and management without referring to the success of the schools they lead and managed. There was no separation of the performance of the ODL degreed head teachers from the wellbeing of the school as a whole. The responses of participants therefore supported the link between head teacher and school effectiveness.
2.2.5. **Strategic plan as a tool for measuring effectiveness**

In Zimbabwe, the mission of any primary school is expected to be modelled along that of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. It therefore follows that the indicators of head teacher effectiveness are based on the stated mission of the school and the ministry as a whole. The vision and mission statements are part and parcel of the development of strategic plans. Head teachers, as leaders and managers of primary schools are expected to draw up strategic plans which are responsive to the national goals. The objectives, outputs and outcomes stated in the plans are supposed to be used as measures of assessing the overall performance of the head teachers, teachers and school as a whole. This observation is supported by Kotler and Murphy (1981) who say that a strategic plan is driven by the mission of the institution.

Kotler and Murphy (1981) define strategic plan as the process of developing and maintaining a long term fit between an organisation and its changing marketing opportunities. Perhaps one would not be wrong in adopting the position of viewing schools as organisations that need to be sensitive to marketing opportunities. The Zanu PF government in Zimbabwe has invested towards the expansion of the education system, at the same time, being a member of the global village. Zimbabwe has not been spared from pressures of technological, social and economic environment. It is therefore imperative for head teachers to be able to market their schools inside and outside their local communities through their own effectiveness as leaders and managers of effective schools.

Strategic plans focus on the following activities in brief:
• Analysing the environment that surrounds the school
• Spelling out objectives, inputs and outputs of the institution
• Establishing strategies to realise the mission of the school

The head teacher and subordinates are expected to be alert to major trends or changes and be aware of the implications to their school. It is within the observed trends that an effective head of an effective school would be able to identify the opportunities and threats facing the school. In this age, when great emphasis is placed on strategic plans, one would assume that failure to develop and achieve what was put down in a strategic plan would be considered as ineffective on the part of the head teacher. The importance placed on head teachers’ competency in strategic planning by researchers proved to be the same as the expectations of the participants. There were comparisons between degreed and non-degreed head teachers concerning their abilities to plan for development in primary schools. It is critical to discuss possible outputs that are expected as measures of effectiveness.

2.2.6. Possible expected outputs in a primary school

From the perspective of a primary school, some typical measurable outputs might include the following:

• pupil enrolment
• teacher retention rate
• pupil pass rate
• the professional development of staff
• Communication between head teacher and stake holders

2.2.6.1. Pupil enrolment

In Zimbabwe the size of a school in terms of student enrolment has always been associated with head teacher effectiveness. The ability to attract more pupils in a school has always been linked to the effectiveness of the head teacher as a leader and manager. People tend to be sceptic about the leadership in a school that does not increase its pupil enrolment because they view that as a sign that people might be shunning the quality of education offered in such a school.

2.2.6.2. Teacher retention rate

Head teacher effectiveness has also been judged against the capability of the head teacher in retaining his or her staff. High staff turnover in a school might be viewed as a reflection of poor relationships in the school. The general assumption is that, where a head teacher has created a health school climate, there is also high teacher retention rate because teachers would be working in a happy school environment.

2.2.6.3. Pupil pass rate

The whole purpose of sending children to school is to enable them to succeed at the end of the teaching and learning programme. The effectiveness of a head teacher is without doubt measured by the school pass rate in public examinations. Low school pass rate is mainly viewed as a result of head teacher in effectiveness in leading and managing school activities.
2.2.6.4. The professional development of staff

The continually changing environment in which schools operate shows the importance of professional staff development. Zimbabwe is a country of highly literate people who always expect teachers to know more than they knew in the past. It is therefore one of the core duties of an effective head teacher to professionally develop themselves and encourage the subordinates to do the same. The ability to staff develop teachers at school level is a recognised indicator of head teacher effectiveness.

2.2.6.5. Communication between head teacher and stake holders

The need for open communication between the head teacher and the community that surrounds the school cannot be over emphasised. This is so because good communication usually translates into community cooperation, support and collaboration. Without the support of stake holders, it would be a challenge for the head teacher to succeed in school development activities.

The above outputs would result in outcomes which would then have an impact on school objectives. The study hold the view that people who experience the impact of the outcomes are the people who are best placed to express their perceptions of the effectiveness of ODL degreed primary school head teachers. In this case it was the teachers, SDC members and education inspectors who participated in the study.
Ruben (2003) goes on to clarify areas of outcomes which can be used as standards of leadership and management effectiveness as:

1. Programme quality, which is related to quality of services as judged by peers and professionals. In case of primary schools, the quality of service offered by a head teacher can be assessed by other district head teachers, teachers, senior education officials, parents and other stakeholders. These are the people who can be trusted to provide trustworthy data.

2. Programme relevance is another outcome area related to the extent to which the services rendered and activities of the school are contributing towards meeting the expectations of beneficiaries. It is obvious that parents send their children to schools for a purpose. The researcher believed that it was the same identified stakeholders who could come up with a credible assessment of the leader of the school in relation to this outcome.

3. The organisational culture is an outcome of significance which determines the effectiveness of the school manager. School culture usually goes hand in hand with school climate. The effectiveness of the head teacher in this area is best understood from the perspective of mainly teachers and SDC members who work with the head teacher on day to day basis.

4. Last but not least important is the process efficiency outcome area. The area relates to the effectiveness of operational and financial dimensions of the school. The study recognises that despite the participation of School Development Committees in the control of school finances, head teachers still play a critical role in their advisory capacity especially in rural areas where the majority of parents might be lacking in the
necessary financial competence. Most head teachers find themselves almost leading the SDCs activities. They are therefore bound to be assessed on effectiveness in this area.

The above four areas can thus form base on which head teacher and school effectiveness can be evaluated (Ruben, 2003). These areas are considered as indicators of head teacher effectiveness. The identified four areas were included in the instruments and the responses of the participants showed that the areas were pertinent to the study of evaluating ODL degreed head teachers.

2.2.7. The *Ubuntu* Model of measuring leader and organisational effectiveness

In recent educational leadership and management studies within the African context, *Ubuntu* (*Unhu*) concept has received support as a measure of effectiveness. As highlighted in the previous section, The Ubuntu Model has been popularised as a measure of effectiveness drawn from the African perspective. The review of related literature has shown that most models of measuring the effectiveness of school organisations have been designed from the Eurocentric perspective. The quest for African based leadership effectiveness measures has given birth to what is now referred to as the Ubuntu Model. The emergence of this new model is supported by Mbigi and Msila (1997) in a study related to the South African education systems, who argue that there is emerging recognition of African models as a way of interpreting leadership and management practices in schools and communities that surround them.
Zimbabwe as a country has demonstrated this aspect by including the concept of Ubuntu in the vision and mission statements of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Educations. Mangena and Chitando (2011) define the concept of Unhu/Ubuntu as a concept that places importance on supportiveness, co-operation and communalism. The definition is in line with Tirivangana (2013) who characterises a leader with Unhu/Ubuntu as one who does the following:

- Consults and listens to subordinates
- Does not impose decisions
- Accepts that he/she is part of the whole
- Effectively represents the people he comes from

From Tirivangana’s (2013) observations the researcher understands that a head teacher who has Unhu would be considered as effective because of the capacity to be inclusive in decision making so that there is no imposition of decisions which are likely to fail due to lack of support. Such an attitude would reflect that every member would be viewed as part of a system with an important role to play. An effective head teacher is not expected to be a sole decision maker on all issues affecting the school.

In their view, Chitando and Mangena (2011) characterise such a leader as:

- One who regards people as family
- Who does not channel organisational funds for personal use
- Who maintains the values and norms of the organisation
• Who operates in solidarity with community especially in times of crisis

Chitando and Mangena (2011) from the researcher’s perspective hold the opinion that an effective head teacher should be a unifying figure in the school and community at all times. Any inappropriate behaviour on the part of a head teacher inside or outside school premises are considered to be against the values and norms of leadership and management in Zimbabwean schools. The researcher is without doubt that such qualities would portray ineffectiveness in a head teacher.

There are no significant deviations concerning how the concept is perceived among the researchers. The model places emphasis on the fact that people in any organisation are interdependent. The concept of interdependentness of people is in tandem with the western view of collaboration and co-operation in organisational activities. The assumption is that Ubuntu contributes towards moral stability within the school due to the fact that there would be a spirit of oneness towards goal achievement. There appear to be linkages between the Ubuntu Model and moral leadership. Mbigi (1997) asserts that the model facilitates participative decision-making in schools due to the value placed on individuals within a system. The tenets of the Ubuntu Model were repeatedly echoed by teachers and education inspectors in their evaluation of ODL degreed head teachers and their subordinates’ interactions in primary schools. The concept of ‘Ubuntu” might be subject to different interpretations within the social and cultural diversity which characterises Zimbabwe. There is however, confidence that there is generally a common agreement of values that have to be maintained and protected through the education system in the country.
The models were considered to be applicable the study due to the fact that, ODL is a training programme which might have an impact on the effectiveness of the recipients. The effectiveness models discussed portray some of the standards used to generate data which evaluated the effectiveness of primary school head teachers in their performance as leaders and managers of primary schools. The models provided guidance in the formulation of data generation tools. The availability of such standards was critical in providing a base from which participants could express their opinions freely. They also created an environment conducive for better understanding of how people in everyday settings create meaning and interpret events of their world (Wimmer and Dominick, 2000). It was relevant to discuss dimensions of effectiveness.

2.2.8. Dimensions of effectiveness

In an effort to arrive at ideal measures of effectiveness, Cameron (1978) identified and tested the ability of nine constructs to express institutional effectiveness. These are referred to as dimensions of effectiveness. The dimensions are concentrated in three specific areas referred to as, student focused measures, staff focused and system openness.

- Student focused measures would be concerned with assessing the efforts of the head teacher towards the provision of educational satisfaction, academic development, career development as well as personal development
- Staff focused measures would be measures related to staff satisfaction and professional development. The issue of motivational strategies used to positively influence teachers towards goal achievement and encouragement of subordinates to develop professionally are critical in this dimension.
• System openness would include measures on head teachers’ ability to acquire required resources and support through cooperation with school development committees as required by the legislation that governs the operations of primary schools in Zimbabwe.

The model of measuring effectiveness provided above does not exhaust all dimensions. Smart, Kuh and Tierney (1997) question the absence of the dimension of culture and decision making which are considered as critical in measuring effectiveness and the researcher considers the criticism plausible.

Nielson (2011) asserts that effectiveness is measured in four categories. The first category recognises the subjective realm effectiveness. Basing on this, an evaluator would look at the overall moral of the school as an organisation. Regardless of challenges that might be impacting on the school, the morale is expected to be high. Low morale is considered as lack of leader effectiveness. Some of the indicators in this category include participation and attendance of both teachers and pupils in the school. Open channels of communication also indicate head teacher effectiveness.

The second category is argued to be based on number-based metrics. Numbers are said to have a telling on head teacher effectiveness. An example of this might be the pupil enrolment figure in the school and the number of teachers in the school in comparison with neighbouring schools. The assumption is that some growth in numbers should be observed in a school led and managed by an effective head teacher. School and head teacher effectiveness could also be judged on numbers of passes at Grade 7 level as well as staff turnover. The
third category of indicators comprises skills, behaviours and attitudes found in the school. These should be as expected in primary school organisations. In the fourth category focus is on how the leader grooms teachers for leadership positions and the extent to which a leadership pool is created through head teacher encouragement. A large number of groomed potential leaders indicate effective leadership.

Cochran (2005) asserts that discipline is necessary and emphasises that organisational support for corrective action is essential for good discipline. The researcher considers this observation to be valid. In Zimbabwe, schools whose pupils and teachers displayed tendencies of indiscipline in public tend to have their head teachers labelled as ineffective. The Zimbabwean society tends to associate strictness with effectiveness as far as head teachers are concerned.

There is no doubt that the issue of educational leadership and managerial effectiveness is of concern globally. Condon and Clifford (2012) explored the American experience on school leadership and management asserting that The Interstate School Leaders’ Licensure Consortium ISLLC (2008) standards are widely accepted and that they contain six domains which should serve as the basis for measuring the effectiveness of school head teachers. The six domains are:

- Sharing vision
- Development of a school culture and instructional programme that is responsive to student learning and staff professional growth.
• Planning, procuring and controlling resources for an effective learning environment.
• Collaborating with community members and responding to community needs.
• Acting with integrity, fairness and in an ethical way.
• Being responsive to legal, political and social demands of a country.

From the Zimbabwean context, much attention has also been directed to several of the mentioned indicators of head teacher effectiveness as tools for measuring head teacher effectiveness. Smart, Kuh and Tierney, (1997) and Welsh and Metcalf (2003) also include leadership style and healthy communication channels within school as having strong influence on overall school effectiveness. However, despite possible limitations, the indicators identified were considered to be applicable in measuring the effectiveness of ODL degreed primary school head teachers in this research study. The discussion on indicators of head teacher effectiveness ushers in the views of researchers on ODL and quality education.

2.3. THE RATIONALE FOR ODL IN HIGHER EDUCATION

UNESCO (2001) advances reasons that have led to the popularity of open and distance learning as a mode of learning in developed and developing countries. One of the contributing factors advanced was that, there have been vast economic, social and political changes that have impacted on governments worldwide. The changes have led to gaps in skilled manpower and demands for wider access to education and more aggressive human resource development programmes. Open and distance learning in higher education has

Through Zimbabwe Open University, Zimbabwe has demonstrated that higher education degrees could be attained at very little cost for the government since the graduates embark on chosen degree programmes at their own initiative without financial assistance from the government. This is supported by Nyaruwata (2014) in the article, ‘Participation of women in Open and Distance Learning in Zimbabwe: A case of commercial banks and NGOs.’ Nyaruwata (2014) argues that many higher education institutions world over were answering the challenge of providing increased educational opportunities by developing parallel programmes that use the delivery mode of open and distance learning.

The other assumed advantage of the ODL mode in Zimbabwe is that there is an automatic marrying of theory and practice since the students learn while they do their usual work. Assumption 1.9.3 of this study is that there is automatic transfer of learning since the ODL students are in a position to practise what they would have learnt in the programmes. This assumption(1.9.3.) was of interest to the researcher because it had a bearing on the problem under investigation, which is evaluation of ODL degreed head teachers as effective leaders and managers of primary schools. The question is, ‘Has there been effective transfer of the knowledge acquired?’
Another assumption (1.9.4.) of the study was that, head teachers who accessed such higher education were likely to be more effective leaders and managers of primary schools. This assumption is strengthened by UNESCO’s (2001) position that ODL has played a significant role in training teachers with appropriate professional qualifications.

2.4. THE BENEFITS OF ODL IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN ZIMBABWE

Review of related literature has revealed benefits of ODL in the Zimbabwean education system as observed by Zimbabwe Open University, Research and Evaluation Unit in ‘Evaluation of the Bachelor of Education in Educational Administration, Planning and Policy Studies,’ (2001). The Bachelor of Education Management Degree graduates were reported to have acquired the following competencies which are crucial in their effectiveness as leaders and managers of schools:

- Communication
- Staff development
- Measurement and evaluation
- Planning, leadership and administration
- Decision making and management
- Financial management
- Critical thinking and analytical signs
- Conflict resolution
The researcher believes that acquisition of the above competencies, was facilitated through the courses which were on offer at the time, which the researcher assumes have been increased and improved upon by the dominant ODL institution as years went by as a way of keeping abreast with changes in the needs of the primary school sector.

The study acknowledges the benefits of ODL as revealed in the above research study but strongly believes that it is now time that the effectiveness of the beneficiaries as leaders and managers of primary schools is evaluated. The concept of effectiveness is generally associated with hands on practice and production of tangible outcomes. The research study offered a chance for the evaluation to be carried out right in their places of operation in Chipinge district primary schools as a case study.

2.5. DEFINING LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT IN A SCHOOL ORGANISATION

2.5.1. Definition of the term ‘leadership’

It was necessary in this review of related literature to pay attention to the definition of the term leadership as it holds a critical position in the research study. The term was defined basing on how renowned researchers have viewed it. Stogdill (1974) perceives leadership as a process of influencing the operations of an organised group in endeavours towards setting goals and achieving the goals. Kotter (1988) recognised leadership as a process which is interpersonal in nature through which the leader plays the role of directing or propelling a group towards long-term best interests of the group.
Murdock and Scutt (2005) define leadership as a dynamic process whereby a person provides direction for the led while influencing each other to contribute voluntarily to the achievement of the team tasks in a given situation. Moving further up the timeline, Northhouse (2007) also concurs with earlier leadership theorist by asserting that leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. Gray (2005) and Shaik (2008) define the term by characterising it as follows:

- It is a process of social influence
- It cannot exist without a leader and some followers
- There is voluntary action by the followers
- It seeks to change the followers’ behaviour

The last characteristic of leadership above is congruent with the view of Murray (2011) where leadership is said to be focused on changing individuals and organisations.

The reviewed definitions exhibit a common feature of leadership. The feature is that it is a process that involves a person exerting some influence on followers so that the goals of the organisation they belong to can be met. Drawing from the definitions, one can deduce that head teachers as leaders in primary schools are expected to be capable of influencing teachers, support staff, pupils and other stakeholders towards goal achievement. The definition of the term ‘leadership’ leads to that of ‘management’.
2.5.2. What is organisational management?

Mahmood and Basharat (2012) assert that management is a term that has its root in Latin, ‘manuagere,’ meaning to lead by hand or giving direction. The word suggests the manager first goes where he or she wants to send followers. The researcher is of the view that this definition still had an element of leadership functions contributing to the confusion of equating leadership with management.

Fayol (1916) in Cole (2004) views the process of managing as to forecast, plan, to organise, to command, to coordinate and to control. Koontz and Donelly (1984) also regard it as an operational process initially best understood through the analysis of five essential managerial functions of planning, staffing, directing, leading and controlling. Louis and Miles (1990) view management in terms of administrative and organisational roles and leadership in terms of educational goals, inspiring and motivating others. This view however tends to project management as being the same with leadership.

Thomson (2002) agrees that the manager’s roles comprise forecasting and planning, organising, commanding and leading, coordinating and controlling activities within the organisation. Robbins, Judge and Campbell (2010) are of the opinion that managers have to get things done and achieve goals through planning, organising, leading and controlling. The definitions of the term indicate that there is common understanding with regard to the main functions of a manager of an organisation which are planning, organising, leading and controlling. A school being an organisation is therefore not exempted. It is these functions
that determine the roles of head teachers as managers of primary schools. The relationship between leadership and management is discussed in the next section.

2.6. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS

There has been confusion with regard to the separation of leadership from management (Kotter, 1990). This view is shared by Mangunda (2005) who explains how the terms leadership and management tend to be interchangeably used when in actual fact they are actually different but complimentary organisational activities. Schmuck (1986) considers that school heads should combine leadership and management skills in their governance and administration practice arguing that leadership brought energy, enthusiasm and commitment while management brought efficiency and coordination of school activities towards goal achievement.

Covey (1992: 246) in an article ‘Principle-Centered Leadership’ has this to sum up the symbiotic relationship between the two roles:

Leadership deals with direction—with making sure that the ladder is leaning against the right wall.
Management deals with speed...Leadership deals with vision—with keeping the mission in sight—and with effectiveness and results. Management deals with structure and systems to get those results...
Leadership derives its power from values and correct
principles. Management organises resources to serve selected objectives to produce the bottom line...

Management and leadership are not mutually exclusive; in fact...leadership is the highest component of management.

De Jong (1999) also regards management and leadership roles as complementary, meaning it is an integration of tasks. Drucker (1967) in Parmenter (2012) differentiates leadership from management by saying that management ensures that staff were doing something correctly while leadership ensures that staff were doing the right thing. The observation still emphasises the relationship between the two concepts.

Bolman and Deal (1997) are of the view that leading and managing are distinct activities but both are important for organisational effectiveness. The symbiotic relationship is heightened by Hallinger (2003) who says that the managerial roles of school heads should not diminish his leadership roles because the need for effective leaders and managers still remains in schools. Bush (2007) supports the relationship, by positing that both roles of leading and managing need to be given equal prominence if schools were to operate effectively and achieve their objectives. Murray (2010) and Shied (2010) went further in separating the two functions arguing that planning, directing, controlling and coordinating are functions of management while inspiring and motivating are the functions of leaders.

From the above observations based on valid research evidence, the researcher considers it critical to use data generation instruments that measure the two variables equitably since they
are both pertinent in the study of head teacher effectiveness and since head teachers are considered as leaders and managers of schools they head. It is also because of the existing symbiotic relationship between the two concepts that the researcher supports the term managerial leadership. The next section analyses the importance of leadership and management in a school.

2.7. THE IMPORTANCE OF EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS

According to International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) in UNESCO (2000) much research has indicated that the way schools are led and managed has an effect on the quality of education that is offered. IIEP argues that the importance of effective leadership and management outweighs the abundance of available resources in as far as the improvement of teaching and learning in schools is concerned. This observation is pertinent to this study due to the fact that the head teachers who are in the spotlight are based in the rural environment where schools are characterised by inadequate resources.

Mulkeen (2005) on school leadership and management in Sub Saharan schools, argue that all efforts towards improvement of educational quality will hinge on school leaders. Mulkeen (2005) further supports this by claim saying that concerted effort to improve school leadership is one of the most promising points of intervention to raise the quality and efficiency of secondary education across Sub-Saharan Africa. While the study was targeted at secondary schools some aspects of leadership and management can comfortably be applied
to primary schools as well. The discussion now turns on to the roles of a head teacher as a leader.

**2.8. THE ROLES OF A HEAD TEACHER AS A LEADER IN A SCHOOL**

Green (2002) in an article *Ten Questions for School Leaders* highlights roles that are consistent with head teachers as school leaders. The researcher is of the opinion that the identified roles could also be applicable to the Zimbabwean primary education context. One of the identified roles is that of scrutinising planning. Supervision of teacher’s schemes and work plans is an emphasised role for head teachers and their deputies in schools. Management degree courses and modules offered through open and distance learning have included supervision and evaluation. It is therefore imperative that a study be carried out to establish the extent to which knowledge transfer has taken place for the betterment of primary schools’ output through effective supervision and evaluation of teachers’ work by ODL educational management degreed head teachers.

Observation of the teaching and learning process is another key role that goes hand in hand with the role stated above. This role covers ensuring that appropriate methods and approaches are employed in the classrooms. The assumption is, effective monitoring of classroom activities would result in better quality of teaching and performance of the learners.

The third role cited is that of scrutinising pupils’ work. Head teachers compare scheme- cum-plans with teaching methods and the content in pupils’ books. To achieve this effectively one
has to be critical. The researcher reckons that through the degree programmes, the ODL graduates were equipped with criticism skills which should be reflected in their report writings.

Head teachers also play the analytical role of identifying strengths and weaknesses of both teachers and pupils. The value of this role is in enabling head teachers to arrive at effective decisions involving delegation of teachers and streaming of students. Analytical skills may also need to be developed in teachers through headmasters in order to facilitate work differentiation to cater for the learning levels of various pupils.

A school head teacher also has the role of identifying the training needs of his or her subordinates. This has an effect on the development of the school personnel as well as that of the school. The need for head teachers to effectively play this role is of paramount importance especially amidst the environmental demands that continue to impact against school organisations. Most of the environmental pressures demand the need to change and headmasters have a role to identify the changes needed and to find solutions.

Leithwood (2006) in “Seven Strong Points about School Leadership” presents the roles as:

- Setting direction, meaning identifying and articulating a vision, fostering and accepting group goals, setting high performance expectations and promoting effective communication within the school and the environment.
- Stimulating people intellectually, providing individual support and modelling appropriate values and practices.
Redesigning the organisation through building collaborations, structuring the school to facilitate work, creating productive relations with parents and communities and connecting the school to the wider environment. The observation was earlier noted by Bullock and Thomas (1997) who assert many countries have embarked on the decentralisation process where decision making has been transferred from bureaucratic to school level leading to increased need for accountability, quality control and external evaluations. On the same issue, Huber (1999) who observes that schools operate in societies and therefore head teachers need to be able to cope with and support cultural changes and developments and to be able to anticipate some problems and possible solutions. Zimbabwe has gone and is still going through such experiences hence the need to assess the effectiveness of primary school head teachers in their delivery of service.

Bringing in stability to the instructional programme through proper class allocation to staff, monitoring student progress and school improvement programmes and allocating resources to foster the school improvement efforts are also critical. This leadership point confirms Gray (1990) who also claims that successful schools had competent leadership while Huberman (1992) and Huber (1999) are also in support arguing that school development and improvement depend on the school leader.

The study recognises the applicability of two sets of leadership roles by Green (2002) and Leithwood (2006) to the Zimbabwean primary education scenario while accepting the later to be more aligned to the current local educational aspirations. Since leadership works hand in hand with management, attention should be paid to the role of a head teacher as a manager.
2.9. THE ROLES OF A HEAD TEACHER AS A MANAGER IN A SCHOOL

Drucker (1967) asserts that managers are responsible for managing time, records and supervising staff. They are also supposed to be result oriented. Managers are expected to be goal-oriented and should aim at achieving the goals through staff development workshops or meetings. A manager is also viewed as a leader in decision making. Bolam (1999) goes further to view educational management as an executive function for carrying out agreed policies. Head teachers in Zimbabwe operate within set policy guidelines which they are expected to be responsive to because it is through the guidelines that educational objectives are cascaded to schools from educational planners and policy makers and achieved. Lack of adherence to policy guidelines would therefore be considered as ineffectiveness by the responsible ministry.

Nandwah (2011) advances the following as responsibilities of a head teacher in a school based on a study carried out in public secondary schools in Kenya:

- Accounting officer
- Interpreting and implementing policy decision
- Organising activities
- Co-ordinating and supervision of activities in school
- Monitoring teaching and learning standards

The above managerial roles of head teachers are considered to be also applicable to the Zimbabwean context. The roles are also expanded upon through the works of organisation
management. Research experts such as Mintzberg (1980) outline ten managerial roles from a modern perspective as follows:

- Figurehead
- Leader
- Liaison
- Monitor
- Disseminator
- Spokesperson
- Entrepreneur
- Disturbance handler
- Resource allocator
- Negotiator

Mintzberg (1980) summarises the above into three managerial roles as interpersonal, informational and decisional.

2.9.1 Interpersonal roles

These are roles where the head teachers functions as a figurehead and leader. The interpersonal role would involve hiring, training, disciplining, motivating and making contacts with outsiders. In relating this role to the Zimbabwean scenario, one would consider an effective head teacher to be someone who is a good communicator.
2.9.2. Informational roles

Informational roles are when head teacher functions as a liaison officer, monitor of school activities, disseminator of information and spokesperson. The effectiveness of a head teacher in this role can be assessed basing on how capable he or she is in collecting information that is useful for the development and smooth running of school activities. Ministry officials rely on head teachers to disseminate information regarding policy issues, procedures and other important issues.

2.9.3. Decisional roles

As a head teacher interacts with the internal and external school environment, they find themselves making a varied range of decisions. Resources in schools especially rural schools are very scarce. The effectiveness of the head teacher as a manager is therefore measured against how the meagre resources are allocated or distributed for maximum benefit to the school (efficient use of resources). After discussing the roles of a head teacher, the review focuses on what characterises an effective head teacher.

2.10. CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE HEAD TEACHER

This review was also guided by the assumption that ODL has played a pivotal role in developing leadership and managerial skills in Zimbabwean primary school head teachers in pursuit of effectiveness. It is focused on doing the right thing. The researcher considers it
relevance to explore the findings of research studies on qualities that contribute towards leadership and managerial effectiveness of head teachers in schools.

Drucker (1967) considers effective management to be the key to success and not leadership. He advances the following views as a result of his management orientation:

i. Strategic plan is the first priority of a leader. The issue of the ability to draw up schools' strategic plans has already been highlighted in the conceptual framework of this study as one of the key indicators of head teacher effectiveness in the first chapter of this study.

ii. Ethics and integrity are also considered as critical in an effective leader and manager. In their leadership and management roles, head teachers are guided by legal, social and cultural ethics of a country. An ethical head teacher is also expected to be someone of integrity, a person who can be trusted. Before the introduction of School Development Committees in Zimbabwean schools the head teacher occupied centre stage in managing the financial affairs of schools. As a result of this state of affairs, there were many cases of head teachers misappropriating school funds to their own personal use. As advisors to SDC activities, head teachers are expected to be men and women of ethics and integrity.

iii. The importance of the head teacher being a good role model in the school and society cannot be over emphasised. For a head teacher to be considered as effective in a Zimbabwean school context, he or she has to portray socially acceptable behaviour or *UnhuUbuntu*, in their interactions with pupils, subordinates, communities and other
stakeholders. This observation has already been discussed at length as an indicator that was used to measure the effectiveness of the head teachers under study.

iv. An effective head teacher should also be seen as one who has the capacity to motivate staff and pupils. Due to the harsh economic conditions which have negatively affected the performance of teachers in Zimbabwean schools, there might be a tendency among head teachers to adopt the Transactional leadership style in leading and managing schools in which there is exchange of service for rewards through incentives. These hygiene factors have served as temporary motivators for goal achievement in schools.

v. Last but not least important, Drucker (1967) observes that an effective head teacher as a leader would be noted by the degree to which he or she interacts with the environment that surrounds their schools. Schools are providers of services to internal and external customers. It was pertinent to gather views with regard to how the customers view the schools, the service they provide as well as the products that comes out of schools headed by ODL educational management degreed head teachers.

According to the School Management Training Manual prepared by Mineduc School Management in Kigali, Rwanda (2008) head teachers occupied a pivotal role in leading and managing schools. So it being the case, it is widely accepted that quality of leadership in a school has a strong bearing on the overall effectiveness of the school. The following were identified by the manual as key characteristics:

- Enforcement of traditions of efficiency, effectiveness and quality in schools where these were already in place.
- Possession of adequate academic and professional qualifications
- Well versed with methods and techniques of educational practice
• Full comprehension of the needs of teaching and non teaching staff, pupils, parents and the environment they operate in

• Awareness of the strengths, weaknesses of the school as well as opportunities and threats that confront the school

In another study carried out in Malaysian schools by Hamadan (2014) effective school principals (the equivalent of school head teachers in Zimbabwe) should be capable of:

• Ensuring and impressing the need for co-operation between him/her and teachers

• Being in a position to competently manage curriculum through participation in the teaching and learning process

• Being responsive to teachers’ professional and developmental needs

• Being able to evaluate and to deal with conflict

• Working towards improving and meeting the standards spelt by the relevant government ministry.

Deal and Peterson (2000) also hold the view that school leaders need to acknowledge the idea of aiming towards achieving the standards of excellence as set by education ministries.

In the above study carried out in Malaysia, recommendations advanced were found to be also relevant to the Zimbabwean primary education scenario. Outlined below are some of the recommendations:

• Experienced and qualified senior teachers are required to hold positions of heading schools.
• Holders of leadership and managerial posts in schools need to be selected stringently in order to have the most qualified school heads
• School heads were also encouraged to acquire new knowledge in order to produce skilled manpower for the nation
• Finally it was recommended that the concerned ministry should provide developmental programmes focused on improving the heads’ leadership qualities.

Basing on the above recommendations, the researcher is of the view that the Zimbabwean primary education system has also implemented policies that are in line with recommendations to the Malaysian education system. Zimbabwean primary schools are headed by head teachers who can be considered as experienced and qualified. Selection into the positions is done following procedures which include interviews where aspirants compete on variables that include academic qualifications, professional qualifications, lengthy of experience and performance to name a few.

Also of interest to the study are the eleven principles of leadership as advanced by the US Army (1993) which state that:

1. An effective leader is one who knows himself or herself and seeks self-improvement through self-study, formal classes and interaction with others.
2. To be technically proficient in terms of knowing their jobs and their subordinates’ tasks.
3. The third is to seek and take responsibility for his/her actions, analyse situations and take corrective action.

4. The forth principle is that of making sound and timely decisions. The current social, economic and political environment in Zimbabwe calls for head teachers who are responsive and alert to changes.

5. To be a good model is the fifth principle of a good leader. Bandura (1967) in Yellon and Weinstein (1977) emphasises the important role of modelling in educational institutions asserting that it contributes considerably in personality formation. This observation is supported by Kaizes and Posner (1981) who hold the view that an effective leader should be able to model the way and to enable others to act following their example.

6. The sixth principle was that an effective leader was one who knew his people and look out for their well-being. Primary school head teachers’ effectiveness is also assessed basing on how they relate to their subordinates’ well-being.

7. Keep subordinates and superiors informed. The implication of this principle is that an effective head would be someone who receives information and cascades it to the subordinates as well as transmitting information through the specified channels for the better of the school.

8. They develop sense of responsibility through delegation. Without delegation of duties or task to subordinates, most school heads would be rendered ineffective. Delegation has the potential of influencing teachers towards common vision and mission.
9. To ensure that tasks are understood, supervised and accomplished. In a Zimbabwean primary school set up, an effective school head is expected to call for staff meetings, hold staff development sessions, supervise the various school activities, all for the sake of goal accomplishment.

10. Promote teamwork. The chief strategy for success in modern organisation is now teamwork. It follows that, an effective head in a primary school is one who acknowledges the benefits of teamwork.

11. Lastly, an effective leader would use the full capabilities of their organisations. The researcher assumed that in their degree programmes, heads and teachers came across decision making concepts such as Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis where a leader is expected to pay attention to the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats or challenges that they face in the school.

The study also notes with interest that although the above eleven leadership principles were propounded to guide the US army, they were still applicable to primary school leadership as well.

Without downplaying the characteristics discussed above, Achua and Lussier (2013) assert that the personality the school leader, has a bearing on his or her effectiveness. They argue that personality traits such as strong need for achievement (nAch), need for power (nPow)
and need for affiliation (nAff) all based on Mc Clelland (1988) Achievement Motivation Theory, plays a significant role in head teacher effectiveness.

The discussion in this section, has served to clarify some of the indicators that will serve as measures of head teacher effectiveness as leaders and managers of primary schools in Zimbabwe. The indicators have been addressed on courses that are on offer in ODL programmes on offer in Zimbabwe. Having looked into some of the indicators of effectiveness it is important to pay attention to the link between managerial leadership and the performance of a school.

