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**TOPIC: AN ANALYSIS OF THE CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED IN
ADMINISTERING ZIMSEC EXAMINATIONS: THE CASE OF SHERWOOD
MUNYATI CLUSTER, KWEKWE DISTRICT**

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Dedications

I dedicate this research to my husband Tawanda Mutandavari, to my daughter Tinotenda and son Blessing.

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Abstract

The point of this survey is to analyze the challenges being experienced in the administering of ZIMSEC examinations using the case of the Sherwood-Munyati cluster. To establish the ZIMSEC examinations related challenges faced by the cluster. The research's objectives were to establish the origin of the examinations challenges faced by the cluster and to recommend the successful mitigation strategies for dealing with the ZIMSEC examinations related challenges for the cluster. This examination is going to utilize the quantitative research method. Stratified random sampling was utilised to come with the 15 respondents being 12 teachers and 3 headmasters. Questionnaires and interviews were the data collection tools used. The research's major conclusions were that transport is a serious challenge to exams integrity in the cluster through delays, exposure and damage of exams material, exams cheating was on the increase in the cluster, leaking of examinations was now a rampant problem in Zimbabwe. Pursuant to these conclusions the researcher recommended the enforcement of ethical standards through stiffer penalties to offenders. There may be need to amend the relevant pieces of legislation to ensure that deterrent sentences are meted out to the culprits. Formation of student intelligent committees. As previously highlighted these help in the detection and reporting of cases of exams leakages in the cluster. This should be embraced at the national level with rewards being offered for leakage syndicates busters. And lastly, provision of transport and security personnel by ZIMSEC. ZIMSEC is an independent exams body that should fight to ensure that its integrity is upheld at all costs. Suffice to say that central to the pursuit of this is exams security. With Zimbabwe highly celebrated literacy levels, ZIMSEC should by now an exams body for the whole region if not Africa as a whole.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM AND ITS CONTEXT

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The point of this survey is to analyze the challenges being experienced in the administering of ZIMSEC examinations using the case of the Sherwood-Munyati cluster. This part shall look at the background information to the investigation, the problem statement, the objectives of the study, questions to be answered during the investigation, the importance of the study, limitations, and its delimitations and the definitions of key terms used in the study. It then ends by giving a summary of the whole chapter.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

P

Examinations are utilized as an apparatus for impartially assessing and evaluating students' learning results, capacity to show information, understanding, and potential for other business aptitudes advancement. Activities and practices that undermine the validity of examinations represent a genuine danger to the nature of the training framework and the accomplishment of its particular objectives. Examination spillages are a case of such activities that undermine the importance of examinations and harm the integrity of those in charge of directing them. In Zimbabwe, where an incorporated examination board operates, examination leakages are a difficult issue.

Immediately after attaining independence from Britain, Zimbabwe transformed its education system to meet its new national objectives. Prior to that, Zimbabwe's state funded school examinations depended on United Kingdom (UK) based examinations board. The Ordinary and Advanced level examinations were a privilege for a few. Then, examinations were being offered by the University of Cambridge Local Examination Syndicate (UCLES), the University of London Schools Examinations Board (ULSEB) and the Associated Examinations Board (AEB). Zimbabwe, the then Rhodesia, had its own Examinations branch under the Ministry of Education, Division of African Education, which, other than assuming a managerial job for external examinations, additionally controlled the terminal elementary school grade seven (7) examinations, the Junior Certificate examinations, the F2 grade nine (9) and grade eleven (11) examinations intended for African students.

The year 2000 marked the beginning of full scale localization of examinations in Zimbabwe. However, there has not been a smooth sailing in the conducting of public examinations in Zimbabwe. Lots of examinations malpractices ranging from cheating, leakages, delays and mix ups have been recorded every year.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Since the migration from the Cambridge International Examinations board in 1999, ZIMSEC, Zimbabwe's examinations board, has faced a myriad of challenges among them poorly printed question papers, errors, examinations leaks, postponements among many others. Several times the board has been taken to court by students contesting results or the manner it has handled examinations in the country. With these challenges seemingly endless, this researcher was then

motivated to carry out an analysis of the challenges encountered in the administering of ZIMSEC examinations in the Sherwood-Munyati cluster. Therefore, this study will justify the study of the challenges faced in administering examinations.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study seeks to address the following objectives:

1. To establish the ZIMSEC examinations related challenges faced by the cluster.
2. To establish the origin of the examinations challenges faced by the cluster.
3. To recommend the successful mitigation strategies for dealing with the ZIMSEC examinations related challenges for the cluster

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions will be answered in this study:

1. What examinations transportation challenges are you facing?
2. What mechanisms do you have in place to guard against examination cheating?
3. What security measures do you have in place to ensure the safety of exam papers and scripts?
4. How can the above challenges be resolved?

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research will be important to the following:

a) To other researchers:

The findings of this study will add to the already available literature. Other researchers can use the research as a reference and will identify some gaps in this study that they can use to carry out further researches on the challenges of examinations handling.

b) To the researcher:

The research will enhance the author with research skills, experience, a better and deeper understanding of the topic under study. Furthermore, the research will generate theory from which more relevant result-oriented pedagogies will shoot from.

c) To the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education.

This study seeks to expose the challenges encountered by the cluster in handling ZIMSEC examinations as well as fostering how best these challenges can be handled. In this light, the research is hoped to awaken the ministry to the challenges faced in this cluster so that the necessary corrective measures can be instituted for the betterment of the whole examinations process and it's the body's integrity. The study will also come up with strategies and recommendations to address these examinations challenges that the ministry can as well adopt to improve its operations.

1.7 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The major aim of this research was to look into the challenges faced in the administration of ZIMSEC examinations in the Sherwood-Munyati cluster with a view to finding lasting solutions to these challenges. The research covered the period from April 2018 to February 2019.

1.8 LIMITATIONS

Data collection – response rates are rarely 100% and this affects research validity and reliability.

However, the researcher made follow ups to ensure that all questionnaires were sent in and all the interviews were conducted.

Time constraints – the specialist being a full time teacher was obviously going to face constraints especially with the added pressure from the new curriculum. Be that as it may, the researcher worked over the holidays and utilised weekends to meet her research deadlines. She additionally needed to build up a period table that fused her examination needs.

1.9 CONCLUSION

The point of this survey was to analyze the challenges being experienced in the administering of ZIMSEC examinations using the case of the Sherwood-Munyati cluster. This chapter looked at the background information to the study, the problem statement, the objectives of the study, questions to be answered during the investigation, the importance of the study, limitations, and its delimitations and the definitions of key terms used in the study. It then ends by giving a summary of the whole chapter. Chapter two will review related literature.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this section is to indicate what other researchers have explored on the topic under study, how much their research has succeeded in providing answers to the research questions and highlighting the gaps that were unanswered. Case studies of best practices in examinations handling from abroad and home will be used to give great emphasis on the impact of a robust examinations handling procedure on exams quality and credibility.

2.1 ZIMSEC, ITS CHALLENGES AND THE HISTORY OF EXAMINATIONS IN ZIMBABWE

Examinations are used as a tool for objectively evaluating and assessing students' learning outcomes, ability to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and potential for other employment skills development. Actions and practices that undermine the credibility of examinations pose a serious threat to the quality of the education system and the attainment of its selective goals. Examination leakages are an example of such actions that threaten the integrity of examinations and damage the authority of those responsible for conducting them. In Zimbabwe, where a centralized examination system is used, examination leakages are a serious problem. It affects candidates in the whole country.

Immediately after attaining independence from Britain, Zimbabwe transformed its education system to meet its new national objectives. Prior to that, Zimbabwe's state funded school examinations depended on United Kingdom (UK) based examinations board. The Ordinary and Advanced level examinations were a privilege for a few. Then, examinations were being offered by the University of Cambridge Local Examination Syndicate (UCLES), the University of London Schools Examinations Board (ULSEB) and the Associated Examinations Board (AEB). Zimbabwe, the then Rhodesia, had its own Examinations branch under the Ministry of Education, Division of African Education, which, other than assuming a managerial job for external examinations, additionally controlled the terminal elementary school grade seven (7) examinations, the Junior Certificate examinations, the F2 grade nine (9) and grade eleven (11) examinations intended for African students.

From a political edge Musarurwa and Chimhenga (2011), charge that, different examination systems were discriminative in nature with one board for Africans and another for the white students. Associated Examination Board (AEB) was intended for whites while University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES) was essentially utilized by African students. This unfair evaluation framework was intended to hinder a greater part of the African populace from pursuing their education further. Because of this very specific framework, Zimbabwe then decided to assume responsibility for its examinations not long after independence in 1980 to address the challenge. Zimbabwe lacked confidence in the past examination process and that prompted the localization of examinations between 1984 and 1994 with accentuation at first on 'O' level examinations. AEB examinations were eventually removed while UCLES assumed control over all examinations and helped with localization

The Zimbabwe School Examinations Council (ZIMSEC) was established through an Act of Parliament (Zimbabwe School Examinations Act of 1994) as the body responsible for assessment in primary and secondary education in Zimbabwe. ZIMSEC then took over activities from the Exams Branch in Zimbabwe and the Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES) of the United Kingdom (UK). The ZIMSEC Act (17/1994 and 22/2001) empowered ZIMSEC to:

- a) Organize and conduct such examinations in subjects that form part of a course of primary or secondary education as the Ministry may direct in writing.
- b) Consider and approve subjects suitable for examination,
- c) Appoint panels or boards of examiners
- d) Approve and register examination centers
- e) Review rules and regulations relating to examinations
- f) Confer or approve the conferment of certificates, diplomas and other awards to persons who would have passed examinations,
- g) Enter into arrangements with persons or organizations for recognition of certificates, diplomas and other awards granted in respect of examinations organized or conducted by the Council
- h) Do all things necessary to maintain the integrity of the system of examinations in respect of primary and secondary education in Zimbabwe. The integrity of ZIMSEC can only be maintained when there is maximum security of the examinations and when the examinations are run professionally without leakages.
- i) Do any other thing that the Council may be required to do under the Act or any other enactment.

This allows ZIMSEC to implement findings from this study to reduce cases of examinations leakages.

The localization of examinations was finished in 2002 when ZIMSEC at last assumed control over the control of advanced level examinations. Its main functions were: setting, appropriation, preparing of markers, security of examinations and stamping of school examinations. In spite of the fact that it falls under the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, ZIMSEC is a self-sufficient board run by a Board of Directors training. It is financed through an administration fund from the government, examination fees and other fund arising activities it undertakes. It also needs to be stated at this point that, school heads and teachers are not representatives of ZIMSEC. Despite the fact that in Rhodesia examinations invigilation was paid for by the examinations boards, it is amazing to take note that, today educators are required to transport, keep, oversee, invigilate, and return examinations answer scripts to ZIMSEC district offices at their very own costs. Those teachers who mark examinations are utilized on contract basis and paid for the marking.