2.1. LINK BETWEEN MANAGERIAL LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

Research evidence has shown that effective leadership is associated with effective school performance (Schermerhorn et al (2000), Finn, (2002) and Waters, Marzona and McNulty (2004). Schermerhorn.et.al. (2000) maintains that leadership is at the centre of any organisation and that the nature of leadership in an organisation can break or promote the organisation. Finn (2002) argues that the most critical element in an organisation is the quality of its leadership particularly the head teacher. The results of a research carried out by Waters, Marzona and McNulty(2004) pointed to the effect that head teacher’s leadership effectiveness could significantly boost pupils’ achievement.
Huber (2004) argues that there is now research evidence indicating that leadership quality is important for school development and student performance. Huber (ibid) posits that schools that are considered to be successful are usually headed by a competent and sound leader. This research based claim is echoed by Leithwood (2006) who advances that, there was no single case of a school successfully turning around its pupil achievement trajectory in the absence of talented leadership. This observation is in tandem with the observations of UNESCO (2010/11) in World Data in Education where it is observed that the education system in Zimbabwe has been and is still academically oriented and examination driven. This means that the main goal of education is to pass the end of cycle examination. In the case of primary school, the main indicator is the pass rate of the Grade Seven examination. It was of interest to the researcher to establish how ODL degreed primary school head teachers fared in the academically oriented and examination driven education system of Zimbabwe.

The observation by UNESCO is echoed by The National Report on the Status of Education by Zimbabwe 48th Session of Geneva (2008) where it was reported that the examination pass rate is one of the indicators of quality education in Zimbabwe. The researcher considersthis to be valid basing on the fact that, in Zimbabwe schools, districts, provinces are rated on public examinations that are administered at the end of the nine year primary course. The researcher was also keen to establish whether or not (according to participants) there was a link between the performance of ODL degreed head teachers and pupils’ performance at Grade Seven.

Bush (2003) is of the view that even in developing countries and some eastern European countries where the role of a school leader is mainly implementing government policy, there is still need to staff develop the school heads in managerial leadership. Moving closer to
Zimbabwe, The South African Government Department of Education (1996) was quoted in Bush (2003) as saying that it was no longer time for school managers to wait for instructions and decisions from the government and that the pace of change dictates the need to be adaptable and be responsive to environmental demands. The department also called for acquisition of new skills and new ways of operating so as to meet the challenges confronting school organisations.

The above research findings re-emphasise the paradigm shift that is now in place concerning the public expectations relating to head teacher effectiveness and school effectiveness. Bush and Oduro (2006) posit that there is increasing acknowledgement that school headship is becoming a specialist position which requires preparation. This is consistent with Bulin’s view that training is an important tool for organisations committed to continuous improvement. Bush and Oduro (2006) believe the shift has been brought about by factors such as expansion of head teachers’ roles, increasing environmental demands, recognition of importance of skill and knowledge development in bringing about the required change in schools. It is without doubt that theory is linking effectiveness to skill development. This is in tandem with the purpose of the study which aimed to explore the impact ODL management degrees has had on head teacher effectiveness in primary schools. It is critical however to understand how one becomes an effective school manager.

2.12. HOW TO BECOME AN EFFECTIVE LEADER AND MANAGER

The traditional school of thought, which could be referred to as trait theorists consider that a person is born with certain traits that lead him/her into leadership (Bass and Avolio, 2006).
There has been a shift in thinking with more researchers in support of leadership development. Veerman, Van Tulder and Voeten (1994) in support of professional development defined the term as referring to a set of activities to deepen and broaden knowledge attitudes and skills that are directly connected with the profession of teaching to improve teachers’ professional competence and effectiveness of their school.

In support of the modern perspective on leadership development, Okumbe (1998) says that leadership traits are not complete inborn but can be acquired through learning and experience. The trait theory has been castigated by, among other critics, Kelly and Petterson (2001) who argue that being a born leader is a paradigm that is no longer applicable in the 21st Century ever changing environment. It is basing on current on leadership that the researcher sought to assess the extent to which head teachers who had obtained further education through open and distance learning were effective and efficient in their leadership and managerial role.

Providers of professional development through ODL have been responsive to the view that leadership can be developed. The assumption is that degrees and content on offer have been designed in a way that provides the students with the type of knowledge and skills which can transform them into leaders who would benefit the Zimbabwean primary school educational system. However, the success of the programme of developing leadership and management skills in head teachers cannot be taken for granted. It was critical to evaluate the performance of the graduates as a way of establishing the success of transfer of knowledge and skills learnt. Failure to transfer acquired knowledge and skills could result in some graduates continuing with undesirable leadership and management styles in schools they head.
2.13. HOW LEADERSHIP STYLES AFFECT THE EFFECTIVENESS OF HEAD TEACHERS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

In this study, the researcher considered it pertinent to direct attention to classical leadership theories of leadership and management before progressing to modern and contemporary theories. Ehiobuche and Hui-WenTu (2012) justifies the relevance of studying classical theories in understanding organisational behaviour. The study revealed that classical theories were still relevant in today’s organisations and constituted an important learning component in the formation of managers and leaders. It was also revealed that the majority of the participants maintained that despite changes in organisational environments over the years classical theories were still critical in understanding organisational behaviour.

The works of Boje (2000), Johns (2005) Business Training Media (2007) indicate that the leadership style adopted by a head teacher has a great influence on the performance of the teachers and the school as a whole. Below is a brief discussion of some classical leadership styles which are still currently in use.

2.13.1. CLASSICAL LEADERSHIP STYLES

Below are some classical leadership theories some of which still have influence on leadership and management practices in the Zimbabwean education system.

a) Trait Theories
Among the classical leadership theorists were trait theorists who believed that there were certain personal characteristics or traits which were in-born in certain people and absent in others. Such characteristics included charisma, intelligence, self confidence, determination, sociability and integrity to name a few. The argument of the trait theorists was that individuals who were lacking in these traits could not be leaders (Van der Wagen and Davis, 2003). This assumption was heavily criticised by other researchers who held the view that leaders could be trained to acquire these characteristics and to be effective leaders (see 2.14).

It is therefore of interest in this study to establish the extent to which the Trait Theory could be said to be true in an environment which is focusing more on leadership training.

b) **Autocratic Leadership**

Autocratic leadership is the kind of leadership where the head of an organisation assumes to total control of organisational activities. There is no or very minimal delegation of duties to subordinates. The leadership has been noted as advantageous in the sense that lengthy time is not waste in arguments among stake holders (Achua and Lussier, 2013). The other advantage is that there are some subordinated who need to be directed closely. The style is also viewed as one that allows subordinates to have one task and to be proficient in that task. Such leadership style in a school organisation however, would not create a teaching environment that is conducive to the professional development of all members because it thwarts participative decision making and creativity (Bush, 2003).

c) **Democratic Leadership**

Democratic leadership is associated with subordinate empowerment in that the style allows for organisational member participation in activities though the head has the final say because
he or she is accountable. The advantage in this style of leadership is that it allows for individual growth and increases sense of belonging or worthy in subordinates. Subordinates are consulted and there are higher chances of increased production. The disadvantage however is that, decision making and implementation are slow due to the fact that everyone would be involved in decision making (Murray, 2011 and Ngara, 2013).

d) Laissez-faire

In an organisation where there is no effective leadership and management and where there is a ‘free for all’ environment the leadership is referred to as laissez-faire. Such a leadership is considered as ineffective in the sense that there is no influence, direction and control towards organisational goals. The organisation is not likely to produce desired results due to lack of supervision and direction.

e) The Styles Theory

According to Nyamuda (2002) classical leadership styles are portrayed through the Blake and Mouton Leadership Grid (1991) also referred to as The Styles Theory, which advances leadership styles scenarios concerning effectiveness in leadership and management. Firstly, in a situation where a manager shows not much concern for the welfare of subordinates and for performance, the leadership is regarded as impoverished. In a school situation such a head teacher would be considered as totally ineffective because there would be no effort towards creating a good working climate for all stakeholders and no achievement of set goals.
Secondly, the study also shows that a manager who shows high concern for his followers and does not pay much attention to the performance of the organisation is viewed as having a ‘country club management style.’ If applied to a school organisation this scenario could be referring to head teachers who are more interested in keeping the staff comfortable at the expense of the needs of the school children and parents.

Thirdly, it was revealed that team effort in an organisation translated into leadership and management effectiveness due to the fact that there would be trust and respect. This positive result was attributed to the sense of ownership within the members.

Fourthly, it was found in an organisation environment where there is more focus on performance at the expense of members’ needs is considered as authoritarian. Such a leadership style negates the modern humanistic approaches which emphasise the need to address the needs of organisational members so as to ensure that they are motivated enough to achieve set goals and to work in unity.

Lastly, according to the Blake and Mouton (1991) where there was a balance in concern for production or performance with concern for people, the work environment was considered as democratic and responsive to team work. Modern leadership and management theories seek to strike a balance between the needs of the organisation and those of members. It must be borne in mind that the above study was carried out in a western business organisation set up which is different from the Zimbabwean educational organisational situation that is under study. The researcher however, regards human nature to be universal therefore the above findings could be applicable to the local school organisation too. Attention will specifically
be on contemporary leadership theories and effects they might have on head teacher effectiveness.

2.13.2. CONTEMPORARY LEADERSHIP THEORIES

Nyamuda (2002) argues that though early organisational behaviour researches have tended to identify the different leadership styles pointing out the strengths and weaknesses of each, there emerged new leadership theories which assume that the selection leadership approach depends on the situation that confronts the leader or manager. Among the theories are the Situational leadership theories.

2.13.3. Situational Leadership styles

According to Kanopaske and Matteson (2007) leading exponents of situational leadership styles, Fiedler (1967) and Hersey and Blanchard (1977) assume that there is no best method to lead an organisation. The best way is therefore to select a suitable leadership style to match the nature of the subordinates one is leading. The argument is that some people can work independently while others cannot produce deliverables without close supervision.

The implication of situational theory is an effective head teacher who is able to decide on a leadership approach that would lead to accomplishment of set goals or that would yield the best performance from the subordinates they work with. One of the famous situational theories is the Hersey and Blanchard (1977) Situational Theory which is based on the
assumption that, the maturity of the workforce determines the selection of leadership style. According to the theory there should be a progression of leadership styles from telling style, selling style, participating style and delegating style so as to cater for new staff members, those who have mastered the basics; those who now know more about their jobs and finally ‘mature’ staff members. In any primary school as an organisation, a head teacher is likely to work with teachers of these situational categories and should be able to deal with them accordingly for effectiveness.

The acknowledgement of leadership styles is of great importance to head teachers in primary schools because they are in positions where they are expected to be able to influence their subordinates and pupils towards a common vision and achievement of educational goals. Educational goals cannot be achieved by one man in a school in isolation of all the other members as observed by Van Der Wagen and Davies (1998) who posit that leadership is about harnessing peoples’ energy towards achieving organisational gaols. The observation is also in line with Stoner, Collins and Yetton (1985) who assert that leadership is a process of directing and influencing the task related activities of group members. The researcher is of the view that a head teacher who has gone through hands-on ODL training should be able to adjust leadership styles to suit different situation in an ever changing work environment. In view of the symbiotic relationship between leadership and management, the study focuses on management theories and their contribution to ODL degreed primary school head teacher effectiveness.
2.14. MANAGEMENT THEORIES AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO HEAD TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS

Knowledge of management theories and their implications are critical in leadership and management. Murray (2011) advances that management theories can be categorised as classical, humanistic or situational.

2.14.1. The character of Classical Management Theory

According to (Weijrich and Koontz (1993), Gray (2005) and Shaik (2008), classical management theory is characterised by:

- Division of labour
- One way communication, from top to bottom and never vice versa.
- The predictable behaviour of the subordinates

The above characteristics indicate that the theories that fall in this bracket of management place emphasis on the fact that in any organisation, tasks should be spread among members. The subordinates are expected to receive instructions from superiors and their performance should be as expected according to set standards. In a school situation, this style of management might not accommodate participative decision making or involvement of subordinates in the running of the school. Remnants of the assumptions of classical management might still be in Zimbabweanschools. There are however variations in classical management.
2.14.2. Variations of Classical Management Theory

According to Grey (2005) and McNamara (2011) there are three variations in the classical management category that were of interest to the researcher in this particular study namely:

- Scientific
- Administrative
- Bureaucratic

2.14.2.1. Scientific Management Theory

It is a theory which is the brainchild of Fredrick Taylor (1911) in Grey(2005). This is the oldest theoretical attempt at increasing productivity in organisations. The theory was based on the assumption that workers were generally inefficient, directionless and awkward at work resulting in losses in companies. As a result Taylor advocated for systematic training of workers so that there was maximum performance within stated time with very minimum loses to the organisation. The theory is said to rest on the following tenets:

- Maximum production
- Salary and rewards should commensurate with productivity
- Payment of high incentives to high achievers
- Equal spread of tasks between workers and management (McNamara, 2011)
The study recognises that the implications of the assumptions of scientific management in a school set up are that all activities that take place should be result oriented. The salary one gets should be determined by the individual’s output or performance. The theory also advances the idea that teachers who are high achievers should be incentivised. Finally, head teachers, teachers and SDC members should have specific roles in the school with no one encroaching into another’s space. I find the theory idealistic but there are chances of conflict with regard to the assessment of high and low achievers. There would also be no room for cross pollination of ideas in a school because everyone would be busy in their own area. Application of the theory is still in schools though at minimal levels.

In a school with a head using this theory to guide his or her activities, there would not be much concern about the needs of subordinates but the interests of the relevant ministry. This management theory goes well with McGregor’s (1967) Theory X which assumes workers to be generally lazy and uncooperative at work so much that they needed strict supervision and monitoring all the time. The theory is also in tandem with autocratic leadership style which gives no room for subordinate autonomy at work places. Scientific management theory heavily influences scientific supervision which placed emphasis on procedures, goals and results at the expense of the needs of the worker. The researcher was interested in finding out how ODL degreed primary school head teachers were balancing traditional management styles and modern styles for school development. Management Theory was followed and challenged by Administrative Management Theory.
2.14.2.2. Administrative Management Theory

The theory is also referred to as Classical Management Theory and was developed by Henri Fayol (1916). The theory assumes that a manager has six managerial functions, which are, forecasting, planning, organising, commanding, coordinating and monitoring (Onkor, 2009). In addition to specifying the six functions Fayol believed in and advanced fourteen (14) principles he said should guide the operations of an organisation. These are:

1. Division of work
2. Authority
3. Discipline
4. Unity of command
5. Unity of direction
6. Subordination of individual interests to the general interests
7. Remuneration
8. Centralisation
9. Scalar chain
10. Order
11. Equity
12. Stability of tenure of personnel
13. Initiative
The researcher’s interpretation and application of the theory to a modern school organisation is that, there was belief in division of work so that people worked in areas of specialisation for high productivity. There is also need to delegate duties so as to instil a sense of responsibility over outcomes. The theory places emphasis on discipline as a way of ensuring school effectiveness and the head teacher is the overall authority.

The principles imply that there should be unity, cooperation and collaboration towards achievement of set objectives and that the success of the school overrode the individual interests of members. In glaring contrast to Scientific Management Theory, Fayol argues that salaries of personnel should be determined by factors such as cost of living and qualification of personnel. In addition, decentralisation of activities was viewed with more favour because centralisation was seen as lowering the importance of subordinates’ roles in the organisation. The theory still values hierarchies in organisations and places value on being orderly. It also assumes that for effectiveness and high production, staff members should work in specific areas and materials should be readily available for successful completion of tasks.

The theory pays attention to importance of fairness and justice in places of work while salaries and benefits should be paid depending on length of service. As people work in their respective areas, they should be encouraged to be initiative. This was a departure from the scientific approach that did not give room for initiative or innovation. Last but not least important, the theory highlights need for a harmonious working climate, where members have good feelings and good relations as a way of improving productivity. The researcher considers that some of the fourteen management principles such as discipline, order, equity,
unity of direction are indicators of effectiveness hence, relevant to the evaluation of the head teachers under study. The review now focuses on the Bureaucratic Management Theory.

### 2.14.2.3. Bureaucratic Management Theory

The theory which is also referred to as Weber’s Theory of Bureaucracy was formulated by a German sociologist Karl Maximillian Weber, also known as Max Weber (Olum, 2004 and Kannan, 2004c).

The theory supports bureaucratic structures in organisations. It justifies the need for firm or rigid hierarchy. There is additional emphasis on maintenance of records, thorough training and following of rules and procedures. The assumption of the theory is bureaucracy ensures efficiency in goal attainment (McNamara, 2010).

In summary, Weber’s Bureaucracy Theory highlights the need for a leader and manager to be guided by rules and regulations in their managerial leadership roles. The need to train leaders and managers as well as subordinates is emphasised for organisational effectiveness. Paperwork is assumed to be critical and should be attended to ensure smooth management of the organisation.

The Zimbabwean education system has inherited and maintained the system of bureaucracy in its structures down to the school level. In assessing head teachers and teachers in schools
focus is on the mentioned requirements. Paperwork is still of value judging by how much attention is given to record keeping by teachers and head teacher in a school. A head teacher or teacher is deemed to be ineffective if they fail to adhere to these bureaucratic requirements. Rules and regulations determine the behaviour of teachers in Zimbabwean schools and breach of the rules and regulations is a chargeable offence. The researcher links the theory to the problem in the sense that head teachers who have been staff developed through ODL should be able to self-evaluate their effectiveness as bureaucratic members. The programme capacitated them to interpret and action instructions and policies. The discussion ushers in a more worker sensitive theory, the Human Relations Theory.

2.14.3. HUMAN RELATIONS THEORY

The Human Relations Theory was propounded by Mayo (1924-1932) as a departure from the main focus of classical management theories which was productivity at the expense of the human factor. After carrying out a series of studies the founder of the Human Relations Theory was of the conviction that there should be development of a more satisfying life in work places for increased production.

The theory rests on three main assumptions. The first assumption is that organisational conflicts between superiors and subordinates in organisations were best resolved through conferences and cooperation. This involved the following steps:

(a) Members should be prepared to listen to each other’s different perceptions and situations.
(b) Readiness to accept and understand each other’s views.

(c) Finally there should be integration of the various views to achieve unity of purpose for goal achievement.

The second assumption of the theory is that duties should be coordinated for effectiveness while the third and last assumption was that if tasks were shared the result was better relationships in the organisation. The implication of this assumption in a school would be that all stakeholders; head teachers, teachers and parents would want to be actively involved in school activities including decision making.

The studies highlighted worker morale, job satisfaction and team spirit as critical factors. The researcher interprets these factors as meaning that an effective head teacher in a school should be one who keeps teachers and other stakeholders motivated enough to achieve school goals. Attention should be directed towards meeting professional and personal needs by allowing for professional growth through training and participation. All stakeholders should be made to understand and appreciate the value of teamwork or strength in numbers as a strategy for goal achievement. The works of human relations theorists ushered in modern and contemporary theories of management.

2.15. MODERN THEORIES OF MANAGEMENT

Modern management theories of interest in this study are the Contingency and Systems theories.
2.15.1. Contingency Management Theory

The theories were developed and popularised by Hersey and Blanchard (1977) and Fiedler (1967) and they rest on the assumption that there is no single answer to effective management. In an organisation the manager might have no choice but to resort to a certain management style not because it is the best but because it would be the most appropriate given the prevailing situation. The implication of the assumptions of this management theory is, in order for a head teacher to be effective it might be necessary to adopt styles that suit conditions or suit the needs of the teachers within the school and those of the community that surrounds the school (Cole, 2004). The theory has been linked to the problem because it is the assumption of the researcher that higher professional qualifications should transform recipients into school leaders who are critical of situations. The link signifies a gap that needs to be filled by this study.

The theory recognises that each organisation has a share of its own problems and challenges as well as its own internal and external factors that impound on it. Example of environmental factors or contingencies could be change in technology, economic conditions, government policies and legislation. Head teachers as leaders and managers might have to be flexible so that they can respond and act accordingly for effectiveness sake. The contingency approach to school management might work best if schools are viewed as a system, therefore a brief discussion on Systems theory is relevant.
2.15.2. The System Theory

Cole (2004) and McNamara (2006) assert that Systems Theory is a modern management theory which like the Contingency Theory accepts that the current organisation has to face the challenge of dealing with unpredictable occurrences. Their point of separation is System Theory is more specific on what managers and leaders should take into account when leading and managing organisations. Proponents of the System Theory argue that the operation of an organisation is best understood by viewing the organisation as a system with parts that are interrelated. The model views an organisation to be made up of parts that are always interacting among themselves and with the environment surrounding it (McNamara, 2006).

In this theory there is emphasis on acknowledging the interdependence of personnel in an organisation and understanding the effect of external stake holders on the organisation. The issues of synergy and interconnectedness of tasks are critical in organisational effectiveness. According to the system theory of management, an organisation system has three components, Input, Throughput (conversion box, processing) and Output. The system operates in an environment of opportunities and threats or demands. Therefore, an effective leader would need to be sensitive to threats, demands and opportunities and to be capacitated with knowledge and skills to take advantage of the opportunities and deal with the threats accordingly. The system is cyclic in that the effect or impact of the output creates more inputs in terms of demands and support for further processing.

In a school scenario, from the System Theory perspective inputs would include human and financial resources, demands on the school as well as managerial goals. These inputs are
expected to be dealt with through managerial functions of planning, organising, staffing, leading and controlling in the throughput stage and effective leadership (conversion box). The products from the school are the outputs and these might include pupil pass rates, services rendered to the community and satisfaction with the performance of the head teacher and his team.

System theory suggests a hive of activity where there should be active involvement of all members in a collaborative manner for the purpose of meeting ever increasing challenges and attaining set educational goals. Unity and coherence are critical in the interactions. ODL educational management degree courses have covered the Systems Theory as relevant in leading and managing schools operating within increasing environmental demands. The researcher believed there was a link to the problem in that a degreed head teacher is expected to be responsive to the demands for the smooth running of the school. How a school operates within a system could have an effect on how the effectiveness of the head teacher would be measured. The image the organisation projects to insiders and outsiders determine how the organisation is viewed. The two modern ways of looking at organisational leadership effectiveness pave way to contemporary views.

2.16. CONTEMPORARY APPROACHES TO SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

As indicated in the methodological chapter of this study, the researcher opted to carry out the inquiry from the constructivist perspective. Ipinge (2004) regards some leadership and management approaches as constructivist in the sense that they place emphasis on interaction
of leaders, followers and other stake holders as a way of constructing social organisational reality. Constructivist biased approaches to leadership which are briefly discussed include transformational, distributive, participative and moral leadership theories.

2.16.1. Transformational leadership

According to Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach (2003) the main thrust of leadership should be on building commitment in members of the organisation. When this is achieved, there are more chances of achieving organisational goals. This would also lead to members investing in more effort leading to greater productivity. Leithwood (1994) and Leithwoodet. al. (2003) argue that where there is transformational leadership, the indicators included, building of school vision, establishment of school goals, provision of intellectual stimulation, offering of individual support, modelling of best practices and important organisational values, demonstration of high performance expectations, creation of a productive school culture and making room for participatory decision making. McNamara (2008) regards the model as one that is responsive to the progressive Human Relations School of management in the sense that the head teacher would recognise the role of individuals and their competencies for school effectiveness. Shield (2004) further supports this notion saying transformative head teachers offer all stake holders opportunities to participate while Monyatsi (2005) argues that the model contributed to improved management and leadership standards in schools.

The model was recognised by Caldwell and Spinks (1992) as the key to self-managing schools. The model is normative that is not so much concerned with structures but with processes that would enable the head teacher to influence school outcomes. Some critics
argue that the model can easily be used by school leaders as a tool for controlling teachers and might not be possible to use in a setup where government policy, rules and regulations might not support it. What might be advantageous about the approach is its capacity to accommodate all stakeholders. The model that exhibits an array of hectic activities and the head teacher would most likely confront some challenges related to procuring appropriate resources. Resources such as competent staff, infrastructure and funds are scarce in most rural Zimbabwean schools.

Ngara (2013) defines a transformative leader as one who is effective, visionary and has the ability to influence and motivate followers towards the vision. The leader would also be able to transform beliefs, attitudes and encourage innovation and creativity while putting into consideration the need to achieve organisational and individual members’ goals. The discussion of transformational leadership leads to distributive leadership.

2.16.2. Distributive leadership

Supporters of this leadership model such as Woods (2004) in Hatcher (2005) argue that every member of an organisation has a part to play. Recognition of member capabilities imply that the head teacher should be someone who is ready to trust, share power and responsibilities through delegation, empowerment, consultation, consensus, shared decision making and involvement of other stakeholders. It is the wish of the researcher to gather the experiences of the participants in the life-world of the schools which are headed by the ODL degreed head teachers. The practices are considered as distributive in the sense that the responsibilities would not be centred on one person in a school. McBeath (2005) hails the model for allowing
leaders to relinquish their role as sole decision maker and creating space for others to make decisions. Such a model would enable participants to be in a better position to assess the effectiveness of the head teachers based on important interactions that would be occurring in the schools and the communities that surrounds the schools. Other organisational behaviour theorists argue that effective leadership can best be understood through the concept of servant leadership.

2.16.3. Servant Leadership

The concept of servant leadership was propounded by Greenleaf (1977) as a way of defining an effective leader. The theory subscribes to the notion that an effective leader and manager ought to place the needs of others first. In addition to this quality, he or she should have vision, credibility, trust and be able to service, pioneer, model, appreciate and empower others. The assumptions of this leadership model have been equalled to those of transformational leadership by Russel (2000). Another leadership theory considered as democratic is the participative approach.

2.16.4. Participative leadership

As a democratic country Zimbabwe tends to be gravitating toward participative leadership and management of schools. Leithwood (1990) is of the view that the approach opens up leadership to any legitimate stakeholder. This means therefore that, school leadership and management ceases to be the domain of only the head teacher. The effectiveness of a head teacher would therefore not be assessed by his performance alone but by the performance of
all stakeholders. The model highlights the need to delegate duties or roles in such a way that successful outcomes are achieved in various sectors of the school. Sergiovanni (1984) supports the participative approach by the following arguments:

- It helps to unite the staff.
- The approach eases pressure on the head teacher
- Burdens of leadership are made less when leadership functions and roles are spread.

Miller and Miller (2001) support the model arguing that it contributes towards building commitment to values and visions of head teachers who use the model. In Zimbabwe, the researcher is of the opinion that the empowerment of School Development Committees (SDCs) is suggestive that the country is committed to participatory decision making. There is cross pollination of decisional ideas among all stakeholders. The challenges of the approach are likely to be in communication with stakeholders like SDCs, failure to implement some decisions which might not be regarded as priorities by other members as well as tensions over budgets. It remains to be confirmed how successful the approach has been in the district under study. Finally, against the background of the importance placed by the Zimbabwean government, on Unhu in the education systems, the researcher considers it worthwhile to discuss Moral Leadership.

2.16.5 Moral leadership

Mangena and Chitando (2011) and DeLiefde (2003) indicate that a new model of leadership is emerging in Africa, the Unhu/Ubuntu Model. The researcher is convinced that the tenets of this model link well with those of Moral leadership. In moral leadership, Leithwood (1999) asserts that the effectiveness of a head teacher is also judged by the values, beliefs and ethics
he or she impresses on the pupils, teachers and other stakeholders. The head teacher’s conception of right and wrong is therefore critical on how she or he is evaluated by school and community members. These observations are in tandem with those of De Liefde (2003) concerning Unhu/Ubuntu where a head teacher carries out his leadership and management roles on the basis of a natural belief in humanity and in a climate of trust.

The issue of effectiveness though, still remains highly subjective due to the varying standards of measuring effectiveness, hence the need to generate subjective data in this research as a way of coming out with a more holistic evaluation of the phenomenon. The multiplicity of the models also shows how much effort researchers have invested in studying organisational leadership and management. The variety is also indicative of the growing trend towards democratising school organisations globally, Bryson and Anderson (2000).

However, Lambert (1995) observes that there is no single best type of school leadership for effectiveness. Each situation or environment calls for a particular or a blend of leadership skills. The various interpretations of effectiveness in the presented models further highlights the gap that needs to be filled with regard to the issue of ODL degreed primary school head teacher effectiveness as leaders and managers of schools. It is important to briefly discuss the relevance of the theories covered in head teacher effectiveness.
2.17. The relevance of theories of educational leadership and management to the study

Stoner, Freeman and Gilbert (2003) emphasise the role of management theories arguing that theories are perspectives or view points with which people make sense of their world experiences. Stoner et al (2003) continue to justify saying theory is a systematic grouping of interdependent concepts or mental images of anything formed by generalisations from particular and principles that give a framework to tie together a significant area of knowledge.

The researcher is aware that traditional approaches to leadership and management of schools might still be in operation in Zimbabwe where the education system tends to be still bureaucratic in nature. The question which remains is, ‘How best can ODL utilise this vast knowledge for effectiveness in primary schools?’ An ODL educational management degreed head teacher has been familiarised with several models of educational leadership. Through the years of engagement in the degree programme one would assume there was ample time to experiment with or apply some of the models to the advantage of school effectiveness. Practical application of leadership and management theory is a gap in knowledge that the research study aims at filling. The discussion of leadership and management styles ushers in a related concept of school culture
2.18. SCHOOL CULTURE AND HEAD TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS

Drawing the concept of effective leadership and management of primary schools closer home in Zimbabwe, Module EA3DC 103(A 7B) on educational leadership and supervision, states that the effectiveness of a head teacher may also be measured by the culture, tone and climate they set in their respective schools.

Newstrom and Davis (1993) define culture as a combination of founders, past leadership, current leadership, events and history. They argue that culture leads to rituals, routines and specific ways of doing things. From the definition, one can observe the deep rootedness of culture. Morgan (1997) considers organisational culture as values and beliefs of members of the organisation. These include shared meaning and understanding. Hoyle (1988) and Chen (1993) elaborate by saying that culture is expressed through rituals and ceremonies used to support and celebrate beliefs and norms such as holding of school assemblies, prize giving days and other ceremonies. According to the researcher, these help in cementing the values and norms not only of the school but the community and all stakeholders. Kruger (2003) argues that a head teacher plays a central role in all school programmes which entails that he or she has a considerable effect on the tone and ethos of the school. Attention is drawn to what characterises a positive school culture.
2.18.1. Characteristics of a positive school culture

The following are some of the characteristics of school culture which indicate head teacher effectiveness.

- **Positive staff attitudes and high morale**
  Positive staff attitudes and high morale are critical ingredients of head teacher effectiveness. Arcaro (1995) argues that these qualities in teachers are created by a head teacher who consults, seeks opinion and advice, listens and encourages subordinates. A head teacher with positive attitude towards subordinates has a higher chance of upping the morale of the teaching staff and the community.

- **Teamwork and sharing of responsibilities**
  The issue of teamwork and building effective teams within an organisation has been echoed several times in modern research as critical in leadership effectiveness. The concept of sharing has gone beyond the confines of material resources to other areas such as sharing responsibilities through delegation, visions and decisions to name a few.

- **Healthy and safe physical environment**
  Behaviourist researchers such as Maslow (1970) argue that workers are motivated and work effectively when they are in healthy and safe surroundings. Rural schools in Zimbabwe have been shunned mostly due to poor teachers’ infrastructure such as roads, laboratories, library, houses and classrooms. These are basic needs which an effective head teacher and members of SDC should ensure that effort is channelled towards providing them. It is not only teachers who need to operate in healthy and safe school
environments but school children as well. Head teacher effectiveness could therefore be measured by how much effort goes towards building additional classrooms and ablution blocks for the pupils. School children who are well housed are likely to perform better than those who learn under the tree.

- **Opportunities for student involvement**
  The whole purpose of attending school is for pupils to learn successfully. An effective head teacher would need to ensure that there is adequate pupil involvement in the teaching and learning process. In support of this, Hopkins (1994) states that there should be focus on pupil involvement in the teaching and learning in the classrooms. In addition to this staff development programmes initiated by the head teacher and staff should also be targeted towards acquisition of teaching skills and subject knowledge. The study recognises that vision and goal sharing are no longer the domain of head teacher, teachers and SDC members alone but pupils as well.

- **High expectations of students and teachers**
  Stoll and Myres (1998) and Teddlie and Springfield (1993) posit that an ineffective school is characterised by low expectations. The researcher holds the view that if there is low expectation in a school in relation to what they can achieve as a school or in terms of pass rate, the head teacher is likely to be labelled as ineffective. Effective head teachers and their team are supposed to be putting maximum effort towards breaking barriers of difficult environmental conditions they might be operating in.

- **Clear and effective communication channels**
  Effective communication is central in the creation of positive school culture. Nyamuda (2002) argues that some leaders and managers stifle effective communication by using excessive authority. This might result in lack of openness in
other members. Effective head teachers might need to discourage negative conflict in their schools. In addition to the suggestions given, it might pay for a head teacher to take note of his or her communication weaknesses and practise good communication.

- **The encouragement and recognition of achievement**

Encouraging and recognising member achievement and performance is part and parcel of positive school culture formation. It must be borne in mind that a head teacher as a leader and manager of school accomplished organisational goals through other people who participate positively. Hertzberg (1964) developed The Two Factor Theory where he categorises motivational factors into two groups, hygiene factors and motivators. In this theory issues such as encouragement and recognition of achievement or success are regarded as intrinsic motivators which are more satisfying to a worker. The implication is that an effective head should be one who develops sense of self-respect and accomplishment in subordinates by noting and appreciating their efforts.

- **Opportunities for school activities and community interaction**

The World Bank-Small Grants Program: Social Development Department 1983 justifies the need for school heads to interact with communities that surround them as a resource mobilisation strategy. World Bank argues that there should be mutual respect and knowledge sharing between organisations, communities and other stakeholders. The argument was that, there were benefits to be drawn through interactions with communities such as skills, talents and capacities which could be utilised to the advantage of the school.

- **Significant involvement of parents**
Morrison (2002) upholds that an effective head teacher is one who includes all stakeholders in developmental issues in the school. In addition to staff involvement there is always need to keep parents informed and involved through their representative council. Such an approach might help the head teacher to earn the respect, trust, cooperation and collaboration of parents who are key stakeholders in the community.

- **The encouragement of risk taking**

As the economic challenges continue to impact negatively on school organisations in developing countries such as Zimbabwe, risk taking is a concept that is becoming more and more familiar in managerial leadership not only in corporate organisations but in school as well. Many schools, both rural and urban are encouraged to engage in programmes for self-sustenance. In most schools the head teacher directs and advises SDC members and teachers in contribution to the success of income generating ventures. Some projects succeed and others fail. Whatever happens, if there was shared decision making and responsibility, the blame would not be placed on an individual but the whole group.