2.2 FORMS OF MALPRACTICES IN PUBLIC SCHOOL EXAMINATIONS

Academic dishonesty is a perplexing phenomenon which can take many forms. Although its occurrence has been documented and publicized, academic dishonesty is not dealt with appropriately, and, often, policies and procedures regarding this phenomenon are lacking or ineffective. Worsening the matter are the ambivalent perceptions toward educational dishonesty by headmasters, faculty, and students. Clearly, it is appropriate and essential that research be completed to shed light on this growing concern, for only a more transparent perspective of the problem will enable institutions of higher education to eliminate educational dishonesty effectively.

2.2.1 EXAMS CHEATING

Throughout the twentieth century then, academic dishonesty has been a problem, and it grew in terms of sophistication, particularly with regard to the professional writing firms. Gary Pavela, director of judicial programs at the University of Maryland at College Park, was quoted saying that cheating has invariably existed, however its character has evolved over the years. "More serious cases involving organized activity" characterize the present situation (Connell, 1981: 20). Pavela 13 14 maintained that the nature of cheating was of greater concern than the simple fact that cheating existed (Connell, 1981: 20).

ORIGIN OF EXAMS CHEATING

The World Bank (2001) additionally indicates that learners become involved in examination irregularities and malpractice principally as a result of the impression that passing public examination will have profound, immediate, and lasting impact on a candidate's life. In several developing countries, examination success and high school graduation is the sole avenue for poor students to secure a non-menial job. TechTalk, (2001) concluded that, large-scale testing is not the culprit, it is large-scale testing with high stakes attached to the results that, in some instances have resulted in cheating. This study is more interested in examinations leaking.

Reviews of several studies have found that cheating is widespread in many countries. For example, Lord and Chiodo (1995) have found within their survey of college students in Western Pennsylvania that eighty three percent of the respondents had cheated in the past or throughout the current school year, 80% had admitted to using crib notes or written science terms on their shoes,

wrists or other parts of their body to get by minor quizzes and over 3 quarters admitted cheating on major exams. Research has also shown that institutional contexts like honor codes have important effects on student cheating behavior (McCabe et al., 2001). According to Konheim-Kalkstein, Stellmark and Shilkey (2008), an honor code is more effective in deterring cheating behavior as shown in their comparative study of honor code and non-honor code classrooms at a non-honor code university. On the other hand, Vandehey, Diekhoff and LaBeff's (2007) research findings indicate that even if students are aware of the institution's honor code this does not reduce cheating.

Meanwhile, individual factors such as age, gender, GPA and participation in extracurricular activities, although less influential than contextual factors, still "have some effect on cheating propensity" (Teixeira & Rocha, 2008, p. 16). Smyth and Davis (2003), for example, found that the majority of male students in two-year colleges admitted that they were more likely to cheat than were the female students. However, Athanasou and Olasehinde (2001) concluded that although differences between males and females were evident, the effect of these differences was quite low. McCabe et al. (1999) have noted alternative factors which have influence on cheating like as a perceived desire for high grades, parental pressures, a desire to excel, laziness, a lack of responsibility, a lack of character, poor self-image, and an absence of internal integrity.

Kerkvliet and Sigmund (1999) also found that instructors or lecturers were influential since students believed that their lecturers or instructors were concerned about them and were involved actively in the learning activities, and therefore these students tended to cheat less. Their study of classroom settings indicated that more test proctors, use of non-multiple choice exams, and use of

multiple versions of an exam help to reduce students' tendency to cheat in examination. A number of studies have examined public perceptions of educational dishonesty. It has been found that college directors and teachers agree that cheating in examinations or academic dishonesty could be serious offense (Leonard & LeBrasseur, 2008). Coalter et al. (2007, p. 11) found that academic misdemeanor in a mid-size state university in the United States is "an important issue that needs to be addressed". However, Zauwiyah, Maimun and Junaini (2008) discovered that business students in a Malaysian university perceived that some level of academic dishonesty is acceptable in some academic settings. Prenshaw et al. (2001) found that students who are more likely to view cheating as common at their institution are those who are younger, who have chosen rather lenient teaching staff, who see themselves as good students, and who do not take seriously the university's reputation for excellence. In general, a survey of the literature indicates that lecturers and directors regard cheating as a major concern and offense though not all students agree with this. Cheating is realistically widespread with many factors identified as significant contributors to the practice.

Peter Ashworth et al (2006) who studied the reasons for cheating question identified three main excuses from learners or candidates. The first one is that candidates or students are attached to certain values such as "friendship, interpersonal trust and good learning " which make them regard a highly punishable behavior like cheating as something justifiable whereas the same learners can view some legally approved behavior as something suspicious.

A significant component of United Kingdom university students are cheating in exams with the assistance of technological devices like mobile phones, watches, and hidden earpieces. Data obtained by the Guardian through freedom of data requests found a forty two percent rise in cheating cases involving technology over the last four years from 148 in 2012 to 210 in 2016. Last year, ¼ of all students caught cheating used electronic devices.

PREVENTING CHEATING

Instructors could curtail the incidences of cheating by paying specific attention to the methods they use to communicate their expectations to students, how they prepare their exams, and the way they administer their exams. The University of Huston provided the following guidelines on these three points:

Advance communication

- Administrators should ensure that their expected standards regarding examinations are well communicated to the students in advance of the exams.
- Advance communication can take various forms and should be done regularly and should form part of the syllabus.

Test preparation

- Create a test that is fair to your students. Some students use an instructor's reputation for giving “unfair” tests as an excuse to cheat. “Fair” means that the exam covers the material that you said it would cover, that students have enough time to complete the exam, and that its instructions are clear.
- Help students control anxiety by discussing the test procedures and outlining the material to be included. Handing out old tests or providing sample questions also reduces anxiety.
- Write new tests each semester, whenever possible; at the very least add new items. By doing this, students are less likely to use past students' exams to gain an unfair advantage.
- Prepare more than one form of the exam. You can have the same questions on each form, but (1) present questions in a different order on each form, or (2) vary the order of the

response alternatives. Where calculations are involved, you can modify values within the same question on different forms so that responses are different.

- Pre-code answer sheets and test booklets by using a numbering system so that the number on each test booklet matches the one on each student's answer sheet.
- To eliminate cheating after the exam has been returned to students, mark the answer sheets in such a way that answers cannot be altered; e.g., by using a permanent felt-tip pen.

Test administration

Most cheating on tests in large classes occurs when students are allowed to sit wherever they choose. It should be no surprise that cheaters choose to sit near each other. Cheating may be greatly minimized by using the following procedures:

- Number seats and tests and then assign students to sit in the seat with the same number as the number on their test.
- Systematically hand out alternative forms, taking into account students sitting laterally as well as those sitting in front and in back of each other.
- Have sufficient proctors for the exam. Exam situations vary, but, in general, the following guidelines are advisable:
- Require students to bring their student IDs and another form of identification to each exam.

To implement this requirement

- Have proctors look carefully at each ID and student.

- Have an enrollment list or card file of names and signatures to be matched against the IDs (or signatures on exam answer sheets) that is to be checked off as students enter (or leave) the exam room.
- Immediately attend to any suspicious conduct by the students. If the conduct is suspicious (but not necessarily conclusive), you should move the students to other locations in the room. This is most successful when it is done immediately and with as little disturbance as possible. Doing so also helps to avoid embarrassing the student being moved, who may be innocent. State ahead of time that you plan to follow this practice whenever something suspicious occurs, and that you do it as assistance to all students involved. When making this statement, stress to the students that you're asking them to move is not an accusation of cheating. A statement such as this frequently helps reduce the disturbance element and assure innocent students that they are not being accused of wrongdoing.
- If you suspect a student of cheating during an exam, let them finish the exam in case you discover the student was not cheating

2.2.2 SECURITY ISSUES IN EXAMS ADMINISTRATION IN ZIMBABWE

Public examinations have been leaking in Zimbabwe since the location of examinations from Cambridge. Despite uncountable circulars imploring headmasters to maintain the highest ethical standards in handling examinations the scourge has not subsided. Regional Examinations Circular Number 3 of 2011 reminded heads of examination centers of proper administration of public school examinations and avoiding all forms of cheating to maintain exams integrity. Major challenges boarder on examinations leakage than cheating.

Security issues regarding examinations in Zimbabwe start showing up the moment heads collect materials from collection centers. Because rural schools do not have their own means of transport, these public transport. Though ZIMSEC Examinations Circular Number 37 of 2012 encourages heads of schools to pool resources together where applicable and hire transport so that they avoid use of public transport when ferrying examinations, this has not been the case in most instances with the result that public transport is utilized.

In 2004, the headmaster and three other teachers at Mnene primary school were reported to have written and filled in answer sheets for most Grade seven pupils. Despite such corruption, the then Permanent Secretary for education, T. K. Tsodzo declared that some of the results at the school would stand as genuine. Such inconsistencies in delivery of services expose the inefficiencies of Zimbabwe's examination system and erode the little confidence that the public still has in the system (Kanyongo, 2005, p.72). This decomposition in ethical standards corroborates well the conclusion made by Arthur Levine when he said "Most schools show by their indifference that engaging in gross forms of cheating is not inappropriate behavior. The penalties are minimal, and students are unlikely to get caught anyway. That's a sure sign that cheating is reasonably acceptable behavior".

Regional Examinations Circular Number 1 of 2012 emphasized that the keys to the strong room should be handled by members of staff not bursars or clerks during the examination sessions. The real issue was not on loss of examination papers from the strong room but leaking before they got

in the examinations strong room. These cases show that, ZIMSEC circulars are addressing general areas and not the core problem of examinations leakage.

Responding to the question on security measures which are in place at ZIMSEC to protect National examinations, ZIMSEC website (2013) indicated that all ZIMSEC examination question papers were protected by stringent security measures at all points of production, distribution, storage and at all transit points.

Examination papers were guarded at cluster distribution centers by state security and ZIMSEC security details. However, security is guaranteed mainly up to the collection point by center heads and very little has been done to protect the papers from the collection point to centers where the examinations will be written. Heads have just been taking examination papers and use any means of transport to get the papers to their stations. Answer scripts are delivered to ZIMSEC Regional centers using the same modus operandi thereby increasing the risk of losing the papers. Unfortunately no school head is paid for the collection of examination papers and taking answer scripts to ZIMSEC. One can infer that Heads are not motivated to do ZIMSEC duties diligently.

2.2.3 TRANSPORT CHALLENGES FACED IN EXAMS ADMINISTRATION IN ZIMBABWE

According to Graham et al (1994) transportation plays a pivotal role in assisting examinations bodies the world over in achieving their mandates. This is supported by Kombora (2007) when he says that without a proper transport system, administration of credible examinations in Zimbabwe remains a night mare.

According to a research done in Asia by McCabe (2008) on academic honesty, examinations transportation was identified as a major impediment to academic honesty. Just like the case in Zimbabwe, examinations are transported using public transport. On numerous occasions examinations material has been lost with examinations having to be written in some instances.

Currently ZIMSEC delivers public school examination papers to District centers and all schools or centers come to collect their papers from the District center to their stations using their own means of transport. Although school heads are not ZIMSEC employees, they are given this extra responsibility that comes with the accountability for examinations leakage.