- **The acknowledgement of mistakes as part of learning**

Modern research is advocating for the transformation of organisations into learning organisations. The school as an organisation is no exception. Part of being a learning organisation is making allowance for mistakes (Senge, 1991). Zero tolerance of mistakes in a school might be result of a head teacher who insists he or she is right all the time and is not willing to learn from mistakes. Mistakes should be seen as
indicative of performance gaps in the teacher and a starting point for further staff development.

The above characteristics were considered pertinent to the study and they formed part of the data generation items. Head teachers find themselves leading and managing schools with different cultures. How then do they deal with these? Does an effective head teacher embrace the culture or analyses it with the view to maintain some practices while dropping and replacing others for the good of the school? To what extent are they receptive to the need for change and to employ the change strategies learnt in their degree programmes as well as to manage the changes effectively? These questions were pertinent in the current research because they make significant contribution towards the issue of the effectiveness of ODL educational management degreed heads of primary schools in their leadership roles. School culture works hand in hand with school climate in determining head teacher effectiveness.

2.19. SCHOOL CLIMATE AND HEAD TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS

Hoy and Muskel (1982) define organisational climate as a set of internal characteristics that separate one school from another and influences the behaviour of people in the organisation. As years progressed, Hoy and Muskel (2001) elaborate on the earlier definition by viewing school climate as a blend of beliefs, values and attitudes pupils and staff members, head teachers and parents, level of independence, styles of leadership and job satisfaction.

Climate is viewed by Iancevick, Kanopaske and Matteson (2007) as the feel of the organisation, individual or shared perceptions and attitudes of the organisations members. A
positive school climate is characterised by recognition of students as the prime focus as well as competent caring staff who share common goals with students, parents and the community that surrounds the school. Hofstede (1997) identifies types of climates as open, autonomous, controlled, familiar, paternal and closed climates. These types of climate fall between democratic and authoritarian. An effective head teacher should be one who focuses on creating a climate that allows development in the school. The observation is in tandem with Hoy and Sabo (1998) assertion that positive school climate is related to the effectiveness of the whole school.

Chakanyuka, Nyuke and Gutuza (2010) consider the issue of school climate as a prerequisite to leadership effectiveness by arguing that supervisors would have a difficult time exercising leadership without a supportive climate in work places. A supportive school climate is also linked to the quality of instruction pupils receive (Robinson, 2011).

Moorhead and Griffin (1995) hold the view that a positive school climate can be created through job satisfaction, respect of one another and through effective team work. The view is further supported by Harris and Lowery (2002) who assert that school climate is actually created and that the person in the middle of that creation is the head teacher. Hurley (2001) went further to show the importance of a positive school climate in measuring head teacher effectiveness by advancing that the climate that exists in a school could be used as a yard stick to measure head teacher effectiveness.
From the above observations, an effective leader and manager of a primary school should be one in a position to put in place strategies to change or improve the climate of the school they lead. It was of interest to the researcher to assess how ODL degree programme has helped the graduates in developing positive school climates. A positive school climate is a measure of head teacher effectiveness. The issue of school climate is strongly related to successful teacher and pupil supervision.

2.20. SUPERVISION AND HEAD TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS

2.20.1. The head teacher as an effective supervisor

In this study which sought to evaluate the effectiveness of ODL educational management degreed head teachers as leaders and managers of primary schools in Chipinge district, the researcher considered it pertinent to review related literature on supervision of classroom and school activities. The researcher considers the head teacher’s supervisory role to be a critical one where every head teacher is expected to demonstrate effectiveness. As an experienced former primary school teacher, the researcher can also confirm that head teacher effectiveness was judged against the effectiveness supervision skills.

Glickman, Gordon and Ross-Gordon (2013) defines supervision as a process of facilitating growth in a teacher through providing teacher with feedback and helping the supervisee to make use of the feedback for effective teaching and learning in the classroom.
Research has provided different rationales for supervising subordinate over the years. Lowery (2002) takes it as a way of developing curricular and resources for classroom teaching and learning. Tyler (2013) considers it as a way of modifying teachers’ behaviours for the success of the school. Glickman, Gordon and Ross-Gordon (2013) argue that it is strategy for the development of human relations and human resources. The three justifications for supervision in schools demonstrate the importance placed on the role even in these later years. They are in tandem with the purpose of having schools where education stakeholders expect successful teaching and learning processes which would result in the pupils passing. In carrying out the supervisory role in the school, a head teacher has several supervision models at his or her disposal. The following are some of the models they can use:

2.20.2. Scientific supervision

This model prescribes that a supervisor operates like an inspector in olden days. There is too much focus on paper work, objective setting and following of procedures in the teaching and learning process. This kind of supervision is rigid and has its roots in scientific management. There is emphasis on results at the expense of the needs of the supervisee. This supervisory technique is facing extinction in modern organisations such as schools (Bean, Davis and Davey, 2014).

2.20.3. Clinical Supervision

This approach to supervision would require that the head teacher establishes a supervisor-supervisee professional relationship based on the trust that the head teacher wants to help and
the supervisee is prepared to be nurtured for professional growth. In this supervision model, the head teacher and teacher work as partners in planning, lesson delivery, observing and evaluating in that cyclic pattern. Robinson (2011) asserts that this kind of supervision appears to be more friendly or positive to both parties and is likely to bring about more lasting change in behaviour in both parties.

2.20.4. Collegial Supervision

This model is also referred to as collaborative, peer-supervision or co-operative supervision. Teachers are allowed to learn from each other for professional growth (Smith, 1987). The advantage is group members help each other to achieve goals as a team (Johnson and Johnson, 1987). The researcher recognises this model as one that is responsive to the modern practice of teamwork in organisations.

The provision of literature concerning models of supervision serves to show that an ODL degreed head teachers has had the advantage of learning about these and other supervision models. The discussion that follows shows that effective supervision calls for effective teamwork.

2.21. TEAMWORK AND EFFECTIVE SCHOOL HEADSHIP

Team-building capacity is another determinant of head teacher effectiveness that has been popularised in recent years. Delarue (2003) regards a team as a group of employees who have
at least some collective tasks and where the team members are authorised to regulate mutually the execution of collective tasks. Dackert (2004) considers that a team should have the right team climate to be innovative and beneficial in its work. The first observation shows that an effective head teacher is expected to select groups that would achieve the vision and goals of the school in specific areas. The second observation indicates that it is the duty of the head teacher to create a positive climate within the school to make sure that the team operates in an environment that guarantees success of achievement of goals.

These views are consistent with Epstein et. al. (2009) who say that for groups to be productive, they should cooperate and coordinate their work towards accomplishment of specific tasks and that the social welfare and emotional needs of the group must be met. Oeij and Weizer (2002) sum everything when they say that teamwork does not exist in isolation but should be studied as a structural consequence meaning that the success of team work is influenced by issues such as delegation of duties, coordination and supervision of team members to meet organisational goals. It is therefore important for a head teacher to acquire team building skills to ensure that there are effective teams in the school for school and head teacher effectiveness.

A leading authority in the concept of teamwork in organisations, Senge (2006) advances that people who work as a team became a formidable force compared to individual effort. Perhaps it is now time for head teachers to realise that teamwork is no longer restricted to pupils and their activities but to the head and other stake holders in their day to day interactions. Business Training Media (2007) and Smith (2002) are of the view that the strengths of
teamwork lies in cooperation, accountability, communication and exchange of ideas. Synergy is also enhanced through teamwork.

Jones (2005) and Dimmock and Walker (2002) however, caution on irresponsible use of teamwork which could culminate in head teacher ineffectiveness as leader and manager of a school. They argue that teamwork should be avoided where participants lack the necessary competence, critical information and need close supervision. It should also be minimised when there are obvious cultural and social limitations such as strong resistance to changes or where democratic leadership approaches are viewed as risky by those who are expected to participate. Hence, the success of teamwork is situational. The discussion on the importance of building an effective team for head teacher and school effectiveness could be linked to the ability of ODL degreed head teacher to recognise the importance of all stakeholders in the school (including SDC members) as team members (Smith, 2002).

2.22. HEAD TEACHER AND SDC MEMBERS’ RELATIONSHIP

Zimbabwe is a country that has put in place a legal instrument, Statutory Instrument 125 (1992) further strengthened by The Education Amendment Act of 2006 Chapter 25, Section 36 which clearly states that parents and guardians of school children would form SDCs. The legal instruments therefore allow parents in a community to have a say in how their local schools are run and managed. They also show that Zimbabwean educational policy makers are keen on ensuring effectiveness in the running of schools.
The stance of the Zimbabwean government is supported by research congruent with that of Rosenblatt and Peled (2002) who hold the view that parental involvement in their children’s education is not a new issue and that researchers of parent involvement concur that parents contribute significantly to pupils’ performance. Epstan (2002) echoes the same sentiment saying that developing a partnership with parents improves school climate, connects families in the school and the community.

While it could be argued that the Zimbabwean government might have put the legal instrument of SDCs participation as a cost recovery measure of decentralising educational responsibility, it is also equally true that benefits were also realised by schools through invigorated parent participation. The study notes that the need for active parent participation was a global concern. Hornby (2000) asserts that despite evidence that parent participation in schools contributed to achievement of school goals, minimal parent involvement remained an issue throughout the world. Small (2003) says parents were willing to cooperate with teachers as long as the teachers were willing to involve them. It is against the above research based findings that ODL educational management degreed head teacher effectiveness could also be evaluated against their capability to engage parents through SDC members in school developmental activities. Focus now turns to the role of motivation in determining head teacher effectiveness.

2.23. MOTIVATION THEORY AND HEAD TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS

Motivation is defined by Mullins (2010) as concerned with why people behave in certain ways. The Free Merriam dictionary sees it as the act or process of giving someone reason for doing something worthwhile. In a more elaborate definition the term is defined as an internal
and external factor that stimulates desire and energy in people to be continually interested and committed to a job, role or subject or to make an effort to attain a goal (www.businessdictionary.com/definition...). As an indicator of effectiveness, the head teacher can also be considered effective or ineffective basing on his or her ability to motivate teachers and pupils in the instructional processes and motivating parents through community participation.

Benton (1995) and Fulton and Maddock (1998) emphasise that leaders have to recognise the individual needs or workers through non monetary rewards such as recognition of good work and praising their work and successes as a team. Steffy (1989) considers it easy for a head teacher to work with a motivated community than an aloof or indifferent one. There are several motivation theories which can be executed by primary school head teachers for their effectiveness as leaders and managers. For the purpose of this study, focus is on two of theories, Maslows Needs Theory and Hertzberg Two Factor theories.

2.23.1. Maslows’ Needs Theory

This was a motivation theory developed by Abraham Maslow (1948-1954) in Griffin and Moorhead (2009) who asserts that there are prerequisites for job satisfaction in work places to occur. The prerequisites are certain needs of the subordinates which should be catered for and satisfied by superiors. The needs theory is usually presented in pyramid fashion. At the base are physiological needs, safety needs, love and belonging, esteem needs and self actualisation in that order. Griffin and Moorhead (2009) argue that the level in the Needs theory do not have rigid boundaries and are closely related. At the bottom are physiological needs.
2.23.1.1. Physiological needs

The needs theory assumes that basic needs should be satisfied before subordinates can perform effectively. These needs include air, water, food clothing and shelter. A head teacher would definitely not be able to provide air but clean surroundings would provide a healthy working climate for teachers and pupils. In addition to this, head teachers through SDCs are expected together to show concern about availability of water and shelter in their schools. These are requirements that contribute towards hygiene, not only for teachers but for pupils and the community. Shelter would not only mean teachers’ houses but adequate classrooms for the pupils so that there is comfortable teaching and learning process in the school. Absence of concern about provision of these basic needs could be viewed as ineffectiveness on the part of the head teacher. The second level of subordinate needs is safety needs.

2.23.1.2. Safety needs

The issue of safety provision is pertinent in any organisation (Mullins, 2010). The way head teachers interact with subordinates and pupils may cause people in the school to either feel safe or not. Job security may be assured through proper guidance and staff developing of subordinates. Whenever there are grievances, they could be attended to in a professional manner than for the head teacher to resort to threats. There should be a professional way of dealing with personal, financial and issues related to the health and well being of both teachers and pupils (Slain, 1988). The third level of needs is concerned with the need to be loved and to belong.
2.23.1.3. Love and belonging

Dion and Yamarinof (2004) and Clegg, Kemberger and Pitsis (2005) acknowledge the value of satisfying these needs as they assert that unity or oneness is important contributory factors. That can be achieved if every member feels that they are part of the whole picture and their efforts are appreciated. In a school every head, teacher, pupil and community member needs to feel he or she belongs. Lack of the sense of belonging could lead to development of a sense of anxiety and isolation which could drive the victim not to participate fully. These needs are followed by esteem needs in organisational members.

2.23.1.4. Esteem needs

These needs are concerned with everyone requiring to command respect and to have self-respect (Beach, 1980) and Bandura (1994). In a school setting all members would want to have their efforts and achievements recognised. The reason why teachers have joined ODL institutions is the crave to improve academically and professionally. This means that head teachers should facilitate these needs through internal staff development programmes for those who cannot afford to join the universities. Confidence and independent performance are likely to be achieved where the esteem needs of followers are attended to. At the pinnacle of the needs theory is the need to self actualise or to reach full potential.

2.23.1.5. Self actualisation

According to Griffin and Moorhead (2009) this level in Maslow’s Needs Theory shows that there is a desire in man to reach full potential. The implication to head teachers as leaders and managers is to coach, train and give their subordinates space to realise their talents and
potentials. This can be done by proper delegation of duties and encouragement of staff members to also attain relevant university degrees just as the ODL degreed head teachers have done. The researcher is aware that reaching the point of self-actualisation might be a big challenge but believes that effort to avail the chances in schools could increase productivity and head teacher effectiveness. The other motivation theory of interest to the study is Herzberg’s Two Factor Theory.

2.23.2. HERZBERG TWO FACTOR THEORY

According to Thomson (2002) and Robbins and Coulter (2005) the theory was developed by a psychologist Fredrick Herzberg (1957) who carried out a research study in a quest to establish factors that influenced job satisfaction in workers. From the study, the findings were that there were two groups of factors that affected job satisfaction, the hygiene factors (maintenance factors) and motivation factors.

According to Hertzberg examples of maintenance factors included, salary work conditions, interpersonal relationships with supervisors, peers and subordinates while motivation factors were things such as achievement, recognition, advancement, the work itself, possibility for growth and responsibility, (Chapman, 2006).

In Herzberg’s study, the argument was that maintenance factors were important in as far as maintaining a level of job satisfaction but it was actually the motivators which had the effect of instilling much more permanent motivation in a worker. The implication to head teachers
as leaders and managers of primary schools is whilst it is important to provide for social and physical comforts in school, it was more important to ensure that members are availed chance for self development professionally so that they reach a level of achievement where they are recognised and where they are given extra responsibility leading to work enjoyment.


- Opportunities to improve themselves academically and professionally
- Availability of learning and teaching resources

The study of the two selected theories of motivation has served the purpose of showing that there are several needs to be catered for in members of school organisations. Some of the needs relate not only to teachers but to the pupils as well. Failure to motivate pupils, teachers, parents and communities according to their needs would lead to head teacher ineffectiveness. In addition to the role of motivating subordinates, contemporary organisation behaviour theorists relate the capacity of a leader to create a learning organisation to effectiveness.
2.24. THE SCHOOL AS A LEARNING INSTITUTION

Effective managerial leadership is increasingly being associated with the capacity of the leaders in turning organisations into learning organisations. English (2008) and Northouse (2010) assert that head teachers are expected to improve conditions of learning that allow schools to operate as professional learning communities. In a learning school, the head teachers try their best to bring out leadership potential of every teacher, work in collaboration with them to improve decision making and development (Cole, 2009).

Robbins et al (2010) argue that a learning organisation also tries to infuse their organisation with new ideas, information and devout significant resources to train and develop employees. In addition to these characteristic Robbins et al add that behaviour must change as a result of learning. The views are consistent with the need to capacitate leaders and employees so that they effectively meet environmental challenges that impact on the organisation.

Kruse and Louise (2009) argue that today’s effective leaders are share leaders which means they delegate duties thus allowing teachers to have first-hand experience in leading and managing. Teachers in some schools are being empowered to lead projects and to be initiative. Senge (2006) elaborates on allowing teachers to learn saying that leaders are now leading from the centre rather that from the top thus creating an environment where teachers can continually learn and grow.
The point of the head teacher being at the centre in decision making is supported by Bulach, Lunenburg and Potter (2008) and Wilcox and Angelis (2010) who hold the view that in more successful schools leaders clearly define themselves as at the centre of school staff rather than at the top. It was the aim of this researcher to establish the relationships of head teacher and their subordinates in Chipinge district and see if the concept of a learning organisation is taking shape in the district schools. A school as a learning organisation is also evaluated basing on how conflict is handled by the head teacher.

2.25. MANAGERIAL LEADERSHIP AND ORGANISATIONAL CONFLICT

The review of related literature would be incomplete without addressing the issue of organisational conflict. It is pertinent to understand how conflict comes to be, types of conflicts and strategies for dealing with conflict.

2.25.1. What brings about conflict in an organisation?

Sloboda (2010) asserts that conflict happens when two or more contradictory perspectives have not been agreed on but it is not necessarily a bad thing. As it has already been said in this chapter, the modern school organisation is characterised by diversity in relation to different people who are involved in the affairs of the school. The diversity indicates increase in chances of disagreements on various issues. It is therefore important for an effective head teacher to be able to understand behaviour that can lead to conflict, differentiate between healthy and unhealthy conflict and be well versed with useful and useless strategies when dealing with conflict in the school.
Critner (2009) argues that social relationship is conflicting by nature and people have similarities and differences as well as friendliness and hostility. Alabi (2010) also holds the view that values, perspectives, opinions and interests are contradictory in nature. From the observations about what causes conflict, it is acknowledged that conflict is a normal, unavoidable occurrence in any organisation.

Alabi (2010) identifies some causes of conflict and below are a few selected from the list:

- Poor communication
- Disagreements about distribution of workloads
- Inadequate resources
- Overstepping authority
- Use of non participatory decision making
- Rumours

Basing on the identified causes of organisational conflict, The researcher assumes that ability to identify them and deal with them accordingly determines the effectiveness of a head teacher in a school. Madziyire(2013), Ndebele (2006) in Tshabalala (2013) assert that lack of supervisory skills may result in conflict between teachers and supervisors when teachers are unfairly treated. This observation emphasises the need to capacitate head teachers with modern supervisory practices through staff development programmes such as ODL educational management degrees.
2.25.2. Is organisational conflict good or bad

How a head teacher views conflict determines how he or she would handle conflicting issues to the satisfaction of all members within the school. Head teachers as leaders and managers of schools can view conflict from three perspectives. If conflict is perceived from the traditional perspective it would be regarded as evil through and through, something that should not happen at all cost. If looked at from a human relations perspective, it would mean that head teachers would consider conflict as something that should just be accepted and unavoidable due to the individual differences of members of staff. From the interactionist view, conflict would be taken as a situation that should be encouraged basing on the justification that harmonious, peaceful, tranquil and cooperative groups are prone to becoming static, apathetic and non responsive to needs for change and innovation (Robbins et. al, 2010).

The human relations and the interactionist perspectives are nearer to modern views concerning organisational conflict. My understanding is that, a school that remains in a prolonged equilibrium state does not change for the better. Each school as an organisation would benefit from some form of disturbance caused by conflict so that members are prompted to find solutions to the problem confronting them as a school. Modern research has shown that some conflicts are positive while others are destructive.

McNamara (2012) supports organisational conflict arguing that it can create opportunities for competition, productivity, creative and innovation. The researcher views this as a situation
where a gap in performance is identified and people argue about how to fill the discrepancy and come out with concrete solutions for the betterment of the organisation.

McNamara (2012) also points out other benefits of positive conflict such as these:

- Helps to raise, clarify, address and even resolve problems.
- Energising, motivating, promoting participation and facilitating communication and discussions.
- Helps to release emotion, anxiety and stress.

The above benefits of conflicts need to be encouraged as much as possible because they contribute to the development of the organisation. Conflict becomes negative according to McNamara (2012) when it does the following in an organisation:

- It hampers productivity
- Undermines morale or self-concept of members.
- Causes more continued conflicts
- Causes in appropriate behaviours
- If it brings in factionalism or polarisation.

The researcher acknowledges that in a school characterised by negative conflict among members there are chances that some of them might become de-motivated and stop performing to their potential. When conflict reaches levels of factionalism, name calling or
labelling others, it might lead to other members developing low self concept. Continued conflicts would be the order of the day in such a school scenario. This kind of conflict should be avoided as much as possible in a school. An ODL degreed head teacher is assumed to have learnt something on conflict resolution strategies.

In a research study, Barendrecht (2009) observes that 65% of performance problems result from strained relationships among employees and not from deficits in individual employee’s skills or motivation. It was observed that conflicts can be resource-sapping, can affect quality of work life and also has influence on job satisfaction. In some schools teachers and head teachers have been known to transfer because of unresolved conflict while some members have succumbed to stress related illnesses caused by conflicts. In some cases members have absented themselves as a way of avoiding stressful situations at work places. The discussion serves to show the importance of ability to resolve conflict as another indicator of head teacher effectiveness.

2.25.3. How can conflict be managed?

There are various techniques which can be employed by a leader or manager to manage conflict in their organisations. These are some of the suggested techniques advanced by Barendrecht (2009) and McNamara (2012):
2.25.3.1. Frequent communication

Frequent communication is becoming more and more encouraged as a way of exchanging views for mutual agreement on issues of common interest. Lack of communication is associated with intolerance of different opinions which is not healthy for an organisation. It also stifles development and growth because there would be no common interest in achieving organisational goals (Algert and Watson, 2002).

2.25.3.2. Using force or formal authority

Use of force has always been associated with military organisations. The general assumption in civilian groups is, a leader who appeals to force as a power base is likely to lead subordinates who are not committed to organisational goals, who are not cooperative and do not share a common vision with the leader (Smith, 2000).

2.25.3.3. Accommodation of the opposing views

Accommodation of opposing views suggests integration of various suggestions so as to come up with a working solution to problems. From the researcher’s perspective the term suggests that the leaders should, in some cases, take into account the views of subordinates or other stake holders and avoid, ‘I know it all,’ situation. Leaders must always leave room for learning from others (Johnson and Johnson, 2006).
2.25.3.4. Avoiding or withdrawing from the conflict

While avoiding or withdrawing from conflict might work in some situations, the strategy might fail to work (Algert and Watson, 2002). Team members are not expected to surrender but to fight on. From the researcher’s point of view withdrawal from a conflicting situation is likely to leave development in an organisation in limbo. There is no progress in an organisation with lots of unresolved problems or issues.

2.25.3.5. Reaching a compromise

Not every decision should be a win-lose situation. Sometimes during conflicts, agreements might have to be reached where both conflicting parties are satisfied that their perspective has been taken into consideration. This has the effect of the leader getting support from the two warring parties in the task ahead of them as an organisation (Johnson and Johnson, 2006 and Smith, 2000).

2.25.3.6. Collaboration

Collaboration means working in partnership. When a leader uses this strategy to resolve conflict, he or she does not act in favour of one particular group. The leader demonstrates to groups that are in conflict that despite their differences, they would be partners who should work in unity towards goal achievement. The strategy could make the groups set aside their differences and find ways of focusing on goal attainment as a successful team (Algert and Watson, 2002).
2.30.3.7. Confrontation

Confrontation is a strategy that is rarely approved as a technique of resolving conflict (Alabi, 2010). That is so because it usually results in use of force as opposing parties try their best to outdo each other. The decision that finally emerges from confrontation would not be a democratic one and would not enhance the spirit of team work.

From the above list of techniques one can see that it is a mixed bag of techniques. Some are more desirable than others. As much as possible authoritarian techniques should be avoided as much as possible because there are high chances of worsening the conflicting situation. It is up to an effective head teacher to pick techniques which are more democratic to increase chances of success. Alabi (2010) sums it up by concluding that there is no single embracing technique in conflict resolution. There is need to understand fully what the conflict is about, who are conflicting and then choose the best strategy for the situation. Apart from conflict there are other factors that might hamper head teacher effectiveness.

2.26. OTHER FACTORS MILITATING AGAINST THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ODL DEGREE PRIMARY SCHOOL HEAD TEACHERS.

The researcher is of the view that no matter how much perfected are the educational management degree programmes on offer through ODL there are bound to be some challenges which might not be attributed to the quality of degrees attained. The acquisition of the degrees might not be an end but a beginning of the travel towards effectiveness as argued by Jago (1982) who asserts that good leaders develop through a never ending process of self
study, education, training and experiences. This assertion could be true against the background of a continually changing environment ushering new demands on the school organisation.

One challenge might be posed by status relationships between degreed head teacher and non-degreed teachers. Such relationships can block communication between the two parties due to inferiority complex or low esteem on the part of the teachers as observed by Prasad (2001). The observation is further supported by Bulin (2001) who argues that professional upgrading changes values and attitudes.

There might also be problems with under qualified senior teachers who would not be willing to be guided and supervised by a junior ODL degreed head teacher. This negative is considered as normal in a school organisation according to Sergiovanni and Starratt (1993).

Most schools are in rural areas whilst district offices are in towns. Head teachers might have to travel often on administrative visits to the district office. Effective supervision and monitoring of teachers might become a challenge. Mulkeen (2005) acknowledges this challenge by asserting that head teachers in remote areas may experience teacher supervision and monitoring problems.

ODL degreed head teachers might face problems mobilising resources for effectiveness due to the fact that most rural communities are disadvantaged financially. Bray (1996) is in support by arguing that community financing can be affected by micro finances. Moorad
(1989), Mwiria (1990 and World Bank (1994c) share the same view when they argue that researches in Kenya, Botswana, Cameron and Nepal have shown that some district schools remain disadvantaged due to low incomes and found it hard to support themselves financially.

Sometimes head teachers might appear not to be effective due to failure in attracting qualified teachers in their respective schools. A report by the Zimbabwe Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture (2004) is in support when the education officials admitted that qualified teachers tended to shun areas with poor infrastructure particularly in rural areas.

In other cases the reason for ineffectiveness might be within the head teacher. In most cases the reason might be negative personality resulting in failure to facilitate trust and cooperation. This is in tandem with Davis (1997) who asserts that school principals who are arrogant, uncaring and inattentive to the needs of others are ineffective.

Unfavourable policies within the education system might also contribute towards head teacher ineffectiveness. In Zimbabwe, policies on pupil discipline and school fees payment procedures have militated against the effectiveness of head teachers and schools. The Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education Mrs Constance Chigwanda is on record in The Herald of 30th November 2013. She was cautioning educators against using corporal punishment and excluding pupils from lessons because of non payment of fees.
Inability to use modern educational technologies and limited financial management skills might also render a head teacher ineffective. This challenge is supported by the National Centre for Education Statistics (2005) which argues that head teachers needed educational technologies for data collection, information management, decision making and presentations within the curriculum.

The ever expanding roles of head teachers as leaders and managers of schools also continue to pose challenges to their effectiveness. Winkler and Gershberg (2003) and a joint report by Zimbabwe’s Ministries of Education, Sports and Culture and Higher and Tertiary Education (2004) acknowledge this as a challenge to head teacher effectiveness.

Lastly, a hostile economic environment in the country might prevent ODL degreed head teachers from performing fully. This could be the case because most schools would be operating amidst shortages nationwide not just in a particular district. The Zimbabwean government through the line ministry’s report (2004) admits to these challenges in schools.

The discussion above serves to demonstrate that there are other factors that contribute to head teacher effectiveness apart from attainment of an educational management degree. The discussion leads to the need for head teachers to adapt to change in order to remain relevant service providers.
2.27. MANAGERIAL LEADERSHIP AND CHANGE

Nyamuda (2002) holds the view that as leaders influence members of their organisations to move towards a vision, goal or the desired change, there is need to change. In this study the researcher thinks that it is possible that some ODL degreed head teachers in Chipinge district schools might be considered as either effective or ineffective basing on their capability to bring about the expected changes in schools and communities.

The image they project in this area might also have an impact on the credibility of the ODL degrees they are attaining from the perspective of those they work with. If there are no noticeable positive changes in the schools they lead and manage, the head teachers are likely to be considered as ineffective because people expect tangible benefits form a degreed person normally. It is also during times of rapid, unexpected environmental changes that leaders can also be tested on effectiveness in adapting to the changes (Nyamuda, 2002).

Achua and Lussier (2013) also emphasise the need for a leader to embrace and act on bringing about required change. They argue that while change might have presented new opportunities it has also unleashed threats to leadership. An effective leader and manager of a school, according to the researcher would be one who is able to develop strategies to deal with changes inside and outside the school.
2.27.1. Reasons why change might not occur when it is needed

Kotter (1988) highlights some reasons why change might not occur when required. The researcher selected the following reasons for the purpose of this study:

- Lack of vision to guide the process
- Lack of communication
- Lack of sensitivity to need for change
- Lack of removal of obstacles to change (political dynamics within the organisation)
- Lack of reinforcing the change

2.27.1.1. Lack of vision to guide the process

The creation of sustainable vision is an important role of an effective leader. In defining the term ‘vision’, Sergiovanni (1994) conceptualised it as incorporating school beliefs about the preferred aims, methods and climate thereby creating a ‘community of mind’ that establishes behaviour norms. Conley (1996) defines the term by arguing that vision exists when people in an organisation share an explicit agreement, beliefs, purposes and goals that should guide behaviour, ‘internal compass.’

The above two definitions show that in order for change to take place, members should have a clear idea of where they are going and in agreement of the need to reach the goal successfully. Once there is disagreement or lack of clarity concerning direction the school is going among stakeholders, it means lack of vision.
2.27.1.2. Lack of communication

Communication is critical in bringing about change (Schein, 2009). It is through communication that organisational members are in a position to engage in discussions as a team discussing threats against school performance as well as opportunities for progress that would be available. All barriers to communication should be removed so that there is cross-pollination of ideas with regard to necessary changes.

2.27.1.3. Lack of sensitivity to need for change

The term sensitivity refers to quick response to something. In the case of an organisation it would refer to the capacity of the leader to respond quickly to environmental demands for change. New educational policies have been introduced in Zimbabwean schools such as decentralisation of the education system showing that it is no longer business as usual. As an example, when the government decentralised authority down to community level it meant that head teachers were or are supposed to realise the importance of forging healthy relationships with parents.

The above views are supported by Reddy (2006) in an article, ‘Teachers, Educational Change and Professional Development: ‘Some thoughts from a South African Experience,’ where he argues that in order to change instructional practices in meaningful ways, teachers not only need to learn new instructional practices and content but also must alter their current practices through a process of professional development that includes continued support.
2.27.1.4. Lack of removal of obstacles to change

A school, just like any other organisations, has formal and informal groups. These groups have the potential of either building the school or impeding cooperation and goal consensus. It is therefore imperative that head teachers identify and find strategies of weeding out groupings which are a threat to innovative ideas for school development. In a situation where groups try to outdo one another it is the school that suffers because some groups might shoot down constructive suggestions from groups they consider as opponents.

2.27.1.5. Lack of reinforcing the change

In some cases even if change is introduced, the leaders fail to reinforce the change. Any change that is introduced meets some resistance from certain quarters of the organisation. This means that for successful implementation of change, there is need to come up with strategies of reinforcing the change. If it is a new programme or project that has been introduced there is need for formative, process and summative evaluation so as to ensure that right from the onset, all members are focused on the goal and how to reach it. Any loopholes or deviations along the way would then be addressed. The focus now is on reasons why people resist change.
2.28. WHY WOULD PEOPLE RESIST CHANGE

Various reasons have been raised to explain why people sometimes resist change. Some of the reasons which might apply in a school situation according to Whitaker (2011) include the following:

- Lack of warning
- Climate of mistrust
- Loss of status
- Self doubt
- Disruption of cultural practices

2.28.1. Lack of warning

If a head teacher realises need for change he or she should register the concern with other stakeholders for further deliberations. The decision that would emerge would then be a common decision shared by all members. Such a change would therefore not likely to be resisted by the implementers in the school.

2.28.2. Climate of mistrust

There is need for openness or transparency concerning reasons for suggesting a particular change. The rationales for the suggested change should as much as possible, resemble group
effort so as to wipe off mistrust. Nothing beats a sense of ownership in successful implementation of change.

2.28.3. Loss of status

Head teacher might need to devise ways of implementing their changes while at the same time using strategies to pacify the losers so that at the end of the day it is a win-win situation. That way, the new head teacher might have a chance of introducing changes with minimum resistance.

2.28.4. Self-doubt

Some changes have failed to take off due to self-doubt on the part of the initiator and the implementer. Against the background of a country where people tend to discredit ODL degrees and the capacity of the graduates to be effective, it might be possible that some ODL degreed head teachers lack the confidence to introduce noble changes in schools. In other cases the problem could be that of a well educated ODL degreed head teacher trying his or her best to influence less educated teachers to embrace an important change. Thesesituations may also make the teachers resist change because both parties might be having within themselves a sense of inadequacy. Once this is identified there might be need to educate, motivate and train for preparedness for the change.
2.28.5. Disruption of cultural practices

Schools operate within communities and every community is bound by certain cultural practices. The cultural practices in the school and communities are the members’ comfort zones. As a result, any suggested change which goes against the culture of the school and community has a high chance of being resisted.

Lastly, once change is in place, it has to be managed. According to Schein (2009) change can be managed by involving the participants to report regularly on the progress. This strategy strengthens sense of ownership among team members as well as the desire to succeed in the new change. The discussions leads to how change can be brought into schools by head teachers.

2.29. HOW TO BRING ABOUT CHANGE IN AN ORGANISATION

2.29.1 Kurt Lewin’s Model

Against the background of challenges faced in realising the need for change and implementing change, a social psychologist Kurt Lewin (1957) developed a model for organisational change process. The model has three distinct but not rigid steps which are Unfreezing, Changing and Refreezing. The stages are explained by Robbins, Judges and Campbell (2010) as follows.
2.29.1.1. Unfreezing Stage

In this stage, the leader is expected to get rid of old ways of doing things, thus removing the undesirable elements of the organisational culture. It is suggested that this can be done through benchmarking (Senge, 2006). In a school organisation, benchmarking could refer to a situation where the performance of the school is compared to other high performing schools so as to establish how they are achieving successes in areas of interest.