The New Zimbabwe Newspaper of 18 October 2012 had a headline which read “ZIMSEC withdraws 13 leaked examination papers.” The paper reported that ZIMSEC was facing a US\$850 000-00 bill to replace the leaked papers. This was after a Head from a Matabeleland North school had misplaced examination papers while hitch-hiking from Bulawayo to his school on a Sunday.

As alluded to earlier on, one of ZIMSEC’s weakness is the use of public transport to move its exams material from collection to schools and vice versa. ZIMSEC Examinations Circular Number 37 of 2012 encouraged heads of schools to pool resources together where applicable and hire transport so that they avoid use of public transport when ferrying examinations. Numerous cases of loss of examinations material on public transport have been reported and this culminates in examinations leakages.

2.3 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter traced the origin of Zimbabwe Schools Examinations Council (ZIMSEC), examined challenges faced by the board in terms of exams administration. Academic dishonesty has been a concern on college and university campuses throughout the twentieth century. Reported incidence

varied somewhat from country to country, but researchers stated consistently that estimates of academic dishonesty were probably lower than actual occurrence. The next chapter will look at the research methodology used in carrying out this study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

Chiromo and Kachikunda (2006) see a paradigm as an expansive system of discernment, understanding, conviction inside which the hypotheses and practices work. O' Leary (2004), characterizes procedure similar to the structure related with a specific arrangement of paradigmatic assumptions that are utilized to direct research, that is, logical strategies, ethnography, and action research. Strategies are the methods to be utilized for information accumulation and these incorporate discourse analysis and qualitative analysis.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

Huysamen (1994) characterizes research design as the arrangement as per which information is to be gathered to examine the exploration theory or question in the most monetary way. Devaus (2006) characterizes a research design as the ground breaking strategy that indicates the techniques and systems for information gathering and investigation. This examination is going to utilize the quantitative research method. As indicated by Saunders (2009), quantitative research is the numerical portrayal and control of perceptions to depict and clarifying the wonders that those perceptions reflect. Cohen (2008), sees quantitative research as social research that utilizes experimental strategies and proclamations to approve its discoveries. He further characterizes exact proclamations as engaging articulations about what "is" the situation in "this present reality"

as opposed to what "should" to be the situation and is generally introduction of observational explanations is normally in numerical terms.

3.2 TARGET POPULATION

Petersen (2004:28) defines target population as the total group of persons or objects from which the researcher intends to collect data from. The same view is shared by Punch (2003) when he describes the target population as the totality of all the elements from which the researcher wishes to collect information during a survey. This research gathered data from headmasters, teachers and the cluster examinations representative using questionnaires and interviews.

3.3 SAMPLING METHODS AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

The MDEA 570 defines population as the totality of all the elements that can be included in a research study that possess the characteristics which are of interest to the researcher. In this respect, all headmasters, teachers and the cluster examinations representative made up the study's population.

The analyst utilized purposive sampling as it gave the specialist the allowance to make speculations from the examples that were viewed as educated on the subject under scrutiny. As indicated by Webster (1985) purposive examining is utilized for choosing data rich cases for in-depth studies. Size and explicit case relies upon the survey's scope. This sort of testing is likewise alluded to as judgmental sampling. In spite of the odds of concocting one-sided data, the analyst noticed that purposive examining offers persuading and reliable data. Purposive sampling is more productive than irregular testing in useful field conditions (Bernard 2002). Purposive sampling is a sort of non-probability sampling, which is described by the utilization of judgment and a

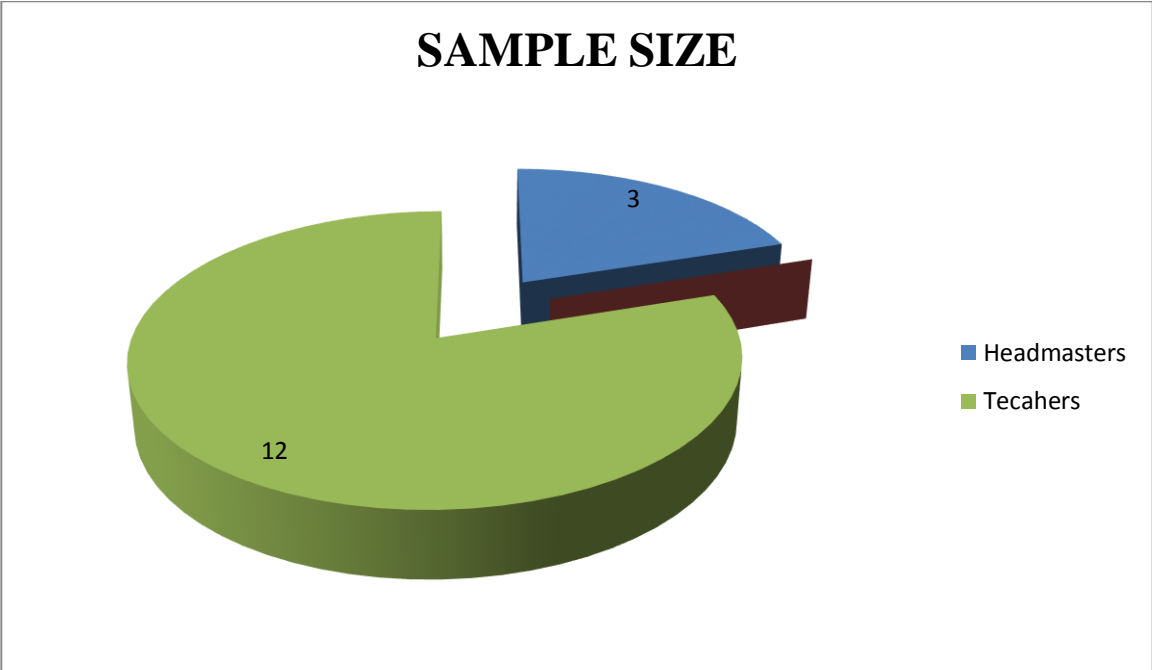
purposeful exertion to get delegate tests by including run of the mill zones or gatherings in the example (Patton 1990). In this manner based on the scientist's learning of the populace, a judgment will be made about which subjects ought to be chosen to give the best data to address the reason for the exploration. It ought to be noticed that this technique was chosen as the examples picked were proficient and enlightening about the research purpose.

3.3.1 SAMPLING PROCEDURES

As per the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2004), a sample chosen for testing and investigation is done on the presumption that the sample can be taken as a delegate of the whole target population and can give a reasonable and genuine portrayal of the whole populace. Pagano (2000) additionally characterizes a sample as a little extent of a populace for perception and investigation. Central to all the definitions is the selection of a small size of the entire population for investigation analysis and generalization of the findings. This survey used stratified random sampling. Respondents were initially put into two groups with each one being assigned a number. They were then randomly sampled to come up with the final sample.

3.3.2 SAMPLE SIZE

The need for sampling emanates from the impossibility of investigating the whole population. The respondents were first categorized into two groups being headmasters and teachers. Teachers were then randomly sampled while the three headmasters in the cluster were all included. This gave a total of 15 respondents being 12 teachers and 3 headmasters. Questionnaires were then given to the chosen respondents with a collection date being agreed upon. Interviews were as well arranged and conducted as agreed with special attention being given to individual circumstances.



3.4 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

As indicated by Cooper and Schindler (2003), information accumulation strategies incorporate every one of the devices used to request information from the respondents. Such strategies incorporate meetings, perceptions, polls and other imaging review procedures. This exploration utilized questionnaires and in-depth interviews on the challenges of administering ZIMSEC examinations in the Sherwood-Munyati cluster.

3.5.1 QUESTIONNAIRES

The analyst utilized self-administered questionnaires. A questionnaire is a progression of questions to be answered by the respondents. Questionnaires are pre-organized by the plan of intrigue nearer to that of the analyst than the inquired about, (Schostak, 2003). My questionnaires were planned in view of this and were expected to realize the difficulties encountered by in the cluster in administering ZIMSEC examinations. The surveys were organized and dependent on the 5 point Likert scale and this took into consideration consistency and simpler investigation of the reactions also. The surveys were intended for the techers. Coming up next are a portion of the points of interest for utilizing the questionnaires:

- They are cheap to administer.
- Do not require as much effort from the questioner such as verbal or telephone interviews.
- Questionnaires help to collect data in a short period of time.
- Clear answers will be provided

3.5.2 INTERVIEWS

Cohen and Manion (2000) define an interview as a face-face questionnaire which provides in-depth information about a particular research issue or question. I have used structured and semi-structured interviews throughout my research. A structured interview is highly standardised and formalised (Robson, 2002). The interviewer has a list of questions and is used when the same information is required of each subject. Semi-structured interviews are also called a guided interview (Robson, 2002). Although the interviewer has a list of themes or questions that are to be covered, semi-structured interviews allow the respondents considerable freedom in their responses. The aim of an unstructured interview is for respondents to describe their observation of the situation without any set questions or interview schedules. The interviewee is allowed to

inform, opine and express beliefs he/she wishes with minimal prompting from the interviewer. Patton (2001) suggests that interviews may have structured and un-structured sections. Interviews were used to solicit for information on the topic under study from headmasters and cluster examinations representatives. Interviews have the following advantages:

- It's the quickest technique of data collection as the information received immediately and readily for the informant.
- Provides rich data since social cues and non-verbal forms of communication can be observed and captured.
- Allows for the rephrasing of questions in case of ambiguity.

However, it needs mentioning from the onset that interviews have their own shortcomings and these are as follows:

- Interviews may cause discomfort to interviewees resulting the provision of wrong information.
- Face to face interviews are time consuming
- Interviews also rely on the interviewer's own sense of Judgment and do not guarantee the best outcome.

3.6 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF FINDINGS

<http://www.ehow.com> characterizes unwavering quality as "the consistency of estimation or how much an instrument estimates a similar way each time it is utilized under a similar condition with similar subjects". The Wikipedia Encyclopedia takes a gander at unwavering quality as the "repeatability of the estimation". From the previous definitions, it very well may be inferred that

the principal focal point of unwavering quality is the capacity of an instrument to yield similar outcomes whenever connected to similar subjects under similar conditions. In this specific circumstance, it implies that similar respondents should yield similar outcomes if this exploration is rehashed under similar conditions. Dependability likewise infers that the exploration can be utilized in different looks into too. To guarantee legitimacy of the discoveries, the questionnaires were first controlled in a pilot study and this empowered the analyst to resolve any problematic issues. For example uncertain inquiries were distinguished and reworded while a superior structure for the accumulation of the returned questionnaires was created. Interview guides were developed well ahead of time and tried with partners not part of the examination picked indiscriminately and observed to be successful in yielding the ideal data. Similar inquiries were utilized which guaranteed that reliable and a similar data was requested from the sources. The issue of informed consent was observed which guaranteed that the respondents were very much educated regarding what they were sharing of and were likewise guaranteed of their protection. This guaranteed the respondents gave as honest data as would be prudent.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION TOOLS

The assembled information through interviews and questionnaires will be sorted out through coding, altering expelling blunder, and inadequate data. Data analysis again alludes to the calculation of specific measures alongside the foundation of examples of relationship that exist among the information gatherings (Kothari, 2004).