2.29.1.2. Changing Stage

After the process of benchmarking, the leader now provides new information, new expected behaviours or ways of operation and new equipment or technology if necessary (Nyamuda, 2002). The head teacher might need the support of SDC members to provide for the success of the change. Provision of information means that there is need to educate on the need for the change or need to sell the new idea for implementation.

2.29.1.3. Re-Freezing

In the third and final stage, the leader supports and reinforces the change by helping the employees to integrate the changed behaviour or attitude into their normal way of doing things (Senge, 2006).

The three stages indicate the need for effectiveness in the leadership and management functions of the leader. The stages also imply the need for critical skills such as
communication, cooperation, coordination, teamwork and others, which are all linked to managerial leadership effectiveness.

The discussion relating to change concepts leaves the researcher with the view that primary school head teachers need to be well versed with the change process and to be able to action what they have learnt through ODL. Knowledge of the change process would also enable their schools to meet modern or global trends concerning the running of modern school organisations. The next section discusses new global expectations of an effective school leader.

2.30. NEW GLOBAL EXPECTATIONS OF AN EFFECTIVE HEAD TEACHER

2.30.1. Competency in Information Communication Technology (ICT)

In its presentation of 21st Century Approach to Education Reform, UNESCO is clear on the need to capacitate educational personnel with Information Communication Technology (ICT) stating that the first goal was to prepare learners, citizens and workforce who are taking up new technologies so as to support social development and improve economic productivity.

The UNESCO document states that teachers should be well versed with basic internet software and hardware operations, and different applications. UNESCO argues that professional development must focus on equipping personnel with technological skills and knowledge of web resources necessary to improve subject matter. As a way of creating
knowledge, UNESCO asserts that school leaders should play a leadership role in training colleagues and in creating and implementing a vision of their school as a community based on innovation and continuous learning enriched by ICT.

The above expectations of the teacher in the 21st Century show the importance of having a head teacher who is computer literate in these modern times. There is dire need for ODL service providers to ensure that the degree programmes offer hands on experiences with computers so that the graduates would not be found wanting in their schools. The global ICT fever should be used to the advantage of school advancement through integrating it with the teaching and learning process so that teachers and pupils are in a position to access more knowledge than they would, using conventional methods. Appreciation of ICT depends on competence of the user that is why it is important for ODL degreed head teachers to have thorough practical experience in this area. Having exhausted topics that were considered relevant to the study, focus now turns towards identified gaps in knowledge.

2.31. GAPS DISCOVERED IN THE REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The main purpose of reviewing related literature was to highlight the research problem and highlight gaps which the current study sought to plug. The researcher was able to identify the following four gaps in knowledge which were expected to be filled in this study.

1. The studies carried out do not clearly suggest ways in which there could be effective transfer of learning during and after an on-the-job training
programme such as ODL so that the recipients remain effective in their workplaces.

2. The challenges of ODL graduates as effective leaders and managers of schools in developing countries where resources are scarce have not been fully explored by the related literature.

3. Most of the studies reviewed have not fully captured the actual views of school leaders and subordinates who are living the experience of interest.

4. The researcher has not come across adequate local research focused on linking ODL with head teacher effectiveness.

5. The related literature concurs with UNESCO (2000) that there is limited research data on the performance of the ODL strategy in producing effective managers of schools. The researcher aimed to add new theory to this under researched area.

2.3.2. SUMMARY

The review of related literature has shown but not exhausted issues that are related to the key variables of the research study. There is optimism that related literature has covered strides in establishing what various researchers regard as the role of ODL in the realisation of the effectiveness of primary school head teachers. The review of related literature has also highlighted some gaps in knowledge with regard to the concepts of effective leadership and management of schools through research evidence which indicates that the debate still rages on with regard to leadership and management effectiveness in schools. There are so many
measures of head teacher effectiveness which emerged in the related literature. The subjectivity of the measures of effectiveness continues to pose challenges among ODL degreed head teachers who face various stakeholders with competing needs in primary schools. Technological changes continue to place demands on primary school head teachers affecting the way their performance is perceived by educational stakeholders.

The researcher was confident that the study would contribute towards filling this gap. The viability of open and distance learning as an effective human resource capacity building strategy in Zimbabwean primary schools is still a subject for debate in academic and professional circles. The next chapter 3 unveils the research methodology that was employed in the field.
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

The third chapter of the study focuses on important research process activities. The process involved stating and justifying the methodology that was utilised, the selection of the research design, instruments employed and how issues concerning ensuring the trustworthiness of the study such as credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability were addressed. The chapter also clarifies how the relevant data were generated, presented, analysed and interpreted in a way that yields accurate, correct and acceptable findings with regard to the issue of leadership and management of primary schools by ODL educational management degreeed head teachers in Chipinge District, Manicaland Province.

3.2. THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study aimed at gathering the opinions of education inspectors, primary school head teachers, SDC members and teachers with regard to the performance of primary school head teachers who have acquired educational management degrees through ODL in Chipinge District in Manicaland Province. Guided by constructivism, a qualitative research methodology was used in the study. The selection of the qualitative methodology is consistent with the view of Berg (1998) who posits that qualitative methodology was found to be a suitable methodology for a study that is linked to attitudes, perceptions, meanings and descriptions of social reality.
Burns and Grove (2003) define methodology in terms of what comprises it such as the researcher design, setting, sample, methodological limitations, data collection and analysis techniques used by the researcher in the study. Polit and Hungler (2004) have a simplified definition which regards methodology as ways of obtaining, organising and analysing data. Holloway (2005) considers the term to mean a framework of theories and principles on which methods and procedures are based. Owen (2013) defines the term simply as a strategy or plan of action. The above definitions were found to be valid in the sense that research methodology identifies components of the actual research process showing how the generation, presentation and analysis of data would be done in a study.

Research methodology from researcher’s perspective can be considered as an umbrella term which explains how the research was conducted in terms of selecting relevant research design, selecting samples as well as identifying suitable data generation tools and finally making decisions concerning how the data was presented and analysed. It is actually a ‘path’ that was followed in the field in an effort to resolve the problem and to generate new theory. The qualitative methodology was adopted for the purpose of this study. Cresswell (2003: 18) has this to say with regard to qualitative research.

A qualitative approach is one in which the inquirer often makes knowledge claims based primarily on constructive perspective (i.e. the multiple meanings of individual experiences, meanings socially and historically constructed, with an intent of developing a theory or pattern, or advocacy, participating perspectives (i.e.
The definition is in tandem with the expectations in this qualitative study. The aim was to provide a ‘thick’ description using as much as possible the actual words of the participants in relation to their evaluation of the performance of ODL degreed head teachers as effective leaders and managers of primary schools in the district of Chipinge.

3.2.1. Basic ontological beliefs in qualitative research

According to Marshall and Rossman (2006) the following are the basic ontological beliefs in qualitative research:

- Reality should be interpreted through the meanings that participants in a study give to their life world. This belief leans towards interpretivism which says that in a study a researcher plays an active role of interpreting information generated from the participants.

- The other ontological belief of qualitative research is that there is no fixed reality or truth; reality can only be socially and personally constructed and participants should be actively involved. This ontological belief points to constructivism

The beliefs dispute the positivistic stance in quantitative studies which state that there is an objective, external reality and the researcher maintains a detached, objective position when carrying out a research study. The researcher regarded the constructivist ontological beliefs to
be appropriate in providing the methodological guidance of this research effort. The reality or the truth with regard to the effectiveness of ODL degreed primary school head teachers would be arrived at through meticulously generating relevant perceptions using appropriate tools that involve active interactions and accurate interpretation of data. This stance is supported by Schwandt (2007) who is of the opinion that qualitative research aims to understand participants’ subjective meanings and interpretations to explain their behaviour. The position is further supported by Kavale (1996) who observes that qualitative researchers have replaced the quantitative idea of knowledge as a ‘mirror’ of reality by the idea of social construction of reality with focus on the interpretation and negotiation of the meaning of the social world. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) support constructivism arguing that the social world can only be understood from the viewpoint of individuals who are part of the ongoing action being discussed. Therefore a study seeking to generate data concerning the effectiveness of ODL degreed head teachers tends to lean more to the constructivist perspective. From the ontological concerns of the qualitative research study, the discussion turns its focus to the epistemological concerns.

3.2.2. The epistemology of qualitative research

The selection of qualitative methodology is in face of criticisms levelled against it as posed by Babbie (1995) such as the amount of time spent in the field generating data as well as time spent in analysing and interpreting voluminous amounts of data. The argument is that, examining interactions, reactions and activities holistically involves considerable amounts of time. Another criticism castigated by Easterby-Smith et al. (1991) and Blanche and Durrheim (1999) is that qualitative research is lacking in statistical summation which is considered as a
more objective approach to studying phenomena by researchers who subscribe to the positivist epistemology. However, Easterby-Smith et al. (1991) dismiss the claim asserting that the qualitative approach adopts a more descriptive, narrative research which is likely to beneficial to the researcher. Gilbert (1993), Fin et al. (2000) and Jennings (2001) throw out the argument of statistics saying that the term “empirical” had nothing to do with numbers and manipulation of variables but had to do with whether or not phenomenon is in the real world and assessed by means of senses.

Gilbert (1993) and Cresswell (1994) also observe that some researchers view the qualitative approach as difficult to achieve conventional standards of reliability and validity. In this study, the researcher acknowledged that the study was indeed labourious and time intensive but was confident with the effectiveness of the strategies that were employed to ensure that the trustworthiness of the study remained intact. Neumain (1994), Walle (1996) and Jennings (2001) dispel the issue of validity in qualitative research saying that the limitation does not minimise the value of participants’ experiences.

The aspect of capturing individual experiences in a phenomenon and drawing meaning through interpretation is critical to qualitative researchers. Mc Millan and Schumacher (1997) argue that the major goal of qualitative research was to capture the richness and completeness of an experience from participants not to provide statistics. The aspect is further supported by Berg (2007) who advances that qualitative research refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols and description of things. The researcher concurred with arguments in favour of the selected methodology and was confident that it
was through the qualitative methodology that she could get a more accurate picture of the perceptions of educational personnel in Chipinge District with regard to the effectiveness of head teachers who have attained degrees through ODL. Owen (2013) justifies this choice of methodology for this particular study by arguing that the philosophical position taken by the researcher is supposed to inform the methodology that is followed.

There was interaction with participants resulting in the expected “rich” verbal description of the phenomenon. Denzin and Lincoln (2011) wholly support the researcher’s anticipation when they argue that the value laden-nature of qualitative research stresses relationship between the researcher and participants, as well as the situation constraints that shape the enquiry. In this study, the researcher’s anticipation was confirmed. There was an impressive willingness to interact during focus group discussions and individual interviews with teachers. The researcher observed that more teachers than anticipated were keen to be a part of the group discussions but there had to be a cut off point for manageable groups. There was indeed active interaction. Through focus group discussions the researcher generated enough data to be able to come out with the actual views of the participants concerning the effectiveness of ODL degree head teachers of primary schools. The chosen methodology influenced the selection of the research design.

3.3. THE RESEARCH DESIGN

Due to the nature of this study which sought to give value to ODL as a training intervention and the performance of the ODL recipients, the case study design was adopted. A case study is defined as an in-depth study of a person, family or social group in their natural setting.
(Dooley, 1995, Denzin and Lincoln, 2000 and Cresswell, 2003). The researcher carried out the study as a multiple case study of Chipinge District schools. It was multiple in the sense that several schools headed by ODL degreed head teachers participated in Chipinge District not just one school. There was confidence that the selected design would allow for exploration and description of each school setting in the sample as well as across the district setting.

Cresswell (1999) regards a case study as an exploration of a “bounded system,” saying:

...over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information and rich in content. This bounded system is bounded by time and place, and it is the case being studied, a programme, an event, an activity or individuals.

The definition provided above is true of the phenomenon that was under study. The aspect of using multi sources of information is supported by Gillham (2000) who posits that case study uses ‘the multi-method approach’ to investigate individuals, groups, institutions or community. The view is further supported by Patton (1990) and Yin (2003) who asserts that, the hallmark of case study research is the use of multiple data sources, a strategy that enhances credibility.

The study used the multi-method approach with regard to the tools that were used to generate data and the participants of various categories who provided the data. This involved
exploration to derive meaning with regard to the perceptions of the participants concerning the effectiveness of ODL educational management degreeed head teachers of primary schools.

In support of case study as a research design, Feargin, Orum and Sjoberg (1991) in Tellis (1997) posit that it is the ideal methodology when holistic and in-depth investigation is needed. The researcher was convinced that since the proposed study extended over three years and was focused on one education district of Manicaland Province, it could therefore justifiably be treated as a case as argued by Borg and Gall (1989).

The choice of the design is further supported by Stake (1995) and Yin (2003) who assert that case studies were intertwined with the constructivist paradigm which claims that truth is relative and dependent on one’s perspective. Yin (2003) supports the use of case study design in studies of this nature where the thrust is passing judgements on the performance of head teachers basing on stakeholders views. Yin (2003) argues that a case study should be considered when the focus of the study is to answer ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions and where the researcher cannot manipulate the behaviour of the people under study. It was not the researcher’s intention to manipulate the behaviour of the participants but to generate data in natural school settings. The ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions made room for probing so that in the end the researcher was in possession of what she considered to be quality data.

The selected option of the design does not mean that there are no limitations associated with case study. Baxter and Jack (2008) argue that while case studies can inform professionals in
policy issues, they tend to be lengthy in presentation. They say care should be exercised so as to provide the rich information in a way that continues to hold the readers’ interest. Case studies are also viewed mainly by pro positivists to be lacking in rigor. It was therefore imperative to be very systematic in the data generation activity.

Maximum effort was made to capture the ‘live’ leadership and management situation in Chipinge District through the actual utterances of participants. The researcher was confident that this approach to data presentation would continue to hold readers’ interest without losing focus of the purpose of the study.

### 3.3.1. The dimensions of the selected case study design

The selected case study design was a combination of three dimensions namely exploratory, descriptive and contextual (Baxter and Jack, 2008).

### 3.3.1.1. The exploratory dimension of the design

The researcher acknowledged the importance of exploring so as to gain new insights, learn the truth and increase knowledge with regard to the effectiveness of ODL degreed primary school head teachers in Chipinge District schools. It was therefore of interest to generate data by exploring as a way of emerging with current views in relation to the phenomenon.
3.3.1.2. The descriptive dimension of the design

The other purpose of qualitative research design is to describe phenomena as it occurs. Polit and Hungler (2004) argue that the purpose of describing is to construct and portray an accurate picture of a situation under scrutiny. The dimension of describing revealed the experiences of the participants and the researcher is confident that she obtained authentic description of the effectiveness of head teachers under study through the practitioners themselves.

3.3.1.3. The contextual dimension of the design

The study was carried out in Chipinge district schools headed by ODL degreed head teachers therefore the schools were considered as ‘naturalistic settings’ or uncontrolled real life situations. The fact that there was no manipulation involved and the personnel were engaging in their normal daily activities or interactions gave hope to the researcher that she was likely to generate accurate data in relation to the phenomenon of interest in this study. Paying attention to the highlighted three dimensions of the research design resulted in research findings which were trustworthy.

There was consciousness of the limitations of generalisability in the adopted research design. While generalisability is not the purpose of the selected research design, the use of the selected data generation tools such as questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, observation checklist and focus group discussions contributed a lot towards the enhancement of the credibility and transferability of the results of the study. Owen (2013) supports this stand by asserting that research designs that are guided by constructivism do not apply the positivistic
scientific values of validity, objectivity and generalisability. This is recognised by Crabtree and Miller (1999) as an added advantage of close collaboration between researcher and the participant. In addition to the selected tools, the study was not focusing on a small group but on reasonably large stratified group of respondents and participants comprising primary school education inspectors, head teachers and teachers and parent representatives in Chipinge District schools of Manicaland Province, which should add to the confirmability and transferability of research findings.

3.4. THE PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study was guided by two qualitative oriented philosophical perspectives which are constructivism and phenomenology. According to Bunge (1996) the philosophical perspective or paradigm of a study encompasses the views a researcher holds which will be reflected in the way data is collected or generated and analysed as well as how the research results are presented. It is also considered as a world-view from which a researcher tries to unveil the complexities of the real world, Covey (1989), Patton, (1990) and Bassey (1995).

The statement of the philosophical base of a study is further supported by Erickson and Kovalainen (2008) who assert that in many cases researchers do not bother to think about the philosophical underpinnings of their research. Erickson and Kovalainen (2008) argue that such an omission implies that the researchers either consider philosophical questions as irrelevant in their research areas or they probably wrongly assume their philosophical positions to be self-evident and known. The inclusion of ontological and epistemological platforms of the study is justified by Mangunda (2003) who posit that researchers work from
different beliefs about the nature of reality (ontology) and how one sees the nature of reality (epistemology).

3.5. THE ONTOLOGICAL BELIEFS OF CONSTRUCTIVISM

The way in which one believes social reality is ontology. Erickson and Kovalainen (2008: 13) define it by referring to its concerns in a research study. They have this to say, ‘...ontology concerns the ideas about existence of and relationships between people, society and the world in general. Ontological assumptions embrace all theories and methodological positions.’ The researcher concurs with this observation in the sense that the study was focused on investigating organisational relationships in primary schools which are managed by ODL degreed head teachers as well as exploring the relationships within the schools and the environment that surround them as a way of establishing the effectiveness of the ODL degreed head teachers as leaders and managers.

3.6. THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL BELIEFS OF CONSTRUCTIVISM

Morrison (2000) and Grbich (2007) posit that what a researcher regards as knowledge or evidence of things in the social world is epistemology. Epistemology has an influence on decisions taken by a researcher in relation to how the phenomenon can be known and how knowledge can be demonstrated.

• That the researcher and participants should be actively involved in the process of bringing out meaning and that they should construct knowledge.

• That humans are not the same as ‘things’, therefore human behaviour is best understood from an insider’s point of view through gaining insight into the meanings participants give to their life world.

In this study the researcher believed that constructivism was the ideal philosophical perspective to carry out this study because it was more responsive to the nature of the study. The study was aimed at gathering the opinions of education officers, education inspectors, primary school head teachers, teachers and parent representative committees with regard to the performance of head teachers who acquired educational management degrees through ODL.

A study that seeks opinions, draws heavily from the minds of participants (Marshall and Rossman, 2006). This is in tandem with Grbich (2007) who assets that constructivism is a philosophical position which assumes that there is no objective knowledge independent of thinking and that what people consider to be reality is actually socially imbedded and exists entirely in the mind. There was focus on constructing meaning from the responses of the participants through generation of “rich” qualitative data generated from the selected respondents.

Gray (2009) supports that from the constructivist perspective, truth and meaning do not exist in some external world but are created by the subjects’ interactions with the world. Meaning
is constructed not discovered. Constructivists believe that participants construct their own meaning in different ways even in relation to the same phenomenon. Strauss and Corbin (1990) recognise that the qualitative paradigm aims at building or constructing a holistic largely narrative description to inform the researcher’s understanding of a social or cultural phenomenon. The view was echoed by Crotty (1998) who asserted that according to constructivist epistemology, scientific knowledge is constructed by a scientific community, seeking to measure and construct models of the natural world. Crotty (1998) also argues that what the world views as knowledge is actually a human and social construction. They argue that, the construction of reality takes place in natural settings. Glesne (2006) further argues that the majority of qualitative researchers adhere to constructivism where it is upheld that human beings construct their perceptions of the world.

The researcher believed that through interactions with the educational personnel and educational stakeholders, a more accurate image with regard to the effectiveness of ODL degreed head teachers as leaders and managers of primary schools would be constructed. It has been indicated that the research was to be guided by two philosophical perspectives, constructivism and phenomenology. Attention is now focused on the later.

3.7. THE ONTOLOGICAL BELIEFS OF PHENOMENOLOGY

Marshall and Rossman (2006) define phenomenology as the study of lived experiences and the way we understand the experiences to develop a world view. Education stakeholders and other interested parties hold certain world views in relation to the effectiveness of ODL degreed head teachers and other graduates of the ODL institutions. The researcher was keen
to unearth or unlock the world views of participants so as to come up with new knowledge that might contribute towards progressive world views about the effectiveness of ODL university graduates on the educational management degree programmes.

The main ontological beliefs of phenomenology as provided by Jasper (1994) are:

- Phenomenology is embedded in the belief that the true meaning of a phenomenon should be explored through people who undergo the experience.
- The people who experience something provide a more accurate description of reality about their situation.

There was confidence that the selected participants were people who were or had gone through the experience of working with the ODL degreed head teachers under study.

3.8. THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL BELIEFS OF PHENOMENOLOGY

Phenomenology is a philosophical assumption which disputes or challenges the idea of objectivity in research. The philosophical perspective argues that if one wants to gain more understanding of nature there is need to analyse human behaviour daily. According to the phenomenological perspective, people need to be explored in the society they live in so as to understand their behaviour better. Importance is placed more on experience rather than on objectivity in the traditional quantitative data. Phenomenology regards conscious experiences like judgements, perceptions and emotions as critical in the construction of social reality. The researcher is of the view that the proposed topic has the potential to evoke various
judgements, perceptions and even emotions within the participants in the target primary schools hence the choice of the philosophical base.

As a result of its epistemological assumptions, phenomenology relies on the use of less restricting data generation tools in order to facilitate the use of rich verbal descriptions of the phenomenon under study observation to generate the necessary data from participants. The relevance of phenomenology in this study was that it allowed for the use of data tools such as the researcher, open ended questionnaire, interview and focus group discussions to gain in-depth knowledge about the effectiveness of the head teachers under study.

3.9. LINK BETWEEN CONSTRUCTIVISM AND PHENOMENOLOGY

Chiari and Nuzzo (1996b) observed that there are strong links between the two philosophical perspectives. Both philosophical perspectives believe that reality or the truth can be arrived at more accurately through the researcher actively interacting with participants in the field. They both agree that researcher cannot detach himself or herself from the participants because the philosophies support interpretation of human behaviour and negotiation of meaning during the data generation process. The two philosophical perspectives also agree on the stages involved in generation of new knowledge which include identification of patterns, generation of hypothesis and coming up with new theories.
It was observed that adopting the two as guiding philosophies helped to achieve the following concerns of the proposed study:

- Answer the research questions
- Help fill in the identified knowledge gaps
- Generate relevant and adequate data
- Address issues of trustworthiness such as credibility, confirmability and transferability
- Generation of new knowledge
- Arriving at credible conclusions from the study

The above concerns were effectively achieved through the adoption of philosophical perspectives that are not restricted by objective measurements. Education officers, inspectors, head teachers, teachers and parent representatives were allowed to express the true perceptions with regard to the performance of the school leaders and managers in question. It was from the descriptions provided and observations made that the reality of the effectiveness of ODL degreed primary school leadership and management was constructed.

3.10. THE SAMPLING PROCEDURES

The researcher considers sampling procedures as scientific methods that are used by the researcher to select the right people to provide the required data concerning the problem under scientific scrutiny. This view is supported by Panneerselvan (2004) who considers a sampling plan as a mechanism by which the sampling units of a study are selected from the
sampling frame of the population. The nature of the participants determined the techniques which were used in the selection. It was observed that the levels and numbers of education stakeholders involved affected the choice of the research tools which were finally used to generate the relevant data.

It was therefore ideal to use purposive sampling for the education inspectors and head teachers and SDC members since they were fewer and then Random Sampling to select teacher participants who formed the majority. Dooley (1995) defines purposive sampling as a non-probability sampling method that involves choosing elements or participants of certain characteristics. Walman and Kruger (2001) describe non-probability sampling as a method in which the researcher has no way of forecasting, estimating or guaranteeing each element in the population to be represented in a sample. It should be born in mind that issues of forecasting and estimating are related to the concept of generalisability which is in the domain of quantitative research and which was not the focus of this particular study.

The study purposively selected education inspectors, head teachers and members of SDCs basing on how easily accessible they were, if they were ODL degreed and how willing they were to provide the necessary data. This is consistent with the views of Easterby-Smith et al. (1991) Neuman (1994) and Veal (1997) who argue that the phenomenological method suggests that respondents are chosen specifically because of their knowledge of the topic under discussion. Gay and Airasian (2000) support the use of purposive sampling arguing that the technique allows for the selection of participants who are thoughtful and have information, perspectives and experiences related to the topic of the research. In the study all
the participants were people with the experience of leading and managing primary schools as well as working under or with ODL degreed head teachers. The technique protected the researcher from wasting time on respondents who were not in a position to provide the relevant data. There was confidence that the sampling method used would yield credible research finding.

3.11. DATA GENERATION TOOLS

The data generation tools for the study were the researcher, who was in charge of interview guides for discussions with focus groups and interviews with education inspectors, self–administered questionnaires with open ended questions for teachers and head teachers and an observation checklist. There was awareness of the strengths of all these tools and possible limitations but was confident that through the triangulation of data tools, quality data would be yielded. The researcher’s confidence was boosted by Flick (2006) who asserts that the use of three data gathering tools allows for one instrument compensating for the weakness of the other. Flick (2006) also argues that using more than one data generation tools is an advantage to the researcher in that answers from both data sets can be combined and compared. This argument was found to be true during data presentation and analysis where data from all sources were combined during discussions to come out with a ‘thick’ description of the reality concerning the effectiveness of ODL educational management degreed head teachers in Chipinge District from the perspectives of the participants.

Using multiple data generation tools is also agreeable with Gillham’s (2000) observation that research data accumulated by different methods are part of what is called the multi-method
approach which was alluded to in the research design section. The study compared the data sets as a way of cross checking and verifying data from one source against the other rather than relying on one source as a way of establishing answers to research questions and the main research problem. The multi-method approach is also responsive to the concept of triangulation which is defined as a process of using multiple approaches to clarify meaning and verify observations, Stake (1988) in Denzin and Lincoln (2000). The questionnaire as a data tool is discussed below.

3.11.1. The Questionnaire

Tuckman (1994) is of the view that a questionnaire is a set of questions which are prepared by someone carrying out research as a way of collecting or generating data from those who participate as respondents.

3.11.1.1. The strengths of a questionnaire

A questionnaire is a tool that enables a researcher to reach out to respondents over a wide geographical area. This observation is in tandem with Sapsford (2007) who posits questionnaires allow for the collection of data from larger samples.

Questionnaires (Appendices IV and V) proved to be an economic way financially, of gathering data from teacher participants. Fisher (2009) supports the use of self-administered questionnaires as a powerful investigative tool that can be used to quickly and efficiently elicit comprehensive initial statements from participants and which takes the form of a standardised protocol of clear instruction and questions that enable participants to provide
their own statements. It is ideal for use when resources are limited and a traditional direct interview is not possible. The questionnaire was quick and efficient in generating data and the researcher agrees with the stated strengths especially as compared to interview.

The other identified advantage is that, the respondents were exposed to the same questions no matter which school they were. The fact that the questions were phrased in the same manner increased the chances of the data generated being more comparable. The uniformity of questions facilitated easier data presentation, analysis and interpretation. Gillham (2000) also supports this view concerning the questionnaire by arguing that data analysis was relatively simple when a questionnaire is employed as compared to the interview.

3.11.1.2. The weaknesses of a questionnaire

The highlights of the strengths of the questionnaire as a data gathering tool do not downplay the weaknesses of the tool. The researcher recognised the role played by respondents’ motivation which might have a negative effect on the trustworthiness of their responses. The respondents were motivated through the cover (transmittal) letter explaining the purpose of the study as well as expressing appreciation of their anticipated cooperation in contributing towards finding solution to the research problem. It was also possible that some of the respondents would not answer honestly but the researcher believed purposive sampling allowed for results which could be trusted.

The discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the questionnaire serves to show that the study acknowledged that there was no data generation tool that was without fault. The
selection of the tool was in response to the selected research design which was directed towards the construction of social reality through ‘thick’ verbal descriptions. Interview was the other tool used to generate data.

3.11.2. The interview

An interview is defined by Best and Khan (1993) as a method that allows a researcher to gather first hand information in its natural state through verbal questioning and answering. The selected interviewees were asked questions from the prepared interview guides (Appendix 3 and 6).

3.11.2.1. The strengths of an interview

Gubrium and Holstein (2001) justify the use of interviews arguing that the tool has managed to attract researchers’ interest because of the reason that it has an increased chance of allowing interviewees to express their views more openly as compared to the questionnaire or standardised interviews. Since the study focused on constructing reality through interaction with stakeholders who experience working with the head teachers under scrutiny, the researcher was convinced the instrument would generate the expected data.

Kvate and Brinkman (2008) are in support of the use of semi-structured interviews in qualitative research and argue that they can be used to generate quality data. The study proved that interviews allowed for clarification of questions when compared to questionnaires. This advantage also provided the researcher with the confidence that a rich description of the phenomenon under study was likely to be realised. Success in gathering a
more holistic description of the state of affairs with regard to the effectiveness of ODL educational management degreed primary school head teachers in Chipinge District, Manicaland province was guaranteed.

The other advantage noted was that, the respondents had freedom to answer in a way they chose and there was room for probing on the part of the researcher. The oral interview informants were accorded the chance to express their personal feelings without the constraints.

The interview provided first-hand experience of the advantage of gathering more data than anticipated resulting in more insights into the research problem. The researcher was conscious of the need to guard against gathering irrelevant data which would not contribute toward successfully answering the question. The data was sifted so that the researcher remained with data which contributed towards answering the key research problem and sub-problems.

3.11.2.2. The weaknesses of an interview

The researcher was aware that conducting interviews would be time and labour intensive therefore the interview guide (Appendices 3 and 6) which were used were not so long as to
discourage participants but long enough to generate the relevant information (Nachamias and Nachamias, 1992). They had a maximum of ten (10) open ended questions.

The items of the interview guide were constructed in such a way that they solicited information that directly contributed towards solving the main research question and sub questions. This meant that the data generation items were linked to the key question (1.2), objectives (1.4), research questions (1.5) and the assumptions of the study (1.9) all of which are stated in Chapter 1 of the thesis.

3.11.3. Focus Group Discussions

Focus group discussions were another method of generating data. These were group interactions that the researcher facilitated as a moderator, where perspectives or views, knowledge and opinions were exchanged. Patton (2002) defines focus group interview as an interview with a small group of respondents on the topic of interest. Due to limited finances, the approach was advantageous in allowing interviewer access to several participants at one time. The interview guide used for interviews was used for focus discussions as well (Appendix 6). There were five groups of six teacher participants from different schools in Chipinge district to generate data. The class of six was easy to invite and to control so that the discussions remained focused on the problem.

3.11.3.1. Advantages of focus group discussions in data generation

The approach enabled observation of non-verbal actions of the participants as they answered the questions. There were also chances of unexpected information emerging through the
exchanges in those open discussions. The research topic proved to have the potential of raising emotions, therefore, focus groups offered chances to observe and measure the participants’ emotional state. Focus groups contributed much towards the construction of ‘thick’ verbal description of the effectiveness of ODL degreed primary school head teachers in Chipinge District. There were lively debates concerning the effectiveness of the head teachers and the ODL staff development intervention. The group discussions allowed the researcher to cross-check data as it was being generated by the focus group members.

In addition to the advantages noticed by the researcher, Morgan (1988), Lunt and Livingstone (1996) and Billig (1987) consider the data generation technique to be very efficient. They also argue that in focus groups, participants provide checks and balances on each other hereby eliminating falsehoods and exaggerations. Finally the three authorities are of the view that there is room for the researcher to make an assessment of consistency and shared views. These advantages were viewed to be critical in facilitating issues of trustworthiness which are critical to a qualitative researcher.

### 3.11.3.2. Disadvantages of focus groups in data generation

The researcher was aware that data collected through focus groups was highly subjective due to the fact that the groups were selected using an non-probability sampling technique. The study used purposive sampling of groups and group members. The procedure had chances of introducing group biases into the study. To mitigate this disadvantage, effort was made to spread the focus groups evenly throughout the district under study and to keep reminding group members to guard against personal biases.
3.11.4. Observation

De Walt and De Walt (2001) asserts that observation entails the systematic noting and recording of events, behaviours and objects in a social setting chosen for study. In this study the researcher had a prepared observation checklist which indicated what was to be observed (Appendix). Observation was restricted to issues such as infrastructure, teacher interactions, pupil discipline, supervision of pupils’ work, record keeping in classrooms, lesson supervision records and use of ICT in school business.

3.11.4.1. Advantages of observation

One of the biggest advantages in using this tool was ability to see, listen and record the behaviours displayed and other aspects of relevance to the topic without having to ask the participants for all the information that was required in the study. This was consistent with what Taylor-Powell and Steele’s (1996) argument that the tool provided an opportunity to document activities and behaviour independent of people in the organisation. From the body language and the language used by the participants, one could tell that there was conviction in what the participants were saying during focus group sessions. They were not afraid to differ on certain observations leading the researcher to believe that she was generating accurate perceptions.
3.11.4.2. Disadvantages of Observation

The main disadvantage noted was that observation was tedious in terms of time and energy. Because of the distance between Mutare where the researcher is stationed and Chipinge, interviews had to be conducted concurrently with observation. A high degree of alertness and recalling was necessary to ensure data accuracy.

3.12. PILOT TESTING OF DATA GENERATION TOOLS

Although pilot testing of research tools is often associated with quantitative techniques, the data generation tools were tested as a way of increasing the trustworthiness of the data generated. This was in tandem with Bell (1993) who considers pilot testing to be of use to a researcher in that it allows him or her to see if some pertinent issues have been omitted as well as to have a rough estimate of the amount of time that would be required for interviews. De Vos et al (1998) are of the view that pilot testing data tools helps the researcher to obtain a more accurate picture of the real situation. The process resulted in data generation questions which were refined and it also provided an opportunity to improve paraphrasing and probing skills. The participants in the pilot testing did not identify many weaknesses though, so the data generation process continued with the actual participants using the slightly corrected tools.
3.13. ISSUES OF TRUSTWORTHINESS

Guba and Lincoln (1985) posit that it is critical to ensure that qualitative research is viewed as accurate and correct. As a result of that requirement, Guba and Lincoln identify the four issues of trustworthiness as credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Several qualitative researchers argue that the four issues serve the purposes of their quantitative counterparts, validity, generalisability, reliability and objectivity. The qualitative research issues of concern are regarded as standards of measuring or making judgments about the quality of the study. Because of the importance placed on the qualitative standards, strategies were employed to meet the standards so that the trustworthiness of the study would not be questioned by all stake holders. Each of the issues was addressed as shown:

3.13.1. Credibility

According to Merriam (1998) credibility relates to the extent to which the research findings would be in line with reality. As a result of this need, the researcher employed data generation and data analysis methods which had been used by past researcher in almost similar studies. There was confidence that the study would also yield credible findings to the participants and to those who would read the research report.