Data analysis utilizes a blend of unpredictably associated tasks like the foundation of classes, classification and after that creation or making factual inferences. In this way, gathered data should initially be ordered into some deliberate gatherings before investigation is finished. Content and

quantitative investigations were utilized in this. Data presentation was then done utilizing tables, diagrams and headings or themes created from research questions.

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Permission- the researcher was given a letter by the registrar of academic affairs at the University which authorized her to carry out her research. She then used this letter to seek permission from the Ministry of Education and the respective heads and teachers.

Informed consent- this is consent conceded in full knowledge of the potential outcomes for example potential dangers or advantages (Wikipedia.org). The specialist disclosed to the respondents the reason for the survey with the goal that the members were particularly mindful of what they were sharing of.

Confidentiality- a confidentiality clause was incorporated in the request form to protect the respondents from possible risks. The respondents were also assured that no names would be disclosed in order to protect them from harassment and intimidation. Acronyms will be used.

3.9 SUMMARY

The chapter covered the research design, sources of data, research instruments, population, sampling, data collection procedures, data presentation, and data analysis. Data presentation and analysis of the study will be looked at in chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on data presentation, analysis and interpretation as they relate to the survey's objectives. Data analysis is done basing on the findings from the questionnaires, articles and interviews conducted with teachers and headmasters respectively. Statistical data is analyzed and presented using tables while content analysis is used for non-statistical or qualitative data.

4.1 RESPONSE RATES

4.1.1 QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES RATE

A total of 12 questionnaires were personally distributed by the researcher to teachers in the Munyati cluster. Out of the 12 questionnaires issued out 9 were correctly filled and returned, 2 were not returned while 1 was spoiled. Thus the 3 questionnaires were subsequently left out of the investigation. This gives a response rate of 9/12 which translates to 75%. This high response rate was deemed necessary for the research to proceed. This information is shown on table 4.1 below

Table 4.1 Questionnaire Response Rate

Respondents	No of questionnaires Issued	No of questionnaires Returned	Response %
Teachers	12	9	75

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.1 above is a summary of the response rate form questionnaires issued to teachers to assess the challenges encountered in administering ZIMSEC examinations using the case study of Sherwood-Munyati cluster in Kwekwe District.

4.1.2. INTERVIEW RESPONSE RATE

Interviews were scheduled and conducted with all the three headmasters that constituted the interview respondents. This gave an overall 100% response rate which warranted justification for the survey to proceed. Interview response rate is shown on the following table.

Table 4.2 Interview Response Rate

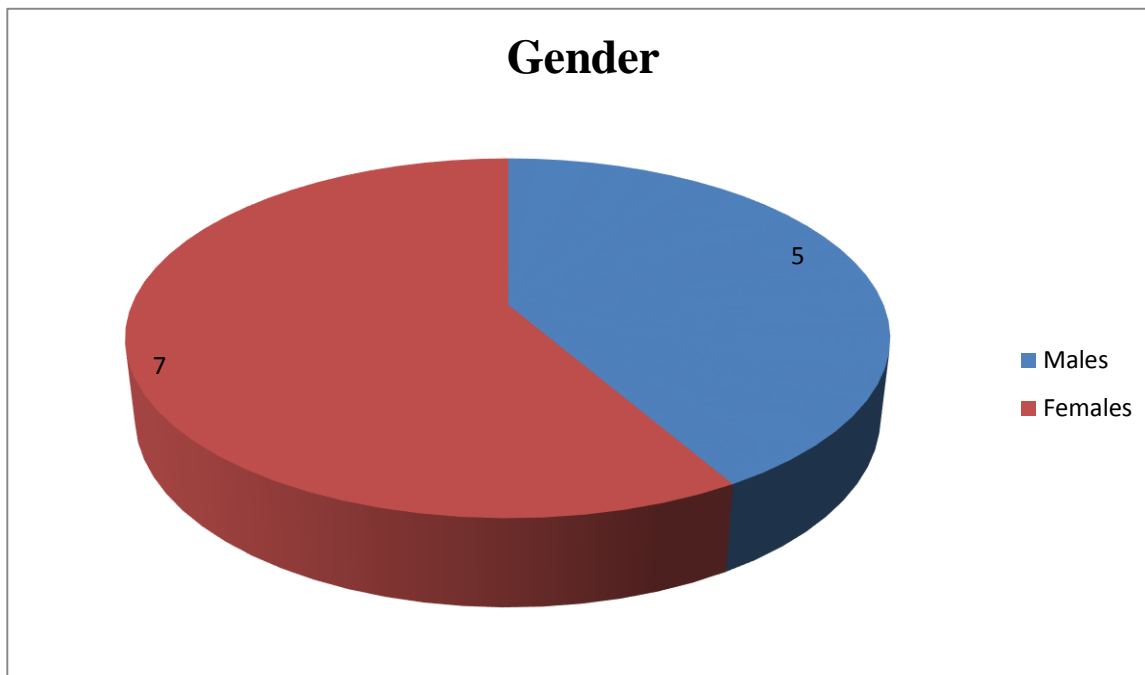
Respondents	No of targeted Interviewees	No Actually Interviewed	Response %
Headmasters	3	3	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.2 above summarizes the response rate of interviews conducted with 3 headmasters in Zhombe East to assess the challenges faced in administering ZIMSEC examinations.