The study used purposive sampling and it shows that the likelihood of researcher bias was real and needed to be curbed.
The strategy that was employed to make the study credible was that of triangulating data generation tools and data generation sources. In the study there were several strata of educational personnel as well as parent committee representatives. The researcher took advantage of the scenario to compare and contrast the responses. The observation is in tandem with what Van Maanen (1983) observes, that various view points and experiences affords the researcher an opportunity to verify the data generated and to come out with a ‘thick’ picture of the phenomenon as well as constructing a more accurate reality. The interview, questionnaire, focus group discussion and observation contributed to research findings which were considered to be credible.

Lastly, the researcher was introduced to the participants through a transmittal letter which contained information such as researcher’s background, qualifications, and experience in the education sector, assurance of confidentiality as well as the purpose of the study. A copy of a letter from the office of the Manicaland Provincial Education Director granting permission to enter the schools was attached to the transmittal letter. The strategy is supported by Patton (1990) who defends it arguing that the credibility of the researcher in a qualitative study is vital because she or he is the main instrument in data generation and analysis. The argument suggests that participants and readers are likely to link a credible researcher to a credible study.

3.13.2. Transferability
While in quantitative research, researchers uphold the need to generalise research findings, in qualitative research, the thrust is on ensuring the transferability of the findings. According to Meman (2001) transferability is concerned with establishing the extent to which the findings of a qualitative study of a case can be applied to other similar situations. Chipinge is a district among several educational districts in Manicaland Province. The educational structures in the district are the same as in all the other districts. The observation is supported by stake (1994) and Denscombe (1998) who are of the view that research findings are transferable when a case is an example within a broad group. There was confidence that since Chipinge is a district within a broad group of educational districts of Manicaland Province, the findings of this study would be transferable to other districts.

In order to facilitate the transferability of the proposed research findings, strategies explained below were used:

Firstly, there was provision of an adequate “thick” description of the views of the participants of Chipinge District primary schools so that readers from other districts would have a clear understanding of the experiences of their counterparts in Chipinge. The researcher was confident that, clear comprehension of the phenomenon under study would enable them to compare the findings with the situations in their own districts. This was consistent with Bassey (1999) who is of the opinion that if practitioners view their situation to have similarities to the situation under study, the chances are that, they may relate the findings to their own scenario.
Secondly, the choice of the participants in the study increased chances of the study being transferable to other districts in the province. The participants belonged to school organisational structures which were the same in all districts in Zimbabwean primary schools. The selection of participants to saturation level also ensured generation of adequate data. The researcher believes that adequate data was captured by reaching saturation point in data generation.

### 3.13.3. Dependability

Guba and Lincoln (1985) draw a thin line between credibility and dependability. They argue that in practical terms, demonstration of credibility also assures dependability. Informants and readers who associate a credible researcher with credible research findings are likely to consider the researcher and the study as dependable.

The issue was addressed through the use of overlapping data generation methods which included interviews, questionnaires, focus groups and observation. The strategy resulted in what were considered to be dependable research findings.

Secondly, care was taken to report the processes of the study in depth so that chances of other researchers repeating a similar study were increased. In all sections of methodology the researcher provided detail of what transpired to help other researchers to replicate a similar study in other districts if they so wish.
3.13.4. Confirmability

Last but not least is the issue of confirmability. This is an issue which is solely within the control of the researcher. Confirmability is linked to objectivity. Confirmability calls for measures against researcher bias. The researcher was aware that she had embarked on the study with personal values, attitudes and perceptions with regard to the phenomenon of interest. However, these were not allowed to influence the outcome of the study.

Oppenheim (1992) advances practices that bring in researcher bias during interviews which are listed below:

- Departure from the interviewing instructions.
- Poor maintenance of rapport with the informants.
- Biased probes.
- Asking questions out of sequence.
- Biased recording of verbatim answers.

To ensure the above, there was no departure from the interview questions with different participants and groups. Rapport was established before interviews to ensure trust and
confidence. Leading questions were avoided during probing and responses were recorded as accurately as was expected.

Suggestions on how to avoid researcher bias were also stated as below:

- All interviews should follow the same protocol.
- Questions should be read the way they are written for oral interviews.
- Accept a participant’s refusal to answer a question to avoid lies.

It was observed during focus group interviews that there were some participants who avoided answering certain questions. The participants were not pushed to do so because it was suspected they would provide inaccurate data on such questions. On the issue of preventing personal values from influencing data accuracy, there was use of reflexivity (conscious guard against personal bias), a strategy advanced by Johnson (1997). There was critical analysis and interpretation of data to guard against personal bias. Of course the researcher was and is aware that due to the subjectivity nature of qualitative researcher, it might not be possible to have data that is completely free from researcher value but she was confident that there was maximum effort to avoid this basing on all the measures that were put in place in the field.

In this study, there was recognition of the importance of the ideas of Johnson (1997) and Benz and Newman (1998) who argue that even if qualitative research was not concerned with external validity it had to maintain internal validity. This being the case, the study adopted
strategies suggested by Johnson (1997) and Benz and Newman (1998) for maintaining internal validity which are as follows:

3.13.5. Member checking

Although it was not possible to meet all of the available participants, effort was made to cross check with some as a way of allowing them to confirm the accuracy of what had been recorded from the interviews. Not much deviation from their experiences was noted.

3.13.6. Peer Review

The researcher took advantage of a friend who was a former university mate and had interest in educational management to critically interrogate the interpretations made and the findings and conclusions arrived at. In a few areas the researcher had to revisit sections of research findings.

In addition to observing the above suggestions, to counter researcher bias, the findings of the study were drawn from the actual experiences and responses of the participants and not based on the researcher’s personal convictions. There was increased chance of participants
regarding the results as confirmable. The triangulation of data and data sources already discussed in this chapter also addressed this pertinent issue of qualitative research.

3.14. ETHICAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The research was to be conducted in an area which is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education therefore permission to carry out the research study in the targeted district was sought from the Provincial Education Director. This took care of the legal implications of the study (Appendices 1 and 2).

The researcher was aware that when dealing with human beings as research subjects, there was need to respect human rights through the observance of some ethical considerations. Bulmer (2001) asserts that ethical considerations are an essential element of the research process. Lack of respect for ethical considerations might have resulted in education officers, head teachers, school development members and teachers who are the respondents questioning the credibility, transferability and confirmability of the research findings. According to Creswell (2003) some of the ethical considerations which had to be respected as the study progressed through the research are shown below:

Maintaining the participants’ dignity
At the problem statement stage there was need to refrain from stating or explaining the problem in a way that marginalised or belittled head teachers and teachers who belonged to the target district. The statement of the problem was done in a way that encouraged trust and respect.

The right to informed consent

The researcher strove to ensure that the participants understood the purpose of the research study as well as clarifying the anticipated beneficiaries of the study, (Allmark, 2002). There was respect of the right to withdraw from the study if they so wished after being informed about the study. Smith (2003) re-emphasises the importance of importance of informed consent. Those who wished not to participate in the study were not pressurised to.

The right to privacy

The right to privacy was protected. A cover letter accompanied the data generation tools. The letter ironed out important issues such as, confidentiality of responses, the right to participate or not to participate and the right to ask questions or to obtain copies of the study. There was no abuse of power by using coercion to force people to be participants because such a stance would have had the potential of yielding inaccurate data resulting in invalid research findings. This is in tandem with Murphy and Dingwall (2001) who emphasise that the values and decisions of participants should be respected.

The right to anonymity
Ethical issues continued to be of concern to the researcher even in Chapter four. Measures were taken to maintain the anonymity of the respondents during data presentation and discussion as well as protecting the anonymity of the primary schools involved in the study. The researcher provided accurate description of the information so that there was no falsification or invention of research findings. The generated data was and will continue to be protected and be discarded when the time comes in such a way that it is not accessed by people other than those who should rightfully access it. Luders (2004) alludes to the ethic of confidentiality arguing that it was important to store data in a safe place where it would not be accessed by people who are not meant for it.

**The integrity of the research**

Finally under ethical considerations, there was need to avoid using language which was biased and sensitive in reporting the research findings. The data were presented in original form to avoid falsification of data. Cresswell (2003) observations are further echoed by Northway (2002: 3) who has this to say:

> ...however, all aspects of the research process, from deciding upon a topic through identifying a sample, conducting the research and disseminating the findings, have ethical implications

The researcher was aware that she would confront ethical issues from the beginning to the end of the research process

**3.15. DATA GENERATION PROCEDURES**
3.15.1. Questionnaires

As the main data generation instrument, the researcher acknowledged and respected the importance of forging co-operation with relevant responsible ministry officials so as to get co-operation in data generation. Questionnaires were distributed to teachers as the researcher went for appointments with head teachers in selected schools. The questionnaires were brought back through contact persons in the district. This is the distribution strategy, employed in order to maximise the questionnaire return rate.

The return rate of the questionnaire was monitored so that follow ups could be done as a way of reaching the desired saturation point. The monitoring was done with the assistance of designated contact persons who were purposively selected by the researcher.

3.15.2. Interviews

Appointments were made for individual interviews. Those who participated in group interviews were not given questionnaires and did not take part in personal interviews. Recording and transcription of interviewee responses were done concurrently with data analysis and interpretation up to the end of the data generation process. The researcher recorded the interviews manually so that the actual words of the participants were captured verbatim.

3.15.3. Focus groups
Holding focus groups involving participants who belonged to schools that were not close to each other proved to be a challenge. Nevertheless, arrangements for focus group interviews were also made so that they were conducted with permission of more responsive head teachers on appointed dates in schools where head teachers were willing to accommodate the researcher. With two of the five groups the researcher took advantage of a pay weekend to meet teachers from different schools in Chipinge district for a focus group interview at an agreed venue in Chipinge town. This enabled generation of views from different perspectives. The researcher purposively selected participants in selected schools who became focus group interviewees.

In conducting group interviews, the researcher considered the views of Punchta and Potter (2004) to be of help with regard to creation of a suitable environment for the interview. The view was that it was important to create a partially informal environment which is liberal. For the focus group interviews, quiet meeting points with no distractions were secured. Open contributions concerning the respondents’ experiences in the primary schools under study were encouraged. The researcher took care that the groups did not deviate from the topic and that all questions was answered (Appendix V).

The small number of the participants in each group allowed the researcher to record the views of the participants without hassle. It was easy for the participants to take turns and to respond to each other’s utterances.
3.15.4. Observation

Just like in the case of other tools mentioned earlier, the researcher was the key data generation tool during observation. As observational data was generated concurrently with visits to interviews, the researcher opted to make use of field notes using an observation checklist where relevant observations were recorded in narrative form (Appendix 7). The researcher took advantage of break times away from participants to write down some observations, on arrival in schools and during the time she was in the school interacting with participants and non-participants where chances availed. The use of field notes was supported by Patton (1990) and De Walt and De Walt (2001) who argue that it could be reliable with good memory on the part of the researcher and systematic recording of the events.

The field notes had two columns showing in one column what was noted and my interpretation in the other column. This was consistent with the observations of The Operational Guide for Coordinated Assessments in Humanitarian Crises (NATF, Feb. 2011) which states that a checklist is normally developed to function as a reminder and recording tool. The checklist kept the researcher focused on issues related to ODL head teacher effectiveness in primary schools.

3.16. PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION PROCEDURES

The purpose of data analysis is to describe and interpret the experiences, feelings, views, understandings and perspectives of participants. Yin (2003b) regards data analysis as consisting of examining, categorising, tabulating or otherwise re-combining the evidence to
address the initial propositions of the study. Hatch (2002: 148) has this to say concerning data analysis:

Data analysis is a systematic search for meaning. It is a way to process qualitative data so that what has been learned can be communicated to others. Analysis means organising and interrogating data in ways that allow researchers to see patterns, identify themes, discover relationships, develop explanations, make interpretations, mount critique, or generate theories. It often involves synthesis, evaluation, interpretation categorisation, hypothesising, comparison and pattern finding. Researchers always engage their own intellectual capacities to make sense of qualitative data....

The observation by Hatch (2002) summarises the main activities of this section. The researcher used the Grounded Theory technique for the purpose of analysing and interpreting the qualitative data.

3.16.1. The Grounded Theory Approach

According to Strauss and Corbin (1994) Grounded Theory is an approach used in presenting, analysing and interpreting qualitative data. It is useful when the researcher is dealing with transcripts of interviews and observations made in the field. In this study the researcher was focused on generating new theory in relation to effective school leadership and management. The researcher’s observation is supported by Oktay (2012) asserts that the approach is one of the oldest and most favoured by qualitative researchers and it is used to develop theory. The Grounded Theory allowed the researcher to ask questions which led to the development of
what the researcher referred to as The Skills, Content, Social and Change Competencies Training Model (SCSC) as an alternative model for training educational personnel through ODL.

According to Glaser (1978), Glaser (1992) and Strauss and Corbin (1990), the technique involves theoretical coding of the generated data. Saldana (2009) asserts that a code is most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient essence, capturing an attribute for a portion of language based or visual data.

Burnard, Stewart, Treasure and Chadwick (2008) describe coding as involving identification of categories and themes in the interview transcript, an attempt to verify, confirm and qualify them by searching through the data and repeating the process to identify further themes and categories. This observation is in agreement with Grbich (2007) who declares that an analysis that is thematic is a common qualitative technique which involves segmentation, categorisation and re-linking of aspects of the data. Saldana (2009) further supports the use of coding in qualitative research by positing that interviews and documents are forms of data receptive to the coding process.
The researcher broke down the generated data for patterns, themes and relationships. This was done following the three procedures of Open Coding, Axial Coding and Selective coding. In each procedure, the activities were as follows:

3.16.2. Open Coding

As data was generated, the researcher unravelled or disentangled it. Attention was given to the codes or actual words of the participants. These were categorised and as key concepts were identified. This stage emphasises the importance of accuracy in transcribing interview data. Information was recorded as provided by participants with regard to their views concerning the issue under study.

3.16.3. Axial Coding

The identified categories were differentiated and the relationships were expanded upon by grouping them into themes. The themes provided for more understanding about how the participants viewed the effectiveness of ODL degree in Chipinge District.

3.16.4. Selective Coding

This is the stage where the final ‘picture’ was constructed with regard to the phenomenon under study. It was also in this stage that a finding was clearly demonstrated. The three procedures of interpreting data were ongoing and continued until the point of saturation was
reached by the researcher. This is the point where the researcher was no longer obtaining new knowledge. Observational data was fused with other data in relevant categories and themes. The procedures were applied to all the data generated by the tools.

3.17. SUMMARY

The chapter dwelt on the research methodology, design and philosophical issues, data generation tools, issues of trustworthiness, ethical considerations, data generation, analysis and presentation plans. These strategies were selected to suit the constructivist and phenomenological perspectives adopted by the researcher in the research study. Chapter four presents, analyses, interprets and discusses the generated data which should lead to new emerging views regarding ODL educational management degree head teachers as effective leaders and managers of primary schools in Chipinge district.
CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter paid attention to the research methodology that was employed by the researcher in the process of generating data for the purpose of evaluating the effectiveness of ODL educational management degree head teachers as leaders and managers of primary schools in Chipinge district, Manicaland province in Zimbabwe. Data generation instruments which were employed by the researcher included the questionnaire with open ended questions, direct interviews, the focus group discussions and observation. To facilitate more accurate interpretation of participants’ views with regard to ODL head teachers’ effectiveness, the Grounded Theory approach was used as a method for analysing and interpreting the generated data. This meant that the findings drawn from this study were grounded in the generated data. The approach enabled the researcher to identify categories and themes
relevant to the research questions stated in Chapter 1. The generated data was therefore presented, analysed and interpreted following the identified categories and themes. Though reference was made to statistics in some areas, the purpose of the study was not to quantify the participants and variables but to conjure a ‘thick’ description of their views and experiences based on the data generated. At the point of saturation, the sample comprising all the categories was as follows:

Table 4.1. Number of participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Education Inspectors</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Head teachers</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Teachers</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. SDC members</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Focus Group participants</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total participants</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=163
4.2. The bio-data of participants

The researcher considered the inclusion of bio data of participants to be of value to the study in terms of trustworthiness. Through bio data it was easier to understand the background of the participants in terms of age, qualification and length of service in the school and community. There was confidence that the information lent credibility to the findings of the evaluation study. Most of the participants were mature and qualified people who had spent varying lengths of time in the schools, working with the head teachers under study. Such participants were viewed by the researcher to be knowledgeable about the performance of the head teachers not only because of the times they have spent in their respective schools, but also due to their professional qualifications which enabled them to be analytical in the responses they provided.

The participants’ profiles provided below shows the breakdown of the stratified sample:

**Table 4.2: Profiles of SDC members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CODE</th>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>LENGTH OF TIME IN COMMUNITY (YRS)</th>
<th>LENGTH OF TIME AS SDC MEMBER (YRS)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>00</td>
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<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>04</td>
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<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N= 16

SDC members were considered to be critical in providing data with regard to ODL degree head teacher. Their responses helped the researcher in the evaluation study in that they work
with the head teacher almost on daily basis therefore they were considered to be in a position to pass judgements on head teachers’ activities. All in all, sixteen (16) SDC members participated in the study. Members of school development committees were profiled by gender, age, length of time in community where the school is and length of service as SDC member in the school. The researcher reckoned that these variables were critical in generating data that was considered to be trustworthy.

The profiles show that the majority of the respondents were mature people and that some of them who have belonged to the community since childhood. The researcher felt that such people were better placed to pass judgements with regard to the performance of the head teacher under scrutiny since they were likely to have seen the head performing before the Bachelor of Education and Masters in Education Staff development intervention, during and after the training. It is also possible that such members of SDCs could have seen more than one head at their school and therefore would provide a more accurate comparison of degreed and non-degreed head teachers’ performance. The years some have participated as SDC members also built confidence in the credibility of their assessment of the head teachers’ performance in the primary schools under study.

Table 4.3: Profiles of Education Inspectors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years in the district</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

182
The two (2) interviewed education inspectors were mature and seasoned educators who had been in the ministry for a long time. Their responses revealed that they were members of the Chipinge communities from birth to date. The study assumed that the education inspectors had been head teachers in the past and had assessed the performance of the head teachers in question in the primary schools since that was one of their key result areas. By virtue of their positions of responsibility and their work experience one would tend to acknowledge their observations and views concerning the operations of ODL educational management degreed head teachers as leaders and managers of primary schools.

Table 4.4. Profiles of head teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CODE</th>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION</th>
<th>PERIOD IN THE SCHOOL (YRS)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HT 1</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>CE &amp; B Ed.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HT2</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>B Ed</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A total of thirteen (13) schools participated in the study. The data shows that all the sampled head teachers were mature and experienced people in terms of age. However, apart from three (3) who had more than twenty (20) years in the district the rest were relatively new appointees as heads in the district. All of them had first degrees and two (2) of them had postgraduate degrees. Among them are some who had led and managed primary schools without degrees until they entered the ODL management degree programmes. Such people were
considered by the researcher likely to be more accurate in comparing and contrasting their performance prior and post ODL degree attainment.

The above head teachers interact with SDC members, teachers and the community at large in their day today duties in schools. They were therefore a source of vital information concerning how they operated in their schools and they articulated challenges they encountered despite attaining higher university qualifications.

Table 4.5: Profiles of teacher questionnaire participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE RANGE</th>
<th>TOTALS</th>
<th>PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION</th>
<th>TOTALS</th>
<th>YEARS IN THE SCHOOL</th>
<th>TOTALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>CE</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0-5</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Dip. Ed</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>B Ed.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>M Ed. (Mgt)</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-70</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>Other Degrees</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A total of one hundred and two (102) teachers participated in the study. The teacher participants in the profile above had a mixed bag of qualifications with the majority being Diploma in Education holders.

The profile also indicates that very few ordinary teachers had taken up ODL degrees in educational management. The low uptake of educational management degrees among teachers could result in a situation of reduced pool of well-trained educational leaders and managers in Zimbabwean primary schools in future. It could also present a situation where some of them would not be appreciative of introduction of new methods of doing things in schools. However, the majority of them have lived in the community in the range of 6 to 15 years. They have possibly seen the head teacher staff developing themselves professionally while leading and managing the schools.

The researcher believed that from the constructivist perspective of the study, these teachers as participants have lived and are living the real life experience of being led by ODL degreed
head teachers. The experiences the teachers expressed were valuable in evaluating the head teachers’ performance.

Table 4.6: Focus Group1. Profiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>PARTICIPANT CODE</th>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION</th>
<th>LENGTH OF TIME AT SCHOOL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1A</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Dip Ed</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1B</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Dip Ed</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1C</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>B Ed</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1D</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>B Ed</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1E</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>CE</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1F</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Med</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No. =6

This was an interesting mixture of teachers with varied age ranges, qualifications and length of services in schools. This resulted in differing views concerning the effectiveness of the head teachers under study. It was demanding on the part of the researcher to keep the group focused on pertinent issues. The researcher was aware that there was likely to be biases in
favour or against the head teachers under study. Effort was made to curb against this by keeping on reminding the group participants to be as objective as possible in expressing their views.

Table 4.7: Focus Group 2: Profiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>PARTICIPANT CODE</th>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION</th>
<th>LENGTH OF TIME AT SCHOOL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2A</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Dip Ed</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2B</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Dip Ed</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2C</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>B Ed</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2D</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>B Ed</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2E</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Dip Ed</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2F</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>CE</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No=6
The above group profiles indicate a mature group of teachers who could be relied upon to provide accurate descriptions regarding the effectiveness of head teachers under study. Their length of stay in the schools also gave the researcher confidence in what they were saying in their evaluation of ODL educational management degreed head teachers’ effectiveness.

Table 4.8: Focus Group 3. Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>PARTICIPANT CODE</th>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION</th>
<th>LENGTH OF TIME AT SCHOOL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3A</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Dip Ed</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3B</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Dip Ed</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3C</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3D</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Dip Ed</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3E</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Dip Ed</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3F</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>CE</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No=6
The profiles of group 3 members portray that there were four holders of Diplomas in Education, one holder of Certificate in Education and one non educational management degree holder. All had spent a reasonable number of years in schools to be able to make judgements with regard to ODL educational management degreed head teacher effectiveness. The researcher sensed an element of bias against head teachers who were ODL educational management degreed and attributed it to the fact that the majority of them had not attempted to staff develop themselves. However, their observations were considered to be valid.

Table 4.9: Focus Group 4. Profiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>PARTICIPANT CODE</th>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION</th>
<th>LENGTH OF TIME IN YEARS AT SCHOOL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>48</td>
<td>Dip Ed</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>Year</td>
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<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4B</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>B Ed</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4C</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>B Ed</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4D</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Dip Ed</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4E</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Dip Ed</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4F</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No=6

Group 4 profiles showcase a group of teachers who are holders of diplomas and university degrees. Of the six, one was a conventional university degreed teacher; two were B Ed. graduates of open and distance learning while the other three were holders of diplomas in education. This spread in professional qualifications gave the researcher confidence that it was possible to get an accurate evaluation from those with B Ed Degrees who had gone through the rigors of ODL and had covered leadership and management issues under spotlight in this study. However the researcher was also alert to the possibility of bias in favour of ODL degreed head teachers from the two B Ed graduates. The group also shows that it comprised of mature people who were likely to be truthful. It turned out that they were a balanced pair in the discussion though. On observation during discussions, the researcher noted that the non-educational management degreed teacher did not contribute much to the discussion and the researcher attributed this to possible limited knowledge about expectations of an effective head teacher as a leader and manager of a primary school.
Table 4.10: Focus Group 5. Profiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>PARTICIPANT CODE</th>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION</th>
<th>LENGTH OF TIME AT SCHOOL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5A</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Dip Ed.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The profiles of focus group 5 participants show that the group comprised teachers who had been in the schools for a reasonable period of time to be able to supply adequate data from personal experience of working under an ODL educational management degree head teacher and not through hearsay from workmates. They were a balanced group professionally with two of them being holders of Diplomas in Education, another two being Bachelor of Educational Management degrees through ODL whilst the last two were Certificate in Education holders. There was confidence that the members were capable of providing data which was based on their independent assessment since they had come across leadership and management styles during their training. There was a possibility of them providing a critical evaluation of the head teachers under study.

4.3. Presentation, analysis, interpretation and discussion of generated data
Grounded Theory approach was used in the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the generated data. The choice of this method is in line with the adopted qualitative methodology and the philosophical perspectives that underpin the study. The Grounded Theory approach involves coding of data and categorising it thematically. In carrying out the procedures, the researcher was guided by the following research questions which were stated in Chapter 1 of the study.

1. How does the attainment of educational degrees improve head teacher effectiveness in leading and managing primary schools?
2. In what ways does the provision of ODL educational management to head teachers beneficial to education stakeholders?
3. What are some of the indicators to head teacher effectiveness in a primary school?
4. What are some other possible threats to ODL degreed primary school head teachers?
5. How justified is the scepticism about the credibility of ODL graduates effectiveness as leaders and managers of primary schools?
6. How best can ODL educational management degrees contribute towards head teacher leadership and management proficiency?

The research questions were closely linked to the interview and questionnaire items which were used to generate data from the respondents. These linkages made the identification of the necessary codes, themes and categories easier.
For the purpose of maintaining the anonymity of the participants in this study, the researcher used the following codes with digits (numbers) in reference to participants from the various categories involved in the study:

Table 4.11: KEY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CODE</th>
<th>STATUS IN SCHOOL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EI</td>
<td>Education Inspector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HT</td>
<td>Head Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDC</td>
<td>School Development Committee Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOC</td>
<td>Focus Group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data was presented, analysed, interpreted and discussed under the categories and themes derived from the research questions above:

4.3.1. Attainment of ODL educational management degrees and head teacher effectiveness.

The themes that emerged in this category provided answers to research question 1.5.1 and objective 1.5.1 of the study. Under this category, the themes emerged as follows:
• Linking theory with practice
• leadership and management skills improvement
• communication enhancement
• impact on supervision and planning
• community mobilisation
• adaptation to change
• professional development and team work enhancement

4.3.1.1 Linking theory with practice

The majority of the respondents commended the programme for enabling education personnel to embark on professional self-development while they were at their work places. The participants acknowledged the programme as some form of on the job training where the theory that was learnt was practised immediately in their respective schools. The participants were of the opinion that ODL as a mode of learning was far more superior in matching theory and practice as compared to staff development in conventional universities where students spent lengthy times away from the field. The ‘beauty’ of ODL was said to be lying in the fact that students were free to practise and experiment on ideas as they went through the modules.

Some of the participants had this to say about the programmes’ ability to marry theory with practice:
T1: *Because it is done whilst the head teacher is at work, this programme engenders development of skills by marrying theory with practice. The programme therefore remains good staff development machinery.*

T2: *In most cases the programme has helped head teachers to find solutions to problems they face on day to day basis. They are actually placed in a situation where they are forced to compare their notes with what is happening on the ground.*

T12: *The programme keeps reminding the head teachers when they make wrong decisions in day to day running of their schools so that they are in a position to take immediate corrective action.*

H1: *Educational management degree attainment through ODL has provided me with theory and practice and has improved my attitude as a head teacher. The degree has influenced me positively right from the day I enrolled with the university.*

H9: *The skills and knowledge acquired are relevant and applicable in all aspects of the school and there is plenty of room to practise after reading each and every topic*

FOC1: *I personally welcome the programme and see it as a viable On The Job training which focuses on skill and knowledge enrichment as the students learn and as they graduate. It is usually not easy to forget something you have struggled to learn on your own. You are motivated to put it into practice.*

The responses of teachers, head teachers and member of focus group above signifies the observed potential of the ODL educational management programme in successfully marrying theory with practice in equipping head teachers with relevant leadership and
management knowledge and skills. Even though most of the participants showed satisfaction that the programme offered adequate theory and practice, a few had reservations about the programme:

**T30: I believe there is need on the part of the service providers, the relevant ministry and the government to ensure successful linkage of theory with practice by following up the students at their places of work, so as to assess the extent to which what they are learning is being practised. This exercise should be allocated some marks as part of course work. Such an approach would encourage conscious effort to transfer theory into practise.**

The finding is that there is plenty of opportunity to link theory with practice because head teachers never leave their schools for long periods but there is still need to perfect the practice. This finding also confirms assumption1.8.3 that ODL was On-The-Job training which provided for easy transfer of learning in schools. The majority, comprising education inspectors, recipients of the degree programmes and non-degreed teachers were in agreement.

However there was a significant portion of the participants who expressed the view that in some cases the link was missing. These were not satisfied that there was successful transfer of learning in all the ODL educational management degreed head teachers because they observed that some ODL degreed head teachers were not portraying as leaders who had been capacitated professionally because they seemed to be reverting to their old practices which were not in sync with modern trends of leadership and management. The researcher believes that the views of the latter group of participants might be an indication of the need to pay
attention to the necessity to have a practical component in the way questions are set or modules are designed to minimise theoretical orientation during staff development.

4.3.1.2. Leadership and management improvement

Organisational research is now indicating that leadership can be developed while the practitioner is at his or her job. One method of developing the skills in the modern world is through ODL. Zimbabwe has been no exception and the majority of the participants in this study supported this view. In Chipinge District primary schools, the leadership and management skills of head teachers who had attained educational management degrees through ODL tended to outshine those of non-degreed head teachers. The majority opinion indicates therefore that ODL degreed head teachers were viewed to be more effective primary school leaders and managers.

To support their views, the following are quotes from some of the participants interviewed who included members of SDCs, head teachers and teachers:

SDC 1: *Chikoro ngechedu asi tinodawo kuti vana vadzidze zvepamusoro.* (This school is ours but we look up to the head teacher to provide quality education to our children.) *Ticha vane degree re Education vakarongekapamazanoekusimudzira Chikoronekuonangezvemariyechikoro.* (A degreed head teacher is more organised in terms of development and management of funds.)
SDC8: I have seen that a degreed head teacher has been fully equipped with relevant skills to run the school. Therefore I can say leadership and management can truly be developed. All head teachers should be made to get degrees so that schools improve. We have seen that.

HT 2: The ODL degree staff development programme has changed the entire leadership trends in our district. The programme has widened my leadership views and has provided several ways of dealing with subordinates whose behaviour varied from person to person.

HT 10: The degree programme has changed my leadership style. I have adopted the participative approach where I am now delegating more duties and as a result of this the performance of the school has improved.

T 23: School heads who have undergone ODL learning are quite ‘pregnant’ with techniques on how they can mould their teachers so that they can be effective teachers, hence promoting the standards of their schools.

T40: Honestly there is improvement. The programme has bridged the gap between head teacher and teachers especially in the running of schools with regard to current and modern approaches. The head is now able to consider the views of other staff members.

The participants quoted in the above quotes share the same sentiments that the ODL educational management intervention has gone a long way in equipping the graduates with the necessary leadership and management skills for a developing society. However in any society there is bound to be opposing views as indicated below:

T33: The programme has partially improved the running of school by the head teacher.
**T48:** In some schools the quality of leadership has been enhanced. In other schools acquisition of degree has led to arrogance on the part of the head teacher rendering the qualification ‘a white elephant.’

**EI 1:** There is marked improvement in areas of lesson delivery and there is evidence in schools that we visit to show that serious supervision of lessons is taking place in their schools. The ODL degreed head teachers also contribute towards the development of the education system in districts by contributing in form of presentations during workshops. In addition to these the ODL display personal qualities of endurance and punctuality. Even if district meetings are consecutive, they always attend.

The observation by the education inspector shows that the self-discipline that was required by the head teachers to go through degree programmes is the same discipline they were showing in their work places.

The finding is that the majority of participants accepted that leadership and management of schools in Chipinge District had been improved through the ODL degreed head teachers who were responding to modern leadership and management trends. The opinions of the majority of the participants confirmed beyond doubt assumption 1.8.1.that ODL degreed educational management degreed head teachers were effective leaders and managers of primary schools. It was agreed by the majority of the participants who included education inspectors, head teachers, teachers and SDC members that ODL degreed head teacher were a better breed of head teachers as compared to non-degreed head teachers or those who held degrees which lacked the educational management component. They showed support for the ODL intervention. The study was not comparative. Any comparison done with head teachers who
were not ODL degreed was not the researcher’s intention. Nevertheless new insights were gained by researcher in relation to the need to carry out a comparative study.

The responses show that even if there might be some observed gaps in some individuals in certain schools, the majority of participants was positive that there was marked improvement in how primary schools were being lead and managed. The finding has also further confirmed the second assumption 1.8.2 that a person’s professional effectiveness could be developed. The majority agreed that head teachers who had been staff developed through ODL had been capacitated in their leadership and management knowledge and skills. The call for improvement in teaching materials and access to the programme shows that participants were realising the benefits of professional development. The finding has also contributed towards answering research question number 1.4.1.

4.3.1.3. Communication enhancement

Effective communication is a vital ingredient in the smooth running of any organisation and a school is no exception. A primary school head teacher finds him or herself as the main facilitator in opening communication channels, be it communicating with all staff members, SDC members and other stake holders as well as passing relevant information from various sections of interested groups. The need for improvement of Basic English Communication Skills was highlighted by several participants showing that it was also a cause for concern. This being a critical skill in an organisation various opinions were raised concerning the need for ODL to improve head teacher communication skills for effectiveness. Below is an assortment of the views that were expressed by the participants.
T51: They lack communication skills. Most are not well exposed to good communication so in some cases some cannot handle issues such as giving instructions and commanding respect without resorting to threats.

T 65: There is still lack of consultative approaches in affairs related to smooth running of schools. As a result sometimes there are scenarios of hasty ill-informed decisions being made due to inadequate communication.

Some SDC members were however positive about their respective head teachers’ communication ability as shown:

SDC 3: Our head teacher communicates with us in a friendly manner.

SDC11: Tinoda mutungamiri wedu. Basa riri kufamba. Tinobatsirwa pakuronga nekufamba nenguwa. (We appreciate our head teacher. Work is progressing in the school. The head teacher helps us in planning and time management). He communicates with us well. Ngenguwa tinotsanangurirwa zviro zveshe (Everything is explained to us timeously).

As far as the head teachers were concerned, they were satisfied with improved communication channels with their superiors as shown:

HT 5: The School Inspector is co-operative and shares with me ideas concerning school leadership and management.

HT 9: The relationship is very good, communication channels are open. Everything is par excellence.
The finding was that some ODL degreed head teachers’ communication skills needed enhancement at both personal and social levels with their subordinates. The researcher observed a gap exists where the head is appreciated as a good communicator by SDC members while a sizeable number of teachers express the sentiment that channels of communication need further opening up. Some head teachers were said to be in need of sprucing up their basic communication skills in English. Haimann and Gilbert (1987) observed that communication was a central part of effective supervisory leadership. The concern about the need to have head teachers who were fluent in the medium of instruction is voiced by Prasad (2001) who argues that badly expressed messages, inadequate vocabulary and jargons hinder effective communication. The issue of fluency in English language is however, highly debateable where there are strong voices calling for more use of local languages in educational institutions.

It might not be adequate for head teachers to communicate freely with education officials at district office while their subordinates felt short changed in this area of leadership and management of schools. The view is supported by Prasad (2001) and Bulin (2001) who posit that status relationships of head teacher and subordinates in organisations can block communication and that such situations can lower the self esteem of subordinates which would lead to distrust, defensiveness, conflict and negative competition in organisations.

The need for open communication and information availability in an organisation are considered to be pertinent by Olajde (2000) who argues that people usually feel there should be improvement in the way people communicate with one another. Olajde (2000) asserts that
it is through communication that people compete with one another. There is no doubt that schools, as organisations, compete with one another as a result of having acquired information and acting on it. Witziers, Bosker and Kruger (2003) highlight the value of effective communication in a school when they posit that a head teacher was expected to communicate expectations for continued improvement of the instructional programme.

4.3.1.4. Impact on supervision and planning

Supervision and planning are key roles of a manager in an organisation. They ensure that the schools’ and relevant ministry’s objectives, vision and mission statements are realised. It is therefore the duty of a head teacher to plan school activities in a way that is responsive to the educational expectations of the school, the local community and the country at large. The local ODL state university has included supervision and planning in both B Ed and M Ed educational management degrees against the background of their importance in education.

This is how the participants in this study thought the head teachers in the district fared:

The head teachers who were interviewed believed that the programme had enhanced their supervision of subordinates.

**HT 8:** Internal supervision and staff development have improved the performance of the school.

**HT 11:** Generally my supervision has improved for the better. I am now able to identify weak teachers and to help them properly.

The responses of the SDC members below show that parents realise the value of having a head teacher who is able to plan effectively with them for the development of their schools.
The participants also fully acknowledge that school activities require effective supervision but they admit that the head teachers’ load had increased in a school. The participants argue that this situation was impacting negatively head teachers’ performance sometimes.

SDC 9: *I feel that head teachers need to supervise teachers in class more as well as when teachers perform other duties outside the classroom, for example during sports. They may fail to do this because of too much work. Basa rakona rawandisa pamunhu umwe. (The work is too much for one person)*

SDC 2: *He is effective in planning for development*

SDC 6: *She is regarded as a hardworking head teacher whose development plans are progressive especially in the area of construction.*

Most of the teacher participants felt that ODL head teachers were trying their best to apply new supervision methods but were hampered by senior ones and teachers who had attained degrees from conventional universities. These tended to resist introduction of new ways of supervising and in some cases tried to de-rail noble plans. A teacher had this to say:

T80: *Some very senior teachers do not respect young ODL degreed head teachers who they consider as inexperienced. The young head teachers sometimes feel inadequate to supervise the senior teachers in the ministry.*

From what the researcher observed in schools that were visited, particular attention was given to supervision of teaching and learning processes in classrooms. Scheme-cum plans, records
of marks and lessons were regularly supervised as a way of ensuring conformance to the educational requirements of the ministry. Where the head teacher was not doing it personally, the work was delegated to the deputy heads and senior teachers. When asked how critical this area was, one of the head teachers said that supervision of pupils’ work and scheme-cum plans remained a key result area and that it was one of the key indicators of head teacher effectiveness.

The finding is that the majority of the teacher participants found ODL degreed head teachers effective supervisors and planners of school activities although they sometimes met resistance from colleagues who under-rated their capability. The finding is consistent with the view of Bonnic (2011) who asserts that when one is in a leadership position, it is important to try and make a positive impact on the lives of the teachers one supervises and on the instruction of the students.

The negative behaviour reported to be displayed by some teachers in schools headed by ODL degreed head teachers is consistent with findings of Sergiovanni and Starratt (1993) who argue that some head teachers meet resistance when trying to implement new ideas among subordinates of lower qualifications. Mulkeen (2005) also observes that, it is normal for head teachers of schools in remote areas to experience some teacher supervision and monitoring challenges due to the fact that head teachers travel often to district offices on administrative issues leaving no adequate time for staff supervision.
4.3.1.5 Community mobilisation

In contemporary Zimbabwe there have been so many changes in the education system. Some of the changes have been attributed to economic, political and social factors prevailing in the country. These factors have resulted in introduction of new educational changes or incremental changes to existing policies. In Zimbabwe the decentralisation of the education system as a policy has had an impact on resource mobilisation in schools.

There has been a paradigm shift in how resources are mobilised for the development of the school organisation. The responsibility of mobilising human, material, infrastructural and other resources falls mainly on the headmaster and SDC members within the local decentralised education system.

The participants have demonstrated the importance of a head teacher’s capability in resource mobilisation as an indicator of effectiveness. The participants, mainly SDC members and teachers are the people who are in active interaction with the head teachers under study. From the constructivist point of view, they projected actual experiences pertaining to the reality of challenges faced in resource mobilisation in schools. Despite the challenges, the majority of participants agreed that ODL educational management degreed head teachers were trying their best in this area of effectiveness. Examples of effectiveness in mobilisation of resources alluded to were building of Early Childhood Development blocks, additional classrooms, building of teachers’ houses and development of sports fields among other things. The responses they gave were a testimony of their conviction.
SDC4: *He is effective in mobilising the community for resources through the school development committee and other stakeholders like non-governmental organisations which have interest in the welfare of the school. As a result we have been able to build the much needed structures in the school*

Although the SDC members agree that degreeed head teachers are excelling in resource mobilisation for leadership and management effectiveness, the heads themselves admit that it is an uphill task due to the brutal financial environment that surrounds them.

**HT7**: *It is not possible to reach the desired level of effectiveness as a leader due to other factors that affect the extent to which the effectiveness is attained such as the availability of material, human resources and the local environment in which the school operates.*

Another head teacher echoes almost the same sentiments by saying,

**HT3**: *It is not that easy to mobilise resources due to problems of location of schools, availability of resources and political interference. These factors affect the level of effectiveness in this area.*

The views of these two head teachers almost summarise the challenges that all the interviewed head teachers said they were facing as they tried to procure necessary resources critical to their effectiveness the performance of their schools as a whole. The issue of political interference in school leadership and management is acknowledged as typical of developing countries scenario by Narayan (1996) who point out that rival political groupings can simply destroy each other’s’ efforts. In this case, it could be efforts towards developing schools in the communities which fall under their constituencies.
Teacher participants tended to agree with SDC members in recognition of the energy head teachers had invested in mobilising resources within a harsh economic environment impacting on school organisations. Some of the teachers also acknowledged the challenges head teachers faced.

T22: Degreed school head teachers have done a great job in building structures and renovating buildings in schools

T3: Most schools headed by ODL educational management degreed head teachers in the district have many textbooks as compared to those headed by non degreed head teachers and modern things are being seen in their schools, things such as computers.

T 77: Poor resources hinder progress in areas of building and buying the necessary furniture for both pupils and staff. These two resources are critical for effective classroom instruction.

Hapanachinganyanyakubudavanavechifundavakagarapashimudzidzisiasinawodhesiki.
(Nothing good can be expected from children who learn sitting on the floor while the teacher does not have a desk to work on).

The responses from head teachers and teachers who are the key figures in schools portrayed that inadequacy of resources was a cause for concern. The scenario that was portrayed with regard to scarcity of resources in schools is highlighted by Sergiovanni and Starratt (1993). They argue that in a school it is customary for people to compete for scarce resources such as library materials, classrooms, houses and others. The situation of scarce resources could be in our schools for a long time. It is part and parcel of what characterises schools in developing
countries. The situation calls for an effective head teacher who can manage it. The researcher observed that in most of the schools, there was evidence of effort towards improving the school buildings and teachers houses. Although it was obvious that teachers were sharing houses, the appearances of the houses from outside did not reflect total neglect.

The finding is ODL educational management degreeed head teachers in Chipinge District were succeeding in infrastructural development specifically building of classrooms, teachers houses and repair work on old buildings in schools. The finding confirms the assumption 1.8.5 and contributes towards answering research question 1.4.3 of the study. Shaeffer (1994) posits that when community members contribute to resources in schools, they were more likely to ensure good enrolment, attendance, quality leadership and good teacher performance. Colleta (1995) and Perkins (1995) also support the role of communities in providing the necessary resources in the school arguing that it may be important as a form and expression of participation.

There might be too much expectation of ODL degreeed head teachers considering that most schools in Chipinge District are in economically disadvantaged areas. The view is supported by Bray (1996) who asserts that community financing can be affected by micro finances such as capacity and nature of leadership at local level, as well as the broader economic, social and other forces. The argument goes to show that attainment of the ODL educational management degree in itself might be a variable that might not be wholly responsible for head teacher effectiveness although it contributes significantly. Some communities might be better placed in supporting themselves materially than others. The researcher observed that schools which were in urban area in Chipinge fared better in resource procurement than those in rural areas.
In a study on community participation carried out in Kenya, Botswana, Cameroon and Nepal by the World Bank (1994), it was found out that some districts remained disadvantaged because of low incomes in the first place and therefore found it difficult to help themselves, (Mwiria, 1990, Moorad, 1989, Tamkong, 1995 and World Bank, 1994c). Closer home in Zimbabwe, Maravanyika (1995) puts forward the argument that most societies suffer from rural-urban disparities therefore government policies tend to compound rather than reduce inequalities.

4.3.1.6. Adaptation to change

The participants, mainly teachers voiced concern on the necessity for head teachers to be sensitive to the need for change and to be able to effect and manage it. They considered that ability to respond and introduce viable changes within a school as part of head teacher effectiveness. The majority of the participants acknowledged that ODL educational management degreed head teachers are introducing appreciable changes in schools they head despite limitations that confronted their efforts.

T31: Our head teacher appears to have noted that since the government had decentralised educational activities there is now urgent need to do that too within the school. As a result, there is now more delegation of duties which used not to be the case before his involvement in the ODL degree programme. He is also prepared to listen to suggestions on things that need changing in the school.
Below are some of the comments of teachers in relation to ODL educational management degreed head teachers and change:

T45: Our head teacher is realising that the ministry is no longer entertaining school administrators who are not degreed. He has taken the encouragement route where he is encouraging all of us to upgrade our skills through ODL. He argues that it is now easier to lead subordinates who are enlightened. This shows that our head teacher recognises the need for everyone to change their professional status by staff developing themselves professionally.

FOC2: The head teacher has now changed her attitude on staff development programmes. She is now including other degreed teachers as facilitators in the discussions. Everyone is showing interest to contribute in the discussions because we find that there is always something new to learn from the discussions. Staff development sessions used to sound like lectures at our school, therefore we used not to pay much attention to what the head teacher was saying. ZOU yakaita hayo basa nekutchinjira attitude ya head wedu. (We give thanks to ZOU for changing our head teacher’s attitude).

One SDC member displayed a good grasp of need for head teachers to adapt to change. The participant understood that failure to adapt to change spelt doom for the head teacher and the school.

SDC 5: I have all the confidence that a degreed head teacher can cope with the current fast changing environment, Zvinhu zviri kuchinja-chinja zvekuti head teacher asina degree zvinomunetsa kunzwisisa zvakawanda zvinodiwa.( there are so many changes around which
would make it difficult for a non-degreed head teacher to understand and meet all the new demands).

When probed further, SDC 5 admitted that there were a few exceptional cases where non degreed head teachers were out shining those with degrees but those were very few cases in the district. The researcher considered this view to be credible especially after observation and further probing revealed that the SDC member was a retired teacher in the community. There were great chances that the participant was knowledgeable about what he was saying.

A head teacher who commented on adaptation to change for head teacher effectiveness accepted that the ODL educational management degree programme had made him change his ways of operation. His exact words were:

**H9: New knowledge and skills helped me to adapt to the changing views on leadership and management.**

The above observation by a head teacher is in tandem with what one focus group said with regard to the extent to which the ODL programme had transformed their head teachers’ attitude for the better.
FOC 4: It is without doubt that head teachers who have improved themselves professionally through ODL have changed the ways they used to do things in schools. New knowledge has influenced them.

The views of the participants regarding change in schools are consistent with those of Fullan (2001) who argues that the more complex society gets, the more sophisticated leadership must become and that complexity meant change and specifically rapid or unpredictable change. ODL degreed head teachers who were said to be willing to listen to subordinates views on leadership and management were acting in tandem with the definition of Robbins and Coulter (2002) of change where it was viewed as alterations in people, structure or technology. The study revealed calls for head teachers to become agents of change. Daft (1998) asserts that effective head teachers should provide time and energy to make things happen in their schools. They should also be able to fight resistance to necessary change and able to educate on the merit of the proposed change.

The finding is that participants are accepting that there is evidence that ODL head teachers in Chipinge District are now more sensitive to constructive suggestions. This is consistent with the assertion of Crockett, Billingsley and Boscardin (2012) who hold the view that true leadership works towards shifts in beliefs, attitudes, behaviours, practices and policy.

The finding on adaptation to change by ODL degreed head teachers in Chipinge district is also congruent to the observations of Florestal and Cooper (1997) who say that
decentralisation, like any other reforms is built rather than created. It is another confirmation of assumption 1.9.2.

4.3.1.8. **Head teacher professional development and teamwork enhancement**

Decentralisation of the education system has meant that there is need for vigorous team building in a school set up. Gone are the days when the running of a school used to be the head teachers’ domain only. There is now more emphasis on establishment of several committees to deal with different aspects of organisational life. Evidence from the generated data indicated that most ODL degreed head teachers have maximized on the concept of participative leadership for the betterment of their schools.

All the participants agreed that most degreed head teachers had worked to ensure that the staff and members of the community work as a team.

**SDC 12:** Head teacher vanotiremeredza (Head teacher treats us with respect). He allows us as SDC members to play our roles and guides us in our activities. He also accepts advice from us.

**HT 4:** I get maximum support from the subordinates.

**HT12:** I get enough support when I require solutions to situational problems. I always involve them in decision making so that we maintain team spirit
The finding is ODL degree attainment has encouraged team work in Chipinge District schools. ODL degreed head teachers, SDCs and teachers were working in unison. At school Z, the researcher had an opportunity to arrive at a time when there were two SDC members, the head and two teachers collaboratively planning for a school occasion. The observation was in tandem with the views of Boston (1992) who advances that an effective head teacher should be one who promotes effective parent, staff, student and community participation in the school as well as developing management and strategic plans in consultation with the school community.

4.3.2. The benefits of providing ODL educational management degrees to education stakeholders

The themes that emerged in this category provided answers to research question 1.5.2. and objective 1.4.2. of the study. Under this category, the themes emerged as follows:

- university graduates as resource persons for personnel development in schools
- economic strategy for staff developing educational personnel
- transformation of leadership and management styles in schools
- linkages with the relevant ministry’s objectives and values
- ODL as a motivation strategy
- procurement of resources
- head teacher and SDC relationship
4.3.2.1 University graduates as resource persons for personnel development in schools.

The relevant participants under this theme who included teachers, education inspectors and the head teachers themselves agreed that the ODL educational management degree programme had broadened the availability of resource persons for personnel development in the district. From the evidence gathered from interviewees, the district ministry officials are utilising the services of learned head teachers in the district to chair or do presentations during district meetings. This shows that degreed head teachers are being accepted as models of effective leaders and managers in Chipinge District schools. There is also evidence that some degreed heads had been elevated to important educational positions after the district office realised their capability. Below are some views that support the researcher’s observations:

**HT10:** Promotions are given to those who have acquired the necessary qualifications. That means that the effectiveness of the head teachers who have those qualifications has been noted.

**HT8:** Because my subordinates and education inspector and District Education Officer in many instances are less professionally qualified than I, they are very cooperative with me because of my high level of education. They know they will learn something new from me each time we interact.

**HT7:** My relationship with District Education Official is pleasing and there is trust. They now respect my space as I respect theirs too. There is no harassment in how I run the affairs of the school because they believe I have got the knowledge and skills to deliver positive results.
SDC 7: Our head teacher is the Chairperson of Chipinge Examination Board. He is also a Grade 7 ZIMSEC marker. He is a capable and intelligent.

The above SDC member showed pride in having a degreed head teacher in their school. Most of the teachers were also in agreement with the fact that the degreed head teachers in Chipinge District had contributed enormously towards the education system through being resource persons in staff developing teachers in their respective school. Here are some of the teachers’ views:

T100: There are now vigorous staff development sessions in the school and teachers respect the head teacher’s ideas because we believe she is a learned person with an M Ed degree. I do not think we would be respecting her ideas that much if she had no degree because already there are some teachers among us with B Ed degrees.

T 92: The head teacher commands expert power due to his additional qualification which is above that of most staff members in this school.

The finding is that, ODL has successfully created a pool of knowledgeable and skilled resource persons at school and district levels in Chipinge. It answers research questions 1.4.2 and 1.4.3. The finding is supported by Stoner et al (1995) who advance that staff training is an indispensable strategy of motivating workers. The finding further consolidates Bulin’s (2001) assertion that training is an important tool for companies that are committed to continuous improvement.
4.3.2.2. Economic strategy for developing educational personnel

The ODL educational management degree programme has been hailed as an economic strategy for developing educational personnel by the majority of head teachers and teachers who participated. They said they found the programme economical for individuals and the government. They also noted that it was economic in the sense that less time was spent at work and during contact time with tutors.

T38: *It is a suitable educational staff development intervention for adults who still need to improve themselves professionally while still meeting the demands of their families.*

T27: *The fact that a person undergoes the programme while at work poses a great advantage. The payment plans that are provided make room for payment of our children’s’ school fees and it does not distance us from our family responsibilities.*

FOC 3: *The programme makes economic sense on the part of the government because it saves money when people do not apply for staff development leave to go to conventional universities. There is no need to engage temporary personnel to cover up for those who would be studying.*

The finding is that ODL is considered by the Chipinge District participants to remain the most economically viable means of professional development for teachers and the employer because it is on the job training. This is an extended answer to research question 1.4.1 of the study.
4.3.2.3. Transformation of leadership and management styles in schools

The philosophical perspective of modernity in the education system not only in Zimbabwe but globally has brought transformational leadership under spotlight as a measure of head teacher effectiveness. Judging from the responses generated from the participants, the researcher concluded that there was now a paradigm shift in the minds of educational personnel in Chipinge District concerning indicators of head teacher effectiveness in their schools. The old ways of doing things is no longer acceptable as people now appreciate head teachers who show signs of moving with time. Most participants said that ODL educational management degreed head teachers had transformed the operations in schools for the better while there were a few participants who said they were not noticing the differences.

SDC members who participated in the study supported the researcher’s observations when they said:

**SDC 15:** Our community views the head mistress as good because she is progressive in developmental issues.

**SDC 14:** The head teacher has brought successes in sports and results. Our school used to be at the tail but the head is transforming that bad image of the past.

**HT 5:** I have adopted the aspect of inclusivity in decision making and I am now viewing teachers as partners in decision making.

Some teacher participants agree:

**T33:** Decisions are made collectively after consultations. To me that is being transformational as compared to what the same head teacher had been doing before going to university.
T18: *It is a positively life changing programme which leads to the development of school management expertise.*

However other teachers had reservations concerning degreed head teachers’ effectiveness in transforming their schools.

T14: *The programme has improved how schools are run but most of the head teachers who have done ODL educational management degrees are computer illiterate hence finding it difficult to 'steer the train' in today’s world.*

T44: *In most cases the programme has helped head teachers to find viable solutions in running their schools properly. However, some head teachers seem to have read or to be reading different managerial skills. Their leadership leaves a lot o be desired.*

T 101: *There is no doubt that ODL is or can be a backbone of capacity building to enhance leadership and management.*

The sentiments of T14 and T44 suggest a gap in ICT skills in educational management degrees and lack of optimal transfer of learning in some degreed head teachers. The finding was that most teachers and head teachers in Chipinge district accepted that there has been effectiveness in use of transformational and participative approaches to decision making in schools. It confirms assumption 1.9.2 of the study. The finding goes well with Caldwell’s (2002) argument that effective leaders and managers use transformational and participative approaches.
4.3.2.4. The responsiveness of the ODL educational management degree to the relevant ministry’s objectives and values

As stated earlier in Chapter 2 of this study, objectives, values, vision and mission statements of Zimbabwe’s Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education form the cornerstone of the indicators of effectiveness that the researcher used in evaluating the effectiveness of ODL degreed head teachers in Chipinge district primary schools.

The participants displayed a clear focus on the ministry’s expectations as evidenced by their responses

**HT 13:** *I earned a high level of recognition and respect from subordinates and community.*

The researcher considered the head teacher who said these words to be a self-actualised person. Such a person had the potential to drive their staff and pupils towards self-actualization in their specific areas.

**T 49:** *Our head teacher is no longer concerned with petty conflicts, he deals with conflicts in a professional manner and does not seek to victimise any one.*

**T 39:** *Generally, the head teachers in question and teachers in their schools are working as colleagues. They take mistakes at work as theirs. They discourage pointing at one another or blaming each other. They work together as a family. They have team spirit.*

**T 58:** *I expect a good head teacher to be firm, good at implementing policies and solving conflicts, delegating duties and who does not show any negative attitudes towards teachers.*

An effective head teacher should according to **T 61:** *Should have the ability to solve conflicts amicably, must be innovative because community and teachers want to see positive changes.*
Speaking on the issue of improved professionalism in ODL degreed head teachers, EI 2 said, ‘There is now improved discipline in staff members and the head teachers are emphasising on wearing of school uniforms and Unhu (Ubuntu).’

The finding is that ODL degreed head teachers in Chipinge district were considered to be more focused on achieving their schools’ and the line ministry’s vision, mission, goals and values through better understanding of leadership and management issues. The finding confirms assumption 1.9.4 of the study. In the Dimensions of leadership for sustainable improvement, Caldwell (1992) agrees with the above finding by relating effective leadership to responsive leadership that involved leaders responding to the expectations of stake holders and analysing and acting upon them.

4.3.2.5. ODL educational management degrees and motivation of educational staff

Motivation is a key concept in relation to determining head teacher effectiveness. Central issues of school tone and climate also partly hinge on how the teachers and pupils are motivated in the school. Some head teachers admitted that they had motivated teachers and pupils by effecting new leadership and management strategies in their respective schools. The researcher understood from the participants that the attainment of educational management degrees had also served as a motivator to teachers and pupils as well.

HT 12: During open day ceremonies, pupils have seen me wearing the academic regalia hence they are highly motivated. The pupils are working hard aiming to pass so that they can achieve their own degrees in future.
**HT 6:** My subordinates have also embarked on professional growth. They have enrolled with different universities to upgrade themselves too. The community appreciates our efforts.

**HT 7:** As a result of the motivation they have received through democratic leadership styles now prevailing in most schools, teachers are working freely, are self-motivated and the pass rate has increased to over 80% (eighty percent) in the district.

**T 99:** The ODL educational management degree programme in its own right is encouraging all age groups to boost their professional qualifications through higher learning. Degreed head teachers are encouraging teachers to study.

However, some teacher participants showed displeasure with some head teachers, who instead of motivating those around them, they were a total disgrace. One teacher participant had no kind words for such degreed heads saying:

**T31:** Some degreed head teachers boast saying they were more learned than the other staff members except for those teachers who had acquired university degrees elsewhere.

The finding was that the attainment of ODL educational management degrees has motivated head teachers, pupils, teachers and even education inspectors in Chipinge district to aim for a degree. Some of them had joined ODL or other degrees from conventional universities.

The finding is consistent with the view of Haimann and Hilgert (1987) when they claim that training lifts morale for most employees as they enjoy new things. It is true from the generated data that the morale of the head teacher participants was indeed high due to the
attainment of ODL educational management degrees. They showed eagerness to practise what they learnt in the programme for the benefit of the school and community. The issue of some boastful ODL degreed heads was raised by several participants. It is possible that such sentiments could be of those participants who were feeling inferior in schools led by ODL degreed head teachers. Such behaviour was likely to result in subordinates being resentful and unappreciative of the benefits of the degree programme. The researcher is of the view that there is need to continue staff developing head teachers for social competence as a solution.

4.3.2.6. ODL degreed head teachers and procurement of resources

Ability to procure resources was alluded to by the majority of participants. It shows that it is a measure that is generally accepted as a sign of effectiveness in head teachers. Although this role falls mainly within the domains of SDCs, it was the head teachers who were finally accountable, the overall supervisor within the school. These are some of the responses got by the researcher in support of this observation.

SDC 10: He is quite effective; we have managed to build an ECD block because of his influence in the school and the community. He managed to approach funders to help us with materials to build the block.

HT 11: I find procurement of resources a big challenge. It is hampered by the education policy on payment of fees where children should not be excluded from lessons. There is also infiltration of politics in school affairs which in some cases result in lack of parents’ cooperation. To cap all these challenges there is also extra territorial vandalism of property since the school is on the Mozambique-Zimbabwe border.
HT 2: The failure to pay building fund hampers progress of the school as money needed to procure the necessary resources is not easy to come by.

HT 9: In adequate financial resources and insufficient textbooks and learning space have militated against my effectiveness as a degreed head teacher. I cannot work magic to bring these around except try my best within such a situation.

Despite the grim picture painted by the majority of the head teachers, several teachers recognized their efforts in mobilising resources for the smooth running of the schools. On observation, the researcher noted that some of the schools visited were in dire need of chalk, textbooks and exercise books. Some of the children could not even afford to buy a pen. Such shortages of basic resources were bound to impact negatively on head teacher, teacher and pupil performance. Teachers commented saying the following:

T 102: We must commend these head teachers who are working in a hostile economic environment because some of them have constructed many structures and renovated old structures in cooperation with the respective SDCs. That is really a mammoth task but they are demonstrating that it is achievable.

T 85: Although the ECD programme was unceremoniously introduced, the head teacher together with SDC members rose up to the challenge by trying their best to procure resources for the successful provision of this basic learning requirement in our school.

Some of the teacher participants also acknowledged the challenges put forward by the head teachers.
**T70:** Poor resources hinder progress in areas of building new classrooms and buying furniture. It is difficult to have quality education without these requirements in place.

**T 54:** Working with inadequate basic resources means that the head teachers whose effectiveness you are evaluating cannot fully implement the new knowledge and skills in schools. How can a head teacher promote ICT when there is no hope of constructing a computer lab in the school?

The finding was that ODL degreed head teachers were trying their best to procure necessary resources in the prevailing harsh economic environment. Their efforts were acknowledged by the majority of the participants. The researcher observed that in the few studied rural schools in Chipinge district primary schools, school furniture was a cause for concern. Most of the furniture was either inadequate or needed replacement or repair. This was the state of affairs in most school and it poses challenges to head teachers. The Zimbabwe government through the relevant ministry (2004) admitted that it was challenging to run schools with meagre resources and that development in some schools was hindered by inadequate textbooks, stationery broken down furniture or no furniture at all.

### 4.3.2.7. The head teacher and SDC relationship

When the Zimbabwean government decentralised its activities in ministries, parents were empowered to have a lot of say in the running of school affairs under the guidance of head teachers. At the early stages of decentralisation according to the participants interviewed there was a lot of friction between the two parties. Teachers, SDC members and head
teachers almost unanimously agreed that as head teachers furthered their professional qualifications they became more knowledgeable about the need for sound relationship between them and SDCs.

SDC members in the study had the following to say concerning their relationship with ODL degreeed head teachers:

**SDC 4:** The head teacher is tolerant and understanding. He explains everything to us even where we do not understand. He is very sociable and communicates with us well.

**SDC 10:** She recognises our presence and values our suggestions so we feel that we are together in all activities.

**SDC 6:** Our community regards the head teacher as a hero because he has raised our school to a standard that is high.

On the other hand, some head teachers expressed these views.

**HT 1:** I have earned a high level of recognition and respect from the community

**HT 9:** The community is beginning to value the importance of having degreeed head teachers because they observe that they are less dictatorial and protective as compared to non-degreeed head teachers who seem to feel they are under attack in meetings.

**T 97:** The relationship is quite good. The parameters of the SDC operations are clearly defined to members. The relevant Instrument 7 of 1994 is read and explained to each one of them by the head. So the members know their roles and boundaries. There is no conflict.
**T53:** It is the arrogant head teachers who are finding it difficult to work with SDC members. Some of the degreed head teachers take advantage of the ignorant SDC members to dictate unfair and unjustified actions.

**T41:** A professional relationship is being observed. The offices of ODL degreed head teachers have ceased to be battle fields for exercising powers over SDCs but serious planning and development houses.

The opposing views claimed the following

**T 95:** A degreed head teacher has become a dictator to those not learned in some cases.

**T 81:** A wide gap has been created between the educated and the not so educated. This has become a stumbling block to progress in some schools and has resulted in endless quarrels between the degreed head teacher and SDC members who might feel that they are being marginalised.

The finding was that the relationship between ODL degreed head teachers and SDC members were good. However, the opposing sentiments of the above two (2) could not be ignored. It is possible that in some primary schools in Chipinge district there might be some SDC members who are hero worshipping ODL degreed head teachers by virtue of them having a degree in educational management and not because of effectiveness. Mulkeen (2005) is in support by advancing that monitoring of head teachers by local communities is weaker in remote rural areas because of economic and social imbalances.
The observations do not however, minimise the views of the majority of the participants who noted that there was a harmonious relationship between their head teachers and SDC members. Florestal and Cooper (1997) support the need for a healthy relationship between head teachers and SDC members. The finding is also in line with observations of Boston (1992, Narayan (1996)), Gwarinda (2001), Winkler and Gershberg (2003) observations that good relationship between school management and parents were critical in school development. From the case of Chipinge district, it appears Zimbabweans are beginning to reap the benefits of SDCs in primary school development under the guidance of ODL degreed head teachers who have received training in educational leadership and management.

The finding in the above category of themes has answered research question number 1.4.2 on ways in which the provision of ODL educational management degrees to primary school head teachers has benefitted education stakeholders. The responses show that there have been benefits in form of, increased resource persons in the district, achievement of Ministry’s goals and that the government was saving funds due to the fact that head teachers are staff developed while at workplaces. In addition to these benefits ODL educational management degreed head teachers have served as motivators towards self-determination among other head teachers, teachers, pupils and education inspectors. Finally the study has found that good relationship with SDC members has been noted in the district which has contributed towards improved procurement of scarce resources.

4.3.3. Indicators of head teacher effectiveness

During interactions with the participants, the researcher noted that the indicators identified by the participants were consistent with those cited in the conceptual framework section 2.2 of
the study. Some of the indicators highlighted by the participants included ability to improve schools’ pass rates, procure the much needed scarce resources, supervise and guide teachers and SDC activities, successfully embarking on tangible projects among other achievements.

The themes that emerged in this category provided answers to research question 1.5.3. and objective 1.4.3. of the study. The emerging themes are presented below:

- school pass rate
- development of infrastructure
- arrogance in some degreed head teachers
- management of conflict in schools
- decentralisation of duties within the school
- The teaching and learning process and other interactions in the school

4.3.3.1. ODL degrees and pass rate in primary schools

Research has linked the academic and professional qualifications of a head teacher to the pass rate of the students at Grade Seven level. In Chipinge district, most of the participants in this study held the view that in schools which were headed by degreed head teachers, the grade seven pass rate tended to be higher as compared to those schools headed by head teachers without degrees.
When interviewed, the majority of SDC members agreed that head teachers with ODL educational management degrees had improved the pass rate in schools. One SDC member said this:

**SDC 14:** *Non-degreed head teachers have a tendency to dictate things. They are also associated with low pass rate*

Several teachers have attributed improved pass rate at grade seven to the attainment of ODL educational administration degrees by the majority of the head teachers in the district under study.

**T 74:** *I have a feeling that the improved pass rate in the district has been realised through well-educated head teachers who are using better strategies of supervising, disciplining and motivating teachers, pupils and parents.*

The responses given by the participants in all groups pointed to the fact that the issue of pass rate in school was at the centre of their hearts. This was not surprising at all to the researcher since the whole purpose of acquiring knowledge and sending children to schools is for them to succeed and proceed with education. The aim was for them to become economically independent and beneficial to their families.

The overall perception of teachers and SDC members was that ODL degreed head teachers were showing the capability of improving pass rate not only in their schools but in the province as a whole. The, interviewed members of SDCs claimed that almost all schools in
the district would prefer head teachers with degrees because communities now associate non degreed head teachers with low pass rates.

When interviewed on the issue, two (2) education inspectors in the district EI 1 and EI 2 both agreed that the district’s pass rate has been escalated due to the informed supervision and guidance that is prevailing in the district’s primary schools. The views of the two education officers were:

**EI 1:** *The presence of ODL degreed head teachers in the district has ushered in improved pass rates. One has no choice but attribute the improvement to improved professional qualifications of the leaders and managers of the schools. The way they understand issues is bound to be more superior to that of head teachers without degrees.*

**EI 2:** *I have noticed that ODL degreed head teachers practised better supervision, leadership and management practices. They do not struggle to staff develop their subordinates because they know what should be done. They also do not hesitate to implement teamwork because they have realised the advantages of using it for the benefit of the schools they lead.*

**HT 11:** *I don’t want to sound boastful but the community regards my work as excellent and academic progress is being noted in my school.*

**HT 13:** *I am not really sure of the figures but if you inquire from our superiors at the district you will be told that the pass rate in the district has increased by a wide margin.*

The majority of teachers who participated in the study were happy with the increased pass rate in the district and they were convinced that it was linked to the high quality of leadership and management in schools which was now more motivational than was the case in the past.
T97: There is increased pass rate in Chipinge district schools which we teachers attribute to disciplined teachers and pupils in schools.

T99: These ODL degreed head teachers seem to be effective managers. They are able to control, coordinate and direct school activities in a way that is advantageous to school children. The schools are now more child-centred than teacher-centred.

Some participants said that although there were other factors that might have contributed to the positive development such as pressure imposed on schools by publication of grade seven results on print media, one could not rule out the key role of head teachers. The researcher considered this observation to be valid due to the fact that, numerous factors exist that might influence the positive progress of school. However, the head teacher is the central figure or is the person at the helm of controlling the factors since that is what management is all about.

The education inspectors who were interviewed expressed the conviction that there was a relationship between the professional qualification of a head teacher and the performance of the pupils at Grade 7 level. To support their view, EI 1 said, ‘...There is indeed a strong relationship. The national pass rate was 47% and last year (2013) Chipinge district was pegged at 58% pass rate. I believe the attainment of ODL degrees has impacted positively on supervision and staff development. Teachers are now empowered through quality leadership in schools. In support of his colleague, EI 2 had this to say, ‘...Through ODL degreed head teachers, Chipinge District has succeeded in successfully adopting a zero tolerance of zero percent pass rate in Chipinge district schools. In 2011 pass rate in the district was at 37% and in 2012 it rose to 51%. We are proud of our performance as a province nationwide.’
Basing on the experiences expressed above, the finding is that ODL degreed head teachers had improved the pass rate in Chipinge District schools through improved leadership and management knowledge and skills. The emphasis on pass rates is consistent with the view of Boston (1992) and provides answers to research question 1.5.3 of this study.

4.3.3.2. Development of infrastructure

Judging from the number of responses that related infrastructural development to head teacher effectiveness inadequate infrastructure was a cause for concern in Chipinge district schools. Development of infrastructure such as buildings, water supply, electricity, libraries, road and pathways within the school were all mentioned as indications of head teacher effectiveness. The teacher participants argued that the availability of these infrastructural requirements in a school ensured that both pupils and teachers operated in an environment which was conducive to effective teaching and learning. Teachers who were asked to elaborate on how these could be the responsibility of head teacher alone when there were also the SDCs in place argued that the head teacher is the overall supervisor of these activities. They had this to say:

T46: *The government always says the SDC has full powers to run the affairs of their schools but the truth is that, it is the head teacher who is accountable for everything that happens.*

T52: *Head teachers who say they fail to implement infrastructural development in their schools because of lack of co-operation by SDC members would not be telling the truth*
because SDC members usually agree with what head teacher because they consider head teachers as knowledgeable people

On the positive side however, most participants indicated that ODL degreed head teachers had displayed the capacity to approach donors for assistance towards developing school infrastructure.

**T 86:** To be fair the degreed head teachers are trying their best in this area but one can only try within the prohibiting economic conditions. No one expects these head teachers to work miracles when funds are not easily available.

**T41:** In schools were the communities are development oriented degreed head teachers have been able to apply their new knowledge and skills. In disadvantaged and backward communities there is not much development because the communities are busy trying to survive. In such a community, development of infrastructure is not really urgent.

The researcher considered the last two observations by teacher participants to be unbiased and balanced. On the issue of ability to develop infrastructure, the finding was ODL degreed head teachers have performed effectively in the development and upgrading of infrastructure within their schools given the financial limitations that confront them. This confirms assumption 1.9.5 of this study.

The issue of poor infrastructure has been noted by Zimbabwean Ministry officials (2004) as one of the reasons why remote schools fail to attract qualified teachers. The inability to
acquire skilled teachers results in head teachers settling with any teacher resulting in poor performance in examinations.

The observation by the ministry is in tandem with the views of a head teacher who said that most of the teachers in his school were locals who operated from their homes. The head teacher said this was a disadvantage in that the school was staffed by people who were born and bred in the community who lacked exposure to outside environment. The head teacher said very few teachers from outside the area were keen to join remote schools because of poor infrastructure. It was emphasised that teachers liked schools which were nearer the highway and recreational centres for mobility and entertainment.

4.3.3.3. Arrogance in some ODL degreed head teachers

The diversity that now characterises people running the affairs of Zimbabwean primary schools today calls for head teachers who have the capacity to cater for it. The teaching staff itself now comprises teachers with various qualifications such as certificate in education, diplomas in education, non-teaching degrees, B Ed degree holders and temporary teachers with no professional qualifications as yet. Some teachers in some school might be holders of the same educational management degree as the head teacher. The point has support from Haimann and Hilgert (1987) when they say that the labour force is better educated today than at any other time in history. On the other hand the head teacher has to deal with SDC members some who might be retired teachers while others might not be educated at all.
The implication of the above scenario is that, these people of different academic and social backgrounds were likely to have varied perceptions about head teacher effectiveness. From the generated data a small number of participants claimed that some of the ODL educational management degreed head teachers were too pompous or arrogant for the good of the schools they lead.

**T44:** Some of these degreed head teachers are pompous, badly treat teachers and do not treat teachers as adults who are responsible.

**T55:** The head teacher wastes time during staff meetings boasting about how he worked hard to acquire his degree while shouldering his normal duties in the school. He should motivate instead of boasting.

**T 7:** Some ODL degreed head teachers are too old to change their ways. They fail to implement new ideas they were taught and also fail to lead young teachers. They resort to force in order to stamp their authority.

The display of such negative behaviour in a head teacher does not augur well with leadership and management effectiveness. Davis (1997) argues that school principals (equivalent of head teacher) who are abrasive, arrogant, aggressive, uncaring and inattentive to needs of others are ineffective. The researcher holds the view that while these accusations might be true with some head teachers; it is also possible that such accusations might have come from teachers who felt inadequate against the degreed head teachers. Interestingly, no such comments came from the SDC members. The observations by other teachers provided below appear to justify the researcher’s view on the issue of head teacher arrogance.
T31: Most ODL degreed head teachers who in some cases are much younger than some senior teachers in the school find it difficult to supervise old teachers. Some old teachers try to resist new ideas and this makes it difficult for the young head teacher who in the end might resort to force to bring necessary changes leading to him or her being called arrogant.

T8: Some old teachers do not respect young degreed teachers who they view as boastful.

FOC 4: One participant in focus group discussion 4 had this to say, ‘...some of us teachers accuse ODL degreed head teachers of being pompous just because we do not have the degrees they have.’

The above comments by the participants led the researcher to the finding that providers of ODL educational management degrees might have created a professional chasm between head teachers and subordinates in schools that needs to be filled. Inferiority complex might be breeding among those teachers without degrees and that does not encourage the spirit of oneness in schools. In addition to the gap that is now there between the ODL degreed head teachers and subordinates. The researcher acknowledged the observation of Adeyinka (2007) who asserts that attitude has direct impact on job satisfaction. Most of the schools in Chipinge district are typically rural. A rural set up might pose challenges to head teacher effectiveness. This view is supported by Mulkeen (2005) who says isolated schools present challenges for teacher supervision and support and that classroom teachers need continued professional support and supervision.
Through the actually expressed views and observations, the researcher made the finding is that the presence of ODL degreed teachers in primary schools was threatening the self-esteem of those who do not have degrees. In addition, the finding confirms assumption number 1.9.6. The finding also answers research question 1.5.4 of the study.

The researcher is of the view that the issues presented above were related to the school climate created by some ODL degreed head teachers in Chipinge district. Chakanyuka, Nyuke and Gutuza (2010) refer to the importance of creating a humanistic climate in a school to ensure effectiveness. The argument is such a climate was likely to make teachers cooperative, have high morale and to focus on task achievement. The researcher also observed that in schools visited the climates were friendly with teachers free to express themselves without showing signs of fear of victimisation.

4.3.3.4. Management of conflict in primary schools

Management of conflict is a theme that has been popularised by organisational behaviour theorists such as Critner (2009) and Alabi (2010). Review of related literature in Chapter 2 has shown that it is critical for any leader in an organisation to be in a position to manage the inevitable conflict which arises due to several factors. This means that conflict cannot be avoided but it can be resolved and managed by an effective head teacher.

Several participants mainly teachers commended ODL degreed head teachers for their ability to resolve conflicts in schools in Chipinge District. The participants elaborated saying
organisational problems leading to head teacher and school ineffectiveness sometimes emanated from failure to resolve conflicts on the part of the head teacher or other senior teachers. Some of the problems they highlighted included, lack of cooperation, insubordination and disunity among staff members.

Here are some of the views from participants regarding the effectiveness of ODL degreed head teachers in resolving conflicts in their schools:

**HT 4:** Sometimes conflict occurs even if one wants to avoid it for the benefit of the school. What is important is how one deals with it.

**HT 9:** I personally try to ensure that conflict is resolved amicably and not in a dictatorial manner but through communication.

**T56:** There is quality supervision and management though some head teachers fail to artfully handle conflicting situations in schools.

**T 67:** The degreed head teachers are more effective in solving social problems.

**T 88:** They display more openness, liberal, empathy and less aggression.

**T 70:** Sometimes there are conflicts in schools due to disrespect of teachers by head teachers.

**T 81:** Some of the head teachers fail to select appropriate strategies to handle conflicts.

The above sentiments are an indication that participants had mixed views and were not in a unanimous agreement concerning the ability of degreed head teachers to manage conflict in
primary schools. Although the majority of participants said that ODL degreed head teachers were resolving conflicts effectively, it is possible that some head teachers were failing to effect conflict resolution strategies in their schools to the satisfaction of their subordinates.

The finding was ODL degreed head teachers were seen to be better equipped in amicably dealing with conflicts professionally in schools they headed but there was still room for improvement. Achua (2010) on conflict resolution says conflict management and resolution were important leadership skills because conflict affected performance and that if the conflict is negative, it might prevent the achievement of organisational goals.

4.3.3.5. Decentralisation of duties within the school

As pointed out earlier in this presentation. The adoption of self-managing schools through decentralisation of responsibilities by the government has resulted in the head teacher having additional roles as a leader and manager of a school. To avoid overload of work, head teachers would naturally be expected to shed off some of their traditional roles through delegation so as to ensure leadership and management effectiveness in the schools. The participants who were more affected by delegation of duties were teachers, so they were the chief informants in this segment.

Asked about their expectations in an effective head teacher, a teacher had this to say:

**T25:** *To me an effective degreed head teacher should be one who is prepared to delegate duties so that the running of the school does not appear as if it is the head teacher’s private property.*
**T51:** The head should not display insecure tendencies of not wanting to delegate duties. They should offer subordinates chances to lead by delegation and use of genuine committees which they do not manipulate.

**T 82:** When the school’s internal activities are decentralised through delegation, every member develops a feeling of oneness and strives to excel in the delegated area.

**T 60:** Sometimes I understand the hesitancy on the part of some head teachers to delegate because if there is failure they are the ones who are accountable.

The above views show that most teacher participants were well versed concerning the dire need for head teachers to delegate against their ever increasing leadership and management load. They explained the ideal situation and some of the benefits that could be reaped by delegating duties in schools. When further probed on what was actually happening on the ground in Chipinge district schools, the researcher received the following views.

**FOC 5:** One participant said, “Our head teacher delegates duties according to our abilities, sometimes she even asks if we are comfortable or not to carry out the duty.”

**T24:** Even if we find the delegated duty too challenging, our head teacher is always encouraging and assuring us that we would overcome.

**T31:** Although our head teacher is degreed; he appears to favour the old style of monopolising school activities forgetting that he cannot be everywhere. This negative attitude towards delegation tends to compromise his effectiveness as a leader and manager and the effectiveness of the school as a whole.
The researcher had some experiences through observation the times he went to interview focus groups in Chipinge. Appointments with the head teachers had been made a week before the interviews so they were aware of my activities. At school W the head teacher was absent on school business but the researcher met no challenges because she was warmly welcomed by one of the senior teachers who led me to the deputy head. The group was swiftly organised to my satisfaction and the interview proceeded.

At school K again, the head teacher was away but the deputy head teacher was actually waiting for my arrival on the day. The preparedness facilitated good time management on my part since I had another focus group interview later. I realised the importance of delegation when she arrived at school X. Though warmly welcomed, the deputy head teacher clearly showed that he was not empowered to allow the researcher to conduct the interview. It was suggested that the researcher waits until the head teacher had returned.

The finding was that while the majority of ODL degreed head teachers were delegating duties effectively, there might still be a few ODL degreed head teachers in Chipinge district who might not be doing it well in their schools. The finding confirms assumption 1.8.3., that ODL provided for easy transfer of learning. It is however, in tandem with Leithwood (1999) and Kreitner and Kinicki (2010) who support delegation of duties as empowering to subordinates.

4.3.3.6. The teaching and learning process and other interactions in the school
The study noted that, despite the fact that the base for indicators of head teacher effectiveness had broadened with more responsibilities, there were core duties of a school head teacher which continued to occupy the centre stage. The main purpose of a school organisation was to ensure that head teacher and teachers facilitated successful learning by effectively carrying out their duties as educators. This means that teaching and learning processes that took place in a school remained critical in determining head teacher effectiveness.

When asked how they measured head teacher effectiveness, education inspector EI 1 said they based their evaluation on, ‘...how they supervise pupils books, teachers’ scheme cum plans and lessons. The meaningful comments show that the head teachers know what to look for.' Asked on the same issue of indicators of head teacher effectiveness, EI 2 said, ‘...We assess their ability to staff develop newly qualified teachers and how they cope with the needs of different teachers in the school. We also look at the ability of the head teacher to identify discrepancies or gaps in the teachers’ performance and what they do to cover the professional gaps.’

The views of the two education inspectors show the importance that is placed on teaching and learning processes as critical areas for measuring head teacher effectiveness. The view of EI 2 is also in line with Result Based Management (RBM) which emphasises identification of gaps in the performance of personnel for further training purpose. The views further support Pajak (2008) who says that there is need to adopt new frameworks with regard to teacher effectiveness, progressive models of supervision and effective leadership styles. Lanz (2010) is also in support of the critical role of teacher supervision by head teachers arguing that
supervisors have the responsibility of assisting teachers in making decisions regarding quality of their instructional competences.

The finding is that ODL head teachers were considered to be effective promoters of successful teaching and learning through thorough supervision and assessment of teachers work.

4.3.4. Threats to the effectiveness of ODL degreed primary school head teachers

The themes that emerged in this category provided answers to research question 1.5.4 and objective 1.4.4. of the study.

The following themes emerged from the study:

- subordinate cooperation and head teacher effectiveness
- the need to upgrade teacher professional qualifications
- the expanding roles of the head teacher
- government policies on running of school activities

4.3.4.1. Subordinate cooperation and head teacher effectiveness

The head teachers and teachers of Chipinge district schools demonstrated acknowledgement of the importance of cooperation for head teacher and school effectiveness. Most head teachers admitted that teachers and education inspectors were cooperating with them in leadership and management activities. Teachers generally acknowledged that there was
cooperation amongst SDC members because they considered learned head teachers to be knowledgeable about leadership and management of schools.

HT 13: My subordinates are supportive and cooperative. They appreciate how I am actioning what I am learning.

HT8: Most subordinates are supportive in their roles. Few are not cooperative; they just want to challenge my leadership.

HT5: Teachers in my school are quite cooperative. They work without much supervision.

T 12: Head teachers and SDC members work ‘hand in glove’ towards the achievement of organisational goals.

T14: SDC members and head teachers cooperate in running affairs of the school.

T21: Head teachers and SDC members are always at loggerheads with SDC claiming superiority over head teacher and the later ending up using unnecessary powers over SDC members.

T32: Relationship is good; teachers and head teachers unite in face of challenges.

T17: Head teacher and teachers cooperate in creating a conducive learning and teaching environment at school because the head teacher respects them and their ideas.

The finding is that there was cooperation among ODL degreed head teachers, SDC members, Education Inspectors and teachers in primary schools of Chipinge district. The responses provided are indicative of successful teamwork in the district. The view is supported by Bulin (2001) who argues that cooperation in an organisation is a result of effective teamwork, openness, democracy, participation and commitment.
4.3.4.2. The need to upgrade teacher professional qualifications

A number of participants held the view that some ODL degreed head teachers might be facing problems in their leadership and management roles due to the fact that their subordinates were way below them in terms of professionalism. Some argued that, a situation where a knowledgeable head teacher tries to introduce noble changes among less knowledgeable teachers could be prohibitive to effective leadership and management. This is because such teachers would sometimes resist the changes without clearly understanding the rationale behind introducing them in the school.

While interviewing focus group 4 participants, the researcher gathered that lack of professional degrees among some subordinates might sometimes lead to resentment and petty jealousies of those who had attained ODL degrees. This negativity could result in lack of cooperation and lack of appreciation of the head teacher’s efforts. It is possible that negative attitudes such as these can result in head teacher ineffectiveness as a leader and manager.

The finding was that ordinary teachers needed to be provided with appropriate degree programmes and to be encouraged to enrol so that they acquire knowledge and skill bases that would enable them to operate at equal wave length with ODL degreed head teachers. It provides an answer to research question 1.4.4.
The finding emphasises the need to change the values and attitudes of teachers through professional upgrade. Bulin (2001) argues that values are ideas that are important to a person and they could be a source of conflict with other people. It is possible that the value system of ODL degreed head teachers was now very different from that of subordinates who have not furthered their professional qualifications.

4.3.4.3. The expanding roles of the head teacher

The study has shown that head teachers were now playing additional roles than they used to do in the past. The increased roles have posed challenges on the effectiveness of head teachers in primary schools. As a result of decentralisation and advances in research on organisational behaviour, new theories have resulted in introduction of new practices into the education system. Head teachers are finding out that they are no longer expected to be effective in only supervision, coordinating, controlling, and directing which were the main traditional roles.

The head teachers said there were now more demands on them in areas such as influencing the community and staff towards the vision of the ministry, formulation of mission statements, procuring resources, sourcing for donors or partnerships for the development of the school, educating and guiding SDC members to name a few.

Most head teachers admitted that the ODL educational management degrees they attained went a long way in equipping with them with modern knowledge and skills to match the
expanding roles. However, several teacher participants were of the views that there were inadequacies in areas of financial management and internet communication technology.

**HT 10:** It is challenging to be a student, supervisor, attend workshops and other roles.

**HT 4:** There is a limit to the roles one person can play effectively. Too much is expected of us in the current environment.

**T51:** In this 21st century, head teachers need to be effective in their roles which are increasing. They can overcome this challenge by training their subordinates so that they take over some of the activities.

**T 60:** The effectiveness of ODL degreed head teachers is now difficult to assess because they are always out of the school on various errands.

**T 76:** Some of the head teachers appear overwhelmed because they are expected to accomplish too much.

The finding is that head teachers of primary schools are now over loaded with responsibilities and the situation justifies the need to capacitate them through relevant staff development interventions so that they manage the diversity in roles effectively. The above finding is congruent to the view of Winkler and Gershberg (2003) and Zimbabwe Ministries of Education Sports and Culture and Higher and Tertiary Education (2004) who argue in favour of professional upgrading of educational personnel. The finding contributes to answering research question 1.5.5 of the study.
4.3.4.4. Educational policies and head teacher effectiveness

Schools operate within the policy framework of the country; therefore participants indicated that some of the educational policies that are governing operations in schools are militating against the effectiveness of head teacher effectiveness. The participants said some policies prohibited head teachers from reaching their potential out of fear of being discharged from service. Two outstanding policies that were identified as not being supportive to head teacher effectiveness were the policy on school fees payment and that on corporal punishment.

4.3.4.4.1. The policy on school fees payment

The majority of the head teachers bemoaned the fact that they were no longer empowered by policy to send non-paying pupils home that is excluding a child from lessons. The Ministry’s rationale was that, in line with the global position of creating child friendly schools, it was not the responsibility of the child to pay the fees but that of the parent or parents. In line with the constitution, the line ministry has officially adopted the stance that no pupils should be chased away or denied their test results on grounds of not paying fees because that is considered as infringement on their rights. The argument was that the Zimbabwean government was pro poor therefore it was up to head teachers and SDCs to find other means of raising money from parents.

The head teachers recognised the rationale but they said that the policy had denied them access to the little income schools could get from parents through the building fund. Some
head teachers argued that the policy had been abused by some parents who could have paid with a bit of pressure. They felt that the use of legal debt recovery procedures was not very effective with parents who already declare themselves as poor. The language they understood was when the children were sent home for a day or two for non-payment of the necessary fees. The finding was that the reduction of funds through non-payment of levies had resulted in reduced development in schools.

4.3.4.4.2. The policy on corporal punishment

Discipline is an important indicator of head teacher effectiveness in a school according to the point of view of the participants. In the Herald, of the 30th of November 2013, Mrs Constance Chigwanda, the permanent secretary in the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education was reported to have addressed an audience at Regina Mundi High School in Gweru stating that anyone who was reported to have applied any form of physical pain on children either at home of in school risked prosecution under the new constitution.

The implication was that the policy which used to allow school head teachers and teachers to log in first before applying corporal punishment had been overridden by the new law. The task was left to head teachers to devise other ways of instilling discipline in children in schools. From this government’s position, the researcher’s assumption is that failure to discipline children without using corporal punishment could be considered as head teacher ineffectiveness.
Most teachers and head teachers agreed that head teacher effectiveness had been compromised by the removal of corporal punishment from the education system. The general belief was that the government was sparing the rod and spoiling the child. The teachers said that it was now difficult for head teachers and teachers to discipline the students. The participants argued that most parents expect schools to discipline their children through corporal and then turn against teaches when something goes wrong. As a result of this, some head teachers might decide to just turn a blind eye on student indiscipline.

The finding on this category of responses is participants are of the view that government should re-think on corporal punishment and payment of school fees which might be impeding head teacher effectiveness and the development of schools in Chipinge District and possibly nationwide. The issues discussed in this category contribute towards answering research question number 1.4.4 that has to do with other factors that might cause a head teacher not to be effective. The participants highlighted factors such as insubordinate teachers who in most cases are now lowly qualified as compared the head teachers, the expanding roles of head teachers and some government policies which tended to be hostile towards head teacher effectiveness, mainly policies on fees payment and discipline.

4.3.5. The credibility of the effectiveness of ODL degreed head teachers

The themes that emerged in this category provided answers to research question 1.5.6 and objective 1.4.6. of the study.
• Lack of respect for head teachers who have undergone ODL by some colleagues.

• The comparison of ODL university education with the conventional one.

• The observed gaps in ODL educational management degree head teacher effectiveness.

4.3.5.1. Lack of respect for head teachers who have undergone ODL by some colleagues.

Bias against ODL graduates was real among teachers judging from what some teacher participants said during interactions with them. The study revealed that ODL degreed head teachers were treated with disrespect in some schools due to negative perceptions held with regard to open and distance learning. There is resistance to their leadership by experienced teachers who believed that although they might have no degrees, they were equal or even better due to years of experience they have had in the teaching field. A teacher declared that he did not have much respect for ODL degreed head teachers. This is what he had to say:

T 67: I do not have much respect for ODL degreed head teachers because they are not effective enough. Some of them learnt through correspondence and are not intelligent enough.

T25: Some of the ODL degreed head teachers appear not to have learnt anything about leadership and management judging on how they behave in and outside the school.

The above views of a teacher participants were contrary to what the head teachers actually said with regard to how they are treated by the subordinates as shown below:

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HT7: I earned a high level of recognition and respect from subordinates and community.

HT 7: The staff and community respect me and view me as a source of knowledge.

HT 10: Both teacher subordinates and the community value me with high esteem. I can see their feelings are such that they are having the right leadership.

The finding was that there could be still bias against ODL degreed head teachers in some ‘pockets’ of the Chipinge district communities. There is smaller number of sceptics among mainly teachers concerning the effectiveness of ODL degreed head teachers in Chipinge district. The few compared the ODL mode of learning with the conventional one. Despite the biases many ODL degreed head teachers have earned the respect of the communities they work with. There is a high level of positivity towards them and their work in schools.

This finding confirms assumption 1.9.6 that some academics in primary schools still questioned the effectiveness of ODL degreed head teachers to be partly and not wholly correct. Research evidence is showing that education stake holders in Chipinge district primary schools are warming up to the head teachers under study because the heads are demonstrating the effective performance of ODL as a staff development intervention. The weaknesses were regarded by the researcher as gaps that should be attended to as a way of improving the intervention and not totally dismissing the programme. The suggestions contributed towards answering research question number 1.5.5.
4.3.5.2. The comparison of ODL university education with the conventional one.

The study revealed that although there have been various professional gains got through ODL degreed head teachers in primary schools, the programme continues to be unjustifiably compared to conventional degrees. There is failure among some teachers to recognise the difference between ODL and conventional universities teaching and learning modes. This continues to impact negatively on their views concerning ODL degreed head teachers. This failure to recognise the strength of ODL in staff developing educational personnel is not surprising to the researcher because research has shown that the intervention has been relegated to the role of supporting and supplementing conventional education in developing countries (Perraton, 2000 and Siaciwena and Lubinda, 2008). It appears to be taking time for academics to realise that ODL is a force to reckon with on its own in countries such as Zimbabwe.

As a result, few teachers held the view that degrees attained through ODL were of inferior quality compared to those from conventional ones. Interestingly, it was observed throughout field work, that the impressions of the majority indicated that, ODL degreed head teachers had brought numerous positive changes not just in schools but in the communities where the schools are and the district as a whole. The views of the majority participants showed that the unfair comparison came mainly from non-degreed teachers and those who attained degrees from conventional universities.

The Chipinge district education inspectors who were interviewed on how ODL degreed head teachers compared with non-degree head teachers had this to say:
**EI 1:** I observed that schools headed by non-degreed head teachers were not performing to desired levels. Those schools headed by ODL degreed head teachers out shine the ones headed by non-degreed and even those headed by head teachers who have other degrees which are not educational. The latter are lacking in discipline and the way they welcome visitors in the school shows that they did not do educational management.

**EI 2:** I have seen ODL degreed head teachers to be more responsible and effective. Their performance is better than of non-degreed ones.

The two education inspectors who the researcher interviewed agreed that ODL head teachers’ performance was above that of non-degreed. They attributed the difference to the levels of qualification. They argued that the level of professional qualification mattered in capacitating the head teachers in steering schools towards high performance and meeting the schools’ and ministry’s objectives vision and mission. On the forth assumption(1.8.4) about commitment to duty, the majority including education inspectors said ODL degreed head teachers were more disciplined and committed to work. Their attendance and participation at district level were also said to be good. A few participants however expressed the view that ODL degreed head teachers’ commitment to work was a bit questionable due to too much movement out of the school under the pretext of submitting or collecting assignments though.

The inspectors added that it was no longer adequate for head teachers as leaders and managers of schools to depend on their basic professional qualifications. They emphasised that head teachers should improve themselves through professional development interventions such as ODL educational management degree programme under scrutiny.
T 55: ODL degreed head teachers are threatened by the existence of better exposed competitors from other universities.

T13: They lack the knowledge acquired by those who did full time degrees

T60: They are half-baked as compared to other conventional universities.

T 20: They are looked down upon as compared to those from conventional universities.

T101: They are looked down upon and are not given enough weight and respect by subordinates who have degrees from other institutions.

FOC 4: A member said: It is a negative mindset in some people which is a problem, otherwise ODL degreed head teachers are effective. Society has prejudice against ODL learning.

FOC 3: A group member had this to say: ‘In the same school there might be some teachers having degrees from other conventional universities and they start boasting and causing unnecessary conflict saying, ‘...iwe neka degree kako kekunyoresa ini ndakaenda kuno seat’ (...you with your degree by correspondence, I did my full time). Such words reduce the respect of ODL degrees in some schools.’

T 59: These ODL degreed head teachers have managed to earn the confidence of education officials, communities and most of the teachers because of modern methods they use in running the schools.

T 79: Confidence building lies with them. The problem is that some of the ODL degreed head teachers seem to be lacking in confidence as far as running of their school affairs was concerned.
HT4: They have confidence in my leadership.

SDC 4: We have confidence in the head teacher. There is better coordination of school activities together with the school community.

SDC 11: We have all the confidence because under the leadership and management of the head teacher we won the trophy of financial management in the whole of Manicaland.

The evidence generated from the participants shows that there was still negativity or bias against ODL in a society which is used to conventional university education. However many participants showed appreciation of what ODL graduates were doing as far as leading and managing schools were concerned. The ODL degreed head teachers were managing to demonstrate that they were capable of developing schools using the knowledge and skills they acquired through ODL. The SDC members who participated showed that they appreciated the developments that had been introduced in their schools by the head teachers under study.

The overall finding was that the majority of stakeholders prefer degreed head teachers in their schools especially ODL educational management degreed head teachers who knew more about school leadership and management. The finding also provides an answer to research question number 1.4.5 showing that scepticism about the credibility of ODL graduates as effective leaders and managers of primary schools was no longer justified. Evidence on the ground is showing that the ODL degreed head teachers had made inroads in gaining the confidence and trust of the majority of education officials and community members.

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4.3.5.3. The observed gaps in ODL degreed head teacher effectiveness

Although the majority of the participants in his study were of the opinion that ODL degreed head teachers were to a larger extent more effective as leaders and managers of primary school in Chipinge district, they identified areas where they believed there were shortcomings in their training. There were the gaps in the knowledge and skills they had acquired which the majority believed had a negative impact on the service delivery of ODL educational management degreed head teachers.

The areas which were a cause for concern were the basic communication of the head teachers, ICT skills and their financial management skills. Commenting on the basic communication skills of some of the ODL degreed head teachers, the participants said the following:

4.3.5.3.1. Communication skills

T19: Some ODL degreed head teachers fail to be effective simply because of poor English language. This makes it difficult for some to communicate effectively. Such head teachers do not present a good image of the ODL educational management degrees because when a person attains a degree, teachers and the community expect a certain standard of oral English to be spoken by the leader and manager of the school since he/she should provide the model to the public.
The ODL universities should continue to devise ways of upgrading communication until the graduates acquire good communication skills that build a good relationship between the school and the community they serve.

The head teachers should open up channels for communication throughout the school and community and they should not be people who entertain gossip among the subordinates, to avoid disunity or disharmony.

Most of them need to improve their communication skills which need a bit more polishing.

The issue of communication deficiency among ODL degreed head teachers has been highlighted by participants especially teachers. The researcher considered this to genuine observation since teachers are the ones who work with the head teachers on day to day basis. There is need for corrective measures so that head teachers are more proficient in communication skills. Evidence generated shows that the area of communication skills needed more attention from the ODL service providers.

4.3.5.3.2. ICT skills

The participants did not mince their words on the need for the ODL educational management degreed head teacher to be proficient in their ICT skills. Many of them reiterated the fact that Zimbabwe was now an active player in modern technology. Head teachers were therefore expected to be capable of using ICT in several areas of their leadership and management.
Some argued that it appeared as if the computers they were taught at universities were more theoretical and not practical oriented. Below are some of the participants’ views on the issue:

**T 88:** *It is not enough to know about the use of a computer in the school. Head teachers should be tested on how to practically use the computer.*

**T 27:** *Some of the head teachers are failing to cope with the technological demands in education such as e-registration of students in a school where the computer is available.*

**T 60:** *Some ODL degreed head teachers rely too much on office staff to retrieve and feed information. They should be taught to use the computers themselves. What happens if the secretary is not there and the head teacher wants some important information?*

**T 57:** *I think the head teachers should undergo practical training with computers not just reading about their uses.*

**T 46:** *There are now calls for e-learning in schools, how will some of them head teachers cope with this development if they cannot operate a computer?*

**T 100:** *Head teachers need practical skills with computers to meet the demands of education such as e-learning so that they interact with the outside world.*

**FOC 2:** *We believe the programme actually promotes technology because ODL students have to prepare assignments by researching, word process and send them. However, the skills are limited and they should be developed practically by the university.*

**HT 9:** *It is true, we need further training so that we may also be able to keep records on our own.*
HT 25: *Our module on computers did not allow for practical so it is true that there is a gap in that area.*

Education inspector EI 1 raised the need for computer mastery in head teachers saying, ‘...they need a hands on approach at degree level so that they would be able to use computers to the advantage of the schools they lead and manage.’

Most of the participants emphasised the importance of this skill in a modern organisation. Ability to send, receive and store files electronically is becoming more and more appreciated in this modern society and is considered as more efficient than traditional ways of using paper. The researcher observed that there was still heavy reliance on written documents at a time when schools are expected to be communicating electronically for quick decision making. The researcher noted that another of the prohibitive factors was lack of electricity in some of the schools in the district.

The evidence shows that participants were of the view that ODL educational management graduates were and are still behind in ICT. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2005) head teachers needed to use educational technologies for data collection, information management, decision making, communication and presentation within the curriculum.

4.3.5.3.3. Financial management skills

The participants observed that even if SDCs were in charge of running the financial affairs of schools, the ministry still held head teachers accountable. Whenever there was
misappropriation of funds in the school, it was the head teacher who was held responsible. Due to this reason, most teacher participants believed that there was a gap in this area that needed to be addressed so that the graduates who never had such training could acquire the knowledge and skill.

Some of the participants argued that even if some ODL universities were now providing the courses, there were still many graduates of the same universities who are ignorant of financial management who still need this particular knowledge and skill. These were the head teachers who were denting the credibility of the ODL educational management degree programme. The participants had these views to express concerning the issue of financial management in primary schools of Chipinge District:

**T41:** Although the SDCs have got treasurers it is the head teacher who has to account for the use of the money in the school and it will be the same head teacher who will be blamed for misuse of school funds. The head teacher is in the front line.

**T 50:** Most SDC members are not highly educated, so the ministry expects the head teachers to guide them in financial matters.

**T 69:** Head teachers take a leading role in budgeting for the needs of the school; therefore, a good background in financial management is a must.

The responses show that ODL educational management graduates needed to have a sound financial management base which is considered as lacking currently. The evidence shows that they are still accountable if money is abused by SDC members. The knowledge would also
protect some of the head teachers from tendencies to connive with SDC members in misappropriating school funds. The responses confirmed assumption 1.8.6.

4.3.6. The best way of improving head teacher effectiveness through ODL

The themes that emerged in this category provided answers to research question 1.5.6 and objective 1.4.6. of the study. Below are the themes that emerged:

- creation of more centres
- the need to expand courses
- practical assessment of transfer of learning
- need for subject specialisation in degree programme

4.3.6.1 Creation of more ODL centres

Several participants suggested that it was necessary that providers of open and distance learning provide centres at district level to make it easier for students to access information.

FOC 4. One member of this focus group was supported by the others when she said: ‘Even if we wanted to join ZOU to staff develop ourselves, the offices are too far away. We do not have enough funds to travel to Mutare many times because we are bread winners.’

Some of the participants when probed argued that ODL students tended to waste too much time away from schools using the excuses of visiting regional ODL offices in the provincial
city. The participants argued that the visits limited the time ODL degree head teachers had at their schools. Their absenteeism during the visits meant that they were not in a position to fully supervise their subordinates and pupils. Below are some of the actual sentiments of participants.

T 43: ‘...some of the students take advantage of ODL to run away from their duties in the school. Maybe if the tutorials could be done at district level there would not be too much movement from schools.’

T61: ‘...the ODL expenses are sometimes too much because of the need to travel now and then and looking for places to sleep during tutorial weekends’

The finding was that providers of ODL should seriously consider a district outreach point in Chipinge district because the participants expressed the need for that service arguing it discouraged some current and potential students.

4.3.6.2. The need to expand content of courses

It was also suggested by the participants that, changes in environmental demands indicated the need to expand the contents of the available courses. Some of the participants said that one of the reasons why some people viewed the degree programme negatively was the fact that some modules had been used repeatedly over several years. They believed there was now a gap in knowledge in the content on offer. The participants suggested that a content review of the existing modules might enable the ODL degree programme providers to include views of modern researchers.
FOC 3: One member of focus group 3 said, ‘...I am a student with a local ODL university and I notice that some of the modules we are using are now very old. The university should try to bring in newer ideas for progress in leadership and management.

FOC 2: Another member in focus group 2 had this to say, ‘...it is always good to move with time in course content because if we do not some of the content becomes irrelevant with time.’

The finding was that some of the modules currently used in ODL degree programmes need to be revised to meet the current situation so as to improve managerial leadership effectiveness in primary schools.

4.3.6.3. Practical assessment of transfer of learning

Some participants expressed the view that ODL service providers should devise ways of ensuring that their students effectively apply what they learn by introducing a practical course work component of on the job assessment. If this practical component is made mandatory, the head teachers who are going through the programme would strive to action what they are learning knowing that they would be assessed on their performance. This observation is a challenge on the ODL service providers to ensure that there is optimal transfer of learning, a gap that keeps on being highlighted in the ODL mode of learning. Another suggested strategy was for the ODL state universities to ask as many practical oriented assignments and examination questions as possible to avoid too much theorising.

T 32: There should be a way of testing the practical skills of the students in order to bring the theory closer to the real situation in a school setup.
**T 43:** Too much reading of modules with no practical assignments prevents successful application of new knowledge learnt.

The finding was that participants in Chipinge district would appreciate that there be a component in the ODL educational management programme where the students would be tested on practical application of knowledge and skills they would be acquiring.

Hopkins (2002) supports this concern by participants arguing that creation and transfer of professional knowledge were critical in an effective head teacher.

### 4.3.6.4. Need for subject specialisation in the degree programme

When interviewed on gaps they felt ODL educational management degree programmes have not yet fully attended to, one education inspector participant voiced concern on the lack of content subjects in the programme. The inspectors said that primary education forms the base for content subjects in high school. That base should be strengthened by having head teachers with subject specialisation. They argued that subject specialisation would capacitate the head teachers in staff developing teachers and compiling resource materials in different subjects for the benefit of the primary schools in the district. The following is what the education inspectors said:

**EI 2:** The ODL degreed head teachers are lacking in subject matter. There should be an element of specialisation in social studies and mathematics so that they display competency in at least one subject. I am worried about the middle grades where subject content is critical. The head teachers would then be able to staff develop others during district meetings and in their schools.
One head teacher had this to say: Some of us think that teachers should also have degrees with content subjects so that it becomes easier to staff develop each other in schools.

Below are some of the comments from teachers:

**T 4:** *ODL seems to be attending to head teachers only but head teachers do not work alone.*

**T 11:** *It would be most ideal, funds permitting, to extend degrees which are more suitable to classroom practitioners.*

The finding was that education inspectors, head teachers and teachers were worried about lack of specialisation in at least one content subject in the degree programmes so that head teachers would effectively staff develop on teaching various content subjects at school and district levels. The finding also contributes to answering research question number 1.4.6., which asks how best ODL educational management degrees can contribute towards primary school head teacher leadership and management proficiency. The suggestions included creation of ODL contact offices in districts, expansion of courses to meet new demands, practical assessment of transfer of learning and addressing the need for subject specialisation in educational degree programmes.

### 4.3.7. Justification for continued search for head teacher effectiveness

It was of interest to the researcher to find out if the participants viewed the study as worthy. The overall answer was that the continued search for head teacher effectiveness was a worthy cause for various reasons. Some of the participants pointed out that they appreciated that a
study of this nature was being carried out at D Phil, level because such studies appeared to be few in the system. Some of the possible benefits of such studies as perceived from the perspective of the participants were as follows:

**HT 7:** The search for ways of making primary school head teachers effective should continue because effectiveness of schools rests on the ability of the head. They say, ‘A good school is just as good as the head.’

**HT 10:** The study is justified in order for head teacher effectiveness to continue to improve in the face of an ever changing world with new ideas and skills that have to be acquired through the ODL mode of learning.

**T 77:** Studies such as this one in education should be continued because they help to identify and rectify grey areas so as to maintain high standards of education in Zimbabwean primary schools through quality leadership and management by head teachers.

**T49:** Such studies are necessary because there are still many head teachers who are ineffective in running schools who need to be professional developed.

**EI 2:** I really think ODL educational management degrees should pay heed to filling the vacuum in the area of subject specialisation in the programme.

**EI 2:** I believe the programme will continue to survive because more teachers, head teachers and even their superiors are reaping benefits through promotions which now require relevant degrees in education. There is no spoon feeding in ODL as a result the graduates are well read. They acquire more knowledge and information when they read more widely on their own; more than what a lecturer in a conventional set up can provide.
The finding was that Chipinge district participants hailed continued research focused on evaluating head teachers on managerial leadership effectiveness arguing that it ensured that primary schools operated in ways that met current societal needs.

### 4.4. EMERGING NEW KNOWLEDGE

From the findings drawn per each discussed theme some new perspectives emerged with regard to the effectiveness of ODL degreed primary school head teachers in Chipinge district in Manicaland.

There is growing acknowledgement of ODL educational management degree programme as a viable on the job training intervention. Teachers are increasingly calling for more practical oriented approaches to capacitating professional in the education system. The participants expressed need to devise new models for training teachers through the ODL learning mode so as a way of increasing their competency as leaders and managers of schools.

School Development Committee members now acknowledge the role of ODL in training head teachers and the value of having university graduates in their schools who they consider and prefer to be good leaders and managers.

Participants showed that the performances of educational staff development programmes are increasingly being measured against tangible benefits delivered by the graduates. Therefore
the performance of ODL educational management degreed head teachers reflected on that of the ODL providers.

In addition to pass rate, effective teaching and learning and development of infrastructure there is now focus on the head teachers’ ability to resolve and manage conflict in a modern school organisation. Some of the conflict is attributed to a wide gap in knowledge and skills which has been created between the head teacher and subordinates in the school. The gap suggests need to bridge it by provision of suitable degree programmes for the subordinates.

Although there is still doubt over the credibility of ODL as a professional development intervention, it is now minimal due to the positive performance of ODL degreed head teachers in schools they are leading and managing. It is emerging that the ODL degreed head teachers are out shining head teachers who hold other academic degrees and non-degreed head teachers in Chipinge district. The comparison between ODL degrees and Conventional degrees is swaying in favour of ODL in Chipinge District schools.

There is a widening gap that is now in place between ODL degreed head teachers and their subordinates. The result is that the two key players in the school are no longer operating at the same level of understanding issues. Massive upgrading of knowledge and skills is now a prerequisite of head teacher effectiveness and there is need that anyone involved in the running of school affairs including SDC members should receive training for the head teacher to be effective. The suggestion from participants was that, maybe it was now high time the relevant ministry introduced the preference for degrees for ordinary primary school teachers so that the universities can respond with the suitable programmes to capacitate teachers who are lagging behind with basic certificates and diplomas in education.
There is growing worry about deficiencies noted in ODL degreed head teachers in connection with internet communication technology, financial management and communication. These have emerged as grey areas that need to be addressed by service providers of ODL in order to improve their product and satisfy the clientele in education. It shows that educational stakeholders, in their different categories are people who are sensitive to modern trends regardless of where they are stationed in Zimbabwe. There is a general call for modernisation of the school organisation in Chipinge district.

The issue of the need for subject specialisation emerged from this study. Concern was raised for the need to include a subject in the degree programme since the head teachers and teachers have to deal with the teaching and learning of content subject at primary school level laying the base for secondary school content subjects. The participants strongly believed that head teachers and teachers should know more than just basic information in today’s classroom.

Another issue that emerged was the suggestion that ODL educational management degree students should be practically assessed on application of what they learn in their degree programme. It was suggested that maybe the service providers could include questions of practical nature in assignments so that the students could practise what they learn. It was argued by some participants that, maybe the strategy would assist the head teachers in transfer of knowledge and skills.

It emerged that there is a possibility that some head teachers were taking advantage of ODL to absent themselves from schools under the pretext that they would be visiting regional office for assignments and tutorials. To mitigate this, participants expressed the view that
both ODL students and aspirants would appreciate the setting up of district contact points. They argued that, the measure would motivate more teachers in the district to join the programme as some were discouraged by distance between them and regional office.

Another issue that emerged was that ODL service providers, Zimbabwe Open University in particular should now embark on review of courses and modules that are on offer because they believed that some of the modules had seen better days. The participants said this was necessary in a country of high literacy rate such as Zimbabwe, where people are quick to identify gaps in knowledge.

It emerged that SDC members, if well trained, motivated and guided are capable of participating within the laid down guidelines dispelling fears that with devolution of powers in the education system some of them might overstep their boundaries and try to venture into areas of leadership and management of schools where they had no legal mandate to do so. There is increasing call from teachers for head teachers to transform schools into learning organisations. The participants showed appreciation of head teachers who staff develop subordinates, who encourage teachers to enrol for ODL degrees and who allow teacher participation in school activities.

Last but not least important, it emerged that the ODL mode of acquiring university degrees remains the most popular or unsurpassed mode of professional development for teachers in Chipinge district. This is despite other conventional universities in the country providing their
own variations of ODL. Open and Distance learning still commands a lot of respect among adult learners in the district.

4.5. SUMMARY

This chapter focused on data presentation analysis and interpretation. The Grounded theory approach was used to come up with a thick description of how educational stakeholders of Chipinge District evaluate the effectiveness of ODL educational management degree holders perform their leadership and managerial roles as head teachers of primary schools. Various theme views and concepts emerged from the data generation exercise which enabled the researcher to clearly identify pertinent findings drawn in consistence with the adopted constructivist philosophical perspective which underpins this research study. The data was analysed, interpreted and discussed against the background of what other researchers have said in reviewed related literature concerning effective leadership and management of educational and other organisations.

Data presentation, analysis and interpretation were guided by the research questions of the study. The findings showed that ODL degreed head teachers were considered as effective in many areas of leadership and management but in some areas there were discrepancies attributed by the participants to unfriendly economic environment and possible gaps in the content they were taught and in how they were instructed through the ODL mode of learning. This chapter leads to chapter 5 which will focus on study summary, findings, conclusions and recommendations.
CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1 presented the background to the study where the justification of the study was discussed. The problem and research questions were stated. There was also discussion of key issues such as the conceptual framework and the philosophical underpinnings of the study.

Chapter 2 focused on review of related literature. The related literature was discussed from the global, regional and local perspectives with regard to the issues concerning views on the effectiveness of open and distance learning as a capacity building intervention of educational leaders and managers in developing countries such as Zimbabwe. In addition to this the related literature also covered concepts of leadership and management effectiveness in educational organisations such as schools.

Chapter 3 of the study presented the research methodology that was used in this study which was qualitative. The sample that was finally used in the study comprised Chipinge two (2) district education inspectors, thirteen (13) ODL educational management degree primary school head teachers, one hundred and two (102) primary school teachers, five (5) groups of six (6) members each for focus group teacher participants to make a total of thirty (30) and
sixteen (16) members of school development committees from thirteen (13)schools in the district. This resulted in a total sample of one hundred and sixty three (163) of purposively selected participants at saturation point in the study. The data generation tools that were employed included the researcher as the main tool, questionnaire with open questions for teachers and focus group discussions with teachers, questionnaire with open questions for head teachers and interview guides for education inspectors and SDC members. The researcher also made use of observation to generate data.

Chapter 4 presented, analysed and interpreted the generated data. This was done in compliance with the demands of qualitative research using the Grounded Theory Approach. Data was therefore categorised and thematically discussed and interpreted. Research findings emerged from the leadership and management related themes. The research findings ushered in new views concerning the effectiveness of ODL educational management degreed head teachers in Chipinge District.

5.2. A SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS FROM THE STUDY

Data presentation, analysis and interpretation was guided by the main research question, ‘To what an extent are ODL degreed primary school head teachers effective leaders and managers of schools in Chipinge District in Manicaland Province.’ From the identified seven (7) categories, several themes emerged and the themes guided the findings of the study. The findings were therefore based on what the participants testified to be their genuine observations in the specified categories:
1. Attainment of ODL educational management degrees and head teacher effectiveness in leading and managing primary schools.

2. The benefits of providing ODL educational management degrees to education stakeholders.

3. Indicators of head teacher effectiveness.

4. Threats to the effectiveness of ODL degreed primary school head teachers.

5. The credibility of the effectiveness of ODL degreed head teachers.

6. The suggested ways of improving head teacher effectiveness through ODL.

7. Justification for continued search for head teacher effectiveness.

Below are the findings from the themes which emerged from the identified categories of the generated data:

5.2.1. Attainment of ODL educational management degrees and head teacher effectiveness in leading and managing primary schools.

The following findings emerged from the themes in this category:

a) There is opportunity to link theory with practice because head teachers never leave their schools for long periods but there is still need to perfect application of theory to the practice because some of the head teachers appear not to be practising what they have learnt or are learning.

b) The majority of participants accepted that leadership and management of schools in Chipinge District have improved through the ODL degreed head teachers who are responding to modern leadership and management trends.
c) Some ODL degreed head teachers’ Basic English communication skills need enhancement at both personal and social levels with their subordinates.

d) The majority of the teacher participants find ODL degreed head teachers effective supervisors and planners of school activities although they sometimes meet resistance from colleagues who under rate their capability.

e) Most teachers and head teachers in Chipinge District accept that there has been reasonable effective transfer of learning through ODL although there was room for improvement with some head teachers. There has been positive transformation of leadership and management styles in primary schools as a result of head teachers adopting modern leadership and management practices.

5.2.2. The benefits of providing ODL educational management degrees to education stakeholders.

a) Most ODL degreed head teachers in Chipinge District have succeeded in infrastructural development specifically building of classrooms, teachers’ houses and repair work on old buildings in schools against the scarce financial resources in the communities. Attention is also being given to roads leading to schools from main roads. The researcher found road signs and directions very useful in reaching schools that participated in the study.
b) Most of the participants were accepting that there was evidence that ODL head teachers in Chipinge District were now more sensitive to constructive suggestions and changes that were required in the schools.

c) There was evidence that ODL degree attainment had encouraged team work in Chipinge District schools. ODL degreed head teachers, SDCs and teachers are working in unity in most schools.

d) ODL has successfully created a pool of knowledgeable and skilled educational management resource persons at school and district levels in Chipinge to enable decentralisation of staff development programmes.

e) ODL was considered by numerous Chipinge District participants to remain the most economically viable means of professional development for teachers and the employer because it is On-The-Job training.

f) The participants observed that ODL degreed head teachers in Chipinge district were more focused on achieving their schools’ and the line ministry’s vision, mission, goals and values through better understanding of leadership and management issues.

f) The majority of participants agreed that the attainment of ODL educational management degrees had motivated pupils, teachers and even education inspectors in the district to aim for a degree and for some of them to enrol for an ODL or other degrees from conventional universities.
h) ODL degreed head teachers were said to be trying their best to procure necessary resources in the prevailing harsh economic environment. Their efforts were acknowledged by the majority of the participants.

i) The relationships between ODL degreed head teachers and SDC members were said to be good. There is mutual respect and the SDC members acknowledge the assistance and respect they are getting from the head teachers. There was clear preference of degreed head teachers by SDC members.

5.2.3. `Indicators of head teacher effectiveness.

   a) ODL degreed head teachers have improved the pass rate in Chipinge District Schools through improved leadership and management knowledge and skills.

   b) ODL degreed head teachers were seen to be better equipped in amicably dealing with conflicts professionally in schools they head.

   c) The finding was that ODL head teachers were considered to be effective promoters of successful teaching and learning thorough supervision and assessment of teachers work.
d) Evidence showed that there was co-operation among ODL degreed head teachers, SDC members, education inspectors and teachers in most primary schools of Chipinge District. The cooperation was attributed to new ideas brought in through ODL degrees.

5.2.4. Threats to the effectiveness of ODL degreed primary school head teachers.

a) Through the actually expressed views and observations by the researcher, the finding was that the presence of ODL degreed teachers in primary schools appeared to be threatening the self-esteem of those who did not have degrees.

b) The study showed that teachers needed to be provided with appropriate degree programmes and to be encouraged to enrol so that they acquire knowledge and skill bases that would enable them to operate at the same intellectual level with ODL degreed head teachers.

c) Head teachers of primary school are now over loaded with responsibilities and the situation justified the need to capacitate them with matching staff development interventions that includes modern knowledge and skills so that they manage this diversity in roles effectively.
d) Participants were convinced that government should re-think policies such as policies on payment of school fees and the ban of corporal punishment as they were viewed to be impeding head teacher effectiveness and the development of schools in Chipinge District and possibly nationwide.

5.2.5. The credibility of the effectiveness of ODL degreeed head teachers.

a) There was still bias against ODL staff development intervention in some small pockets’ of the Chipinge District schools. Despite the biases many ODL degreeed head teachers have earned the respect of the communities they work with. There is a high level of positivity towards them and their work in schools.

b) The majority of stakeholders who participated preferred degreeed head teachers in their schools especially ODL educational management degreeed head teachers who were viewed to know more about school leadership and management than holders of other degrees.

c) Evidence generated showed that the area of communication skills needs more attention from the ODL service providers.

d) The evidence shows that participants were of the view that ODL educational management graduates were and are still behind in effective use of ICT.
e) The responses showed that ODL educational management degrees needed to have a more practical financial management course—which was considered as lacking currently. The evidence shows that they remained accountable if money was abused by SDC members.

5.2.6. The suggested ways of improving head teacher effectiveness through ODL.

a) The finding was that providers of ODL should seriously consider a district outreach point in Chipinge District because the participants expressed the need for that service arguing that the distance to regional centres discouraged some current and potential students.

b) The participants were of the view that some of the modules currently used in ODL degree programmes needed to be revised to meet the current situation so as to improve managerial leadership effectiveness in primary schools.

c) The finding was that participants in Chipinge District would appreciate that there be a component on the ODL educational management programme where the students would be tested on practical application of knowledge and skills they would be acquiring.
d) Education inspectors were worried about lack of specialisation in at least one content subject in the degree programme so that head teachers would effectively staff develop teachers in teaching various content subjects at school and district levels.

5.2.7. Justification for continued search for head teacher effectiveness.

Chipinge district participants hailed continued research focused on evaluating head teachers on managerial leadership saying it ensured that primary schools operated in ways that met the current societal needs.

The research findings ushered the study to the next section of drawing conclusions of the study.

5.3. CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

The findings of the study highlighted in the above section informed this section of the study. The following are conclusions the study drew from the findings. The research questions formed the base of the conclusions made.

The study concludes that the attainment of ODL educational management degrees has benefitted head teachers through improved teaching and learning supervision skills, effective planning of school activities and improved interactions with other stakeholders. The qualification has increased the head teachers’ self-esteem as some find themselves being utilised as resource persons to staff develop other head teachers and teachers at district level.

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It is concluded that the provision of ODL educational management degrees has benefitted stakeholders through infrastructural development, improved relationships and use of participatory and transformative approaches to decision making and implementation of plans. As a result, a pool of knowledgeable and skilled educational resource persons has been created for the district and this is inspiring other teachers, head teachers and education inspectors to aim for university degrees. The gains are attributed to new knowledge and skills acquired by the head teachers.

The study concludes that high pass rates at Grade Seven level, co-operation with teachers and SDC members and ability to procure resources for school development were upper most as indicators of head teacher effectiveness.

The study also concludes that despite attaining higher professional qualifications ODL degreeed are confronted by challenges that might threaten their effectiveness. One of the challenges is that of resistance to progressive changes in school by senior but less qualified teachers. There is now a mismatch of qualifications between ODL head teachers and subordinates. Lastly on this conclusion of challenges is that Zimbabwe’s educational policies on fee payment and pupil discipline are negatively affecting head teacher’s effectiveness.

The other conclusion is that there is no longer justification for scepticism about the credibility of the effectiveness of ODL graduates as leaders and managers of primary schools. The majority of the participants acknowledge the capabilities of the graduate. However, they point
out gaps in use of information communication technology (ICT), content subject, financial accounting and English language communication skills.

Finally, the study concludes that ODL educational management degrees lacked effective techniques for training and evaluating for optimal transfer of theory to practice while students are still in the programme. In addition to this, most ODL modules that are currently in use are considered outdated. Lastly, past and current students are finding visits to regional offices to access assignments and information financially draining. This is considered as a deterrent factor to aspiring students. The final part of this study advances some recommendations based on conclusions which were drawn from the research findings.

5.4. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

The conclusions drawn show that there were positives and negatives concerning the effectiveness of ODL educational management degree head teachers. The recommendations that are advanced by the study are based on identified gaps. Below are the recommendations:

5.4.1. Recommendations to policy makers

- The study recommends that the Zimbabwean Government could continue supporting ODL in university education and promoting the graduates because the majority of the participants in this study registered overwhelming support for this mode of learning.
- It is recommended that educational policy makers could make it a requirement for primary school teachers to attain a university degree so that there is effective
participation and co-operation towards vision and goal achievement in primary schools.

- The recommendation is that educational policy makers could reconsider certain policies which are indirectly impeding head teacher effectiveness in primary schools such as policies on corporal punishment and revenue collection procedures.
- The Zimbabwe Government should continue engaging parents on the two critical issues of fee payment and corporal punishment for a mutually agreed lasting solution.

5.4.2. Recommendations to the ODL trainers

- The study recommends that providers of ODL degrees in Zimbabwe could work in cahoots with the line ministry so as to come up with suitable degree programmes for the middle grades teachers so that they are better equipped with knowledge and skills to teach content subjects for a sound base in preparation for secondary education.
- The recommendation is that ODL degree service providers could introduce modules that involve practical approaches to ICT, financial management and make basic communication skills as compulsory subject in educational management degree programs.
- It is recommended that district contact points be established in areas where there are sizeable numbers of students to encourage aspiring students while making it easy for current students to access information.
5.4.3. Recommendations for further research:

- It is recommended that a similar study at a larger scale combining both qualitative and quantitative techniques could be carried out to cover more districts and provinces for generalisability.
- It is recommended that a comparative study be carried out on the effectiveness of ODL versus conventional degree head teachers to exhaust the debate on superiority.
- It is recommended that the proposed training model be subjected to practical application assessment for further theory generation.
- It is further recommended that more research should go towards developing new training models for training educational management students.

5.5. VALUE ADDITION TO THE FIELD OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.5.1 Proposal for a training model for effective ODL educational management programmes

Basing on the research findings, conclusions and advanced recommendations, the researcher finally proposes a training model that could be utilised in training for head teacher effectiveness. The model was developed basing on the conviction grounded in the research findings that head teachers’ competencies in managerial leadership rested on four specific pillars. According to the research findings the key pillars were, the identification of type of skills educational management students need to be equipped with by the trainers, the academic and professional knowledge they are exposed to during
training, the participation of the trainees in their work environment and their adaptation to change. Each pillar might need to be subjected to continual evaluation to suit the ever changing environmental demands that impact on the school. The study shows that all the four pillars, if adequately attended to during training, would facilitate easier transfer of learning in graduates and ODL recipients and lead to effectiveness.

The proposed model would be referred to as The Skills, Content, Social and Change Competencies Training Model (SCSC Training Model). The structure of the model diagrammatically shows that competency is at the centre of all educational training interactions. The diagrammatic presentation of the proposed model which is cyclic in outlook is shown:
THE SKILLS, CONTENT, SOCIAL AND CHANGE COMPETENCIES TRAINING MODEL (SCSC TRAINING MODEL)

Figure 5.1 The SCSC Training Model
5.5.2. Identification of required skills

In this stage, research findings imply that educational policy makers and ODL trainers could work together to evaluate skills which might be critical for effectiveness in educational leadership and management. There might be need for sensitivity to current environmental demands such as the use of information communication technologies (ICTs). Sensitivity could be facilitated through research fora and other interactions where there is cross-pollination of ideas. These activities are likely to influence the content undergraduates are exposed to.

5.5.3. Academic and professional content

The study indicates that once the skills are identified and continual upgraded, the trainers could be in a position to revisit the academic and professional course content on offer. The model suggests that there should be a symbiotic relationship between the skills and the content on offer. The research findings called for additional courses in the content such as Basic English Communication and subject specialisation for teachers and head teachers. The programme could include some presentation skills involving the content subjects using the 21st Century information technologies and allocate some marks on practical use of these.
5.5.4. Social interactions

The research findings suggest that some assessment should be done on how ODL students actually operate in their places of work. That could be achieved by means of self-assessment reports which could be compiled basing on short quest views. The data could then be transmitted electronically to the ODL regional centres for coursework mark allocation. Such evaluations could motivate students to keep applying skills and knowledge acquired in the programme. Assessment in this area could also include head teacher and parents’ interactions.

5.5.5. Change process

The last three pillars were likely to lead to the desired changes which would have a cyclic impact. This stage implies that there would be continual changes to skills and content on offer as time passes. Educational leadership and management researchers need to be on continually evaluating and assessing the performance of ODL students to ensure that the required changes materialise.

This model would not be applicable to head teachers only but to other educational personnel such as teachers. It would also address gaps such as lack of subject content in educational management degrees as well as assisting in content review of courses on offer in educational management through ODL. The assessment results would provide feedback to stakeholders especially trainers and policy makers.
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11 Takunda Road
Murambi Gardens
Mutare
02 April, 2014

The Provincial Education Director
Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
Manicaland Provincial Office
P.O. Box 146
Mutare

Dear Sir,

Re: APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT A RESEARCH STUDY IN CHIPINGE DISTRICT PRIMARY SCHOOLS: GUTUZA CONSTANCE; ZIMBABWE OPEN UNIVERSITY

I am a Doctor of Philosophy in Education candidate with Zimbabwe Open University who is intending to carry out a research study entitled:

“The effectiveness of open and distance learning degreed head teachers as leaders and managers of primary schools in Chipinge District of Manicaland Province.”

I humbly beg for your permission to carry out the study in the selected district. The collected data will be used purely for academic purposes and will be kept with strict confidentiality and privacy. I promise that ethics governing research studies shall be observed as a way of protecting the rights of all participants. The participants will comprise senior education officials in the district, head teachers, teachers and parent representatives.

I thank you so much in advance for your cooperation.

Yours Faithfully

Constance Gutuza
APPENDIX 11

Letter of Authorisation from Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education

Ref: C/377/1

Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
Manicaland Provincial Office
Cabs Building, Cnr H. Chitepo & R. Mugabe Road
P.O Box 146
Mutare
Zimbabwe

9 April, 2014

Gutuza Constance
Zimbabwe Open University

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH: CHIPINGE DISTRICT: MANICALAND PROVINCE BY: GUTUZA CONSTANCE; ZIMBABWE OPEN UNIVERSITY.

The above subject matter refers.

Please be advised that the Provincial Education Director has granted you permission to carry out a research on 'the effectiveness of open and distance learning on degree head teachers as managers ... Chipinge District Manicaland Province'. Ensure that this does not interfere with students’ learning time.

Kanoerera C
DEPUTY PED-PELS MANICALAND PROVINCE
Dear Participant

My name is Constance Gutuza, a Doctor of Philosophy Degree student with Zimbabwe Open University. I am researching on a study entitled. “The effectiveness Open and Distance Learning degreed head teachers as leaders and managers of primary schools in Chipinge District.”

Your district has been selected to be a case study and you are being humbly requested to participate voluntarily in the study. The researcher guarantees your anonymity and assures you that the data generated will be treated with the confidentiality it deserves and will not be used for reasons other than the reason stated. May you please answer the questions as honestly as possible (within the shortest time). Thank you in anticipation of your cooperation.

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA OF PARTICIPANT

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1. How do schools headed by a degreed head teacher compare with those headed by a non-degreed head teacher in your district?

2. In what ways has the acquisition of educational management degrees affected how primary schools are led and managed?

3. How best can the effectiveness of Open and Distance Learning degreed head teachers can be measured?

4. In which areas do you think ODL has contributed a lot on grooming head teachers as leaders and managers of primary schools?

5. Which areas do you consider ODL providers should give attention in staff developing primary school head teachers?

6. How far true is it that a gap has been filled in the Zimbabwean educational leadership and management of primary schools through ODL? Support your answer.

7. What do you consider to be the future of ODL as a professional staff development intervention in Zimbabwean primary schools?

8. Which areas do you focus on when assessing head teachers on their effectiveness as leaders and managers of schools?
9. What differences have you noticed if any with regard to the performance of degreed and non-degreed primary school heads in your district?

10. How does head teacher effectiveness relate to pupil performance in a primary school?

APPENDIX 1V

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL HEAD TEACHERS

Dear Participant

My name is Constance Gutuza, a Doctor of Philosophy Degree student with Zimbabwe Open University. I am researching on a study entitled “The effectiveness Open and Distance Learning degreed head teachers as leaders and managers of primary schools in Chipinge District.”

Your district has been selected to be a case study and you are being humbly requested to participate voluntarily in the study. The researcher guarantees your anonymity and assures you that the data generated will be treated with the confidentiality it deserves and will not be used for reasons other than the reason stated. Thank you in anticipation of your cooperation.

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1. How has the ODL degree programme influenced your views concerning leading your subordinates?

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2. How has the attainment of ODL management degree affected how you lead and manage your school?

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3. In what ways is your line ministry’s concept of effectiveness agreeable with what you have studied in your degree programme?

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4. How applicable are the knowledge and skills you have acquired through the ODL educational management degree programme in your leadership and managerial roles?

5. How does your professional qualification relate to pupil performance in your school?

6. How do you think your subordinates and the larger school community view your higher professional qualifications?

7. In your opinion, to what extent is it possible to reach the desired level of effectiveness as a leader and manager of a primary school? Justify your answer?
8. How much support did you get or are you getting from your subordinates and education officials as an ODL student? Suggest possible reasons for the support and lack of it.

9. What challenges have you met in your school which have militated against your effectiveness as a primary school leader and manager?

10. Describe your relationship with education officials in your district as an ODL degreed head teacher?

11. In what areas do you feel ODL has not equipped you with adequate knowledge and skills in educational management?
APPENDIX V

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INDIVIDUAL TEACHERS AND FOCUS GROUPS

Dear Participant

My name is Constance Gatuza, a Doctor of Philosophy Degree student with Zimbabwe Open University. I am researching on a study entitled. “The effectiveness Open and Distance Learning degreed head teachers as leaders and managers of primary schools in Chipinge District.”

Your district has been selected to be a case study and you are being humbly requested to participate voluntarily in the study. The researcher guarantees your anonymity and assures you that the data generated will be treated with the confidentiality it deserves and will not be used for reasons other than the reason stated. May you therefore please answer the questions as honestly as possible. Thank you in anticipation of your cooperation.
DEMOGRAPHIC DATA OF PARTICIPANT

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1. What are your views concerning open and distance learning as an educational staff development intervention?

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2. In your personal opinion how has the acquisition of educational management degrees through ODL improved the running of primary schools by head teachers?

3. What are some of the visible indicators of head teacher effectiveness or ineffectiveness in schools headed by ODL degreed head teachers?

4. How would you describe the relationship of ODL degreed head teachers with school development committees in their respective school?

5. How do you view the head teacher and teacher relationship in schools headed by ODL degreed head teachers?
6. Generally what are some of the challenges which threaten ODL degreed head teacher effectiveness in primary schools?

7. Do you consider ODL to be a worthwhile On the Job Training technique for primary school head teachers? Explain why.

8. What is your opinion regarding the idea that leadership and management skills can be developed through ODL educational management degree programmes?

9. How would you define an effective head teacher?
10. How justified is the continued search for head teacher effectiveness in primary schools?

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APPENDIX VI

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR MEMBERS OF SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES

Dear Participant

My name is Constance Guntuza, a Doctor of Philosophy Degree student with Zimbabwe Open University. I am researching on a study entitled. “The effectiveness Open and Distance Learning degreed head teachers as leaders and managers of primary schools in Chipinge District.”

Your district has been selected to be a case study and you are being humbly requested to participate voluntarily in the study. The researcher guarantees your anonymity and assures you that the data generated will be treated with the confidentiality it deserves and will not be used for reasons other than the reason stated. May you therefore answer the questions as honestly as possible. Thank you in anticipation of your cooperation.
### DEMOGRAPHIC DATA OF PARTICIPANTS

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<td>How long have you been an SDC member?</td>
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1. What benefits are you getting from a degreed primary school head teacher as School development members?
2. Which head teacher would you prefer in your school, a degreed or non-degreed head? Support your answer with reasons?
3. Cite areas where you feel there is need for effectiveness in your school and areas where you feel the head teacher is effective?
4. What are the disadvantages of not having a degreed head teacher a in the school and the local community?
5. What are your comments with regard to how your head teacher communicates with you?
6. How effectiveness is the head teacher in guiding you in school developmental programmes?
7. How does the community view the capability of your head teacher as a leader and manager of your primary school?

APPENDIX VII

OBSERVATION GUIDE FOR THE RESEARCHER
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