4.2.3 RESPONDENTS' DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

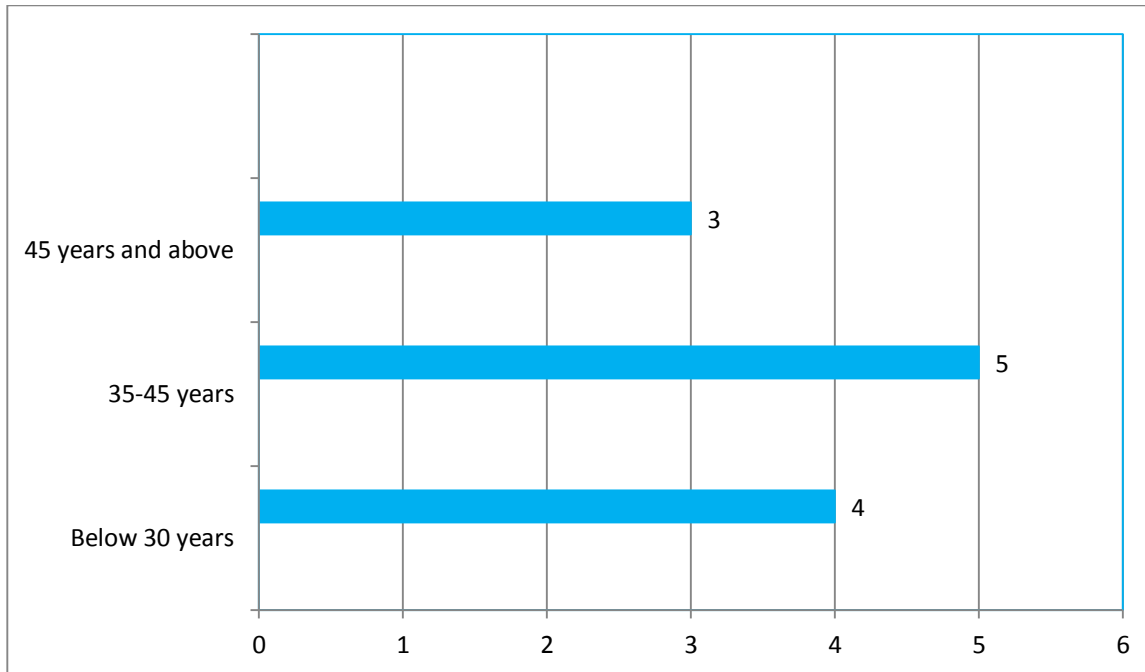
The researcher found it necessary to consider the gender composition of the sample so as to balance the views of both sexes.



Source: Primary Data

FIG 4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The above pie chart shows the gender of the respondents who made the sample in the investigation to establish the challenges faced in the administration of ZIMSEC examinations in the Sherwood-Munyati cluster.



Source: Primary Data

FIG 4.2 RESPONDENTS'S AGE

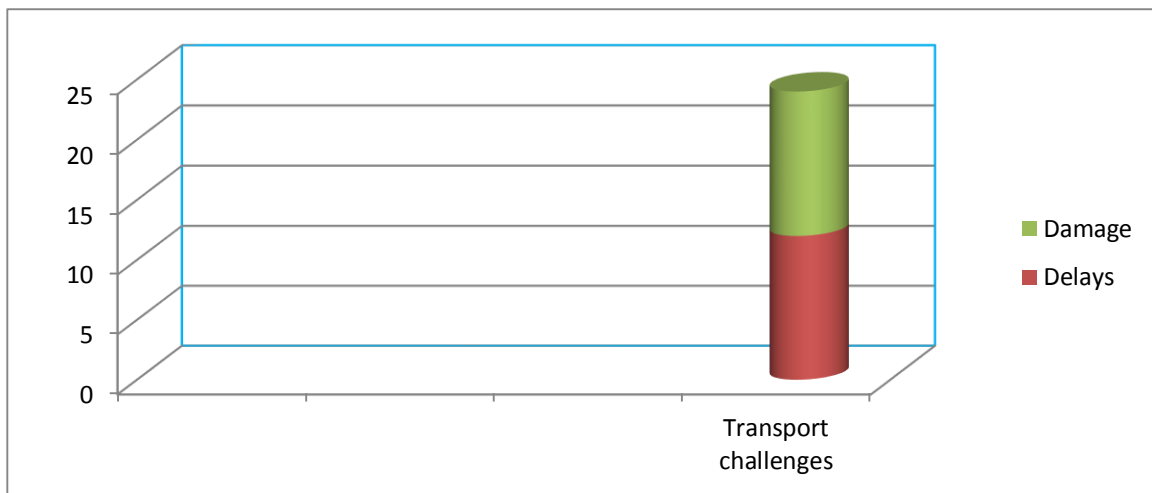
As shown on the pie chat above, there is a fair mix in terms of age composition among the respondents with a slight majority of 42% (5) between 30-35 year age group. 33% (4) are below 30 years with the remaining 25% (3) being 45 years and or more. The researcher feels the age compositopn is excellent as it includes respondents who wrote both ZIMSEC and cambridge exams and also possess first hand information on the challenges encountered in administering examinations. The reseracher this mix will generate rich responses that will help validate this survey.

4.2 RESPONSE ANALYSIS

This section seeks to analyze the responses from both questionnaires and interviews with teachers and headmasters respectively on the challenges encountered in the Sherwood-Munyati cluster of Kwekwe District in the administration of ZIMSEC examinations. A thematic approach will be pursued with the analysis being done concurrently i.e. analysis of responses from questionnaires and interviews. Suggestions or recommendations and examples of best practices in examinations will also be done concurrently.

What examinations transportation challenges are you facing?

All the respondents contended that they were indeed facing a myriad of transport challenges in relation to the administration of ZIMSEC examinations. These are fully discussed as below in their order of intensity:



Source: Primary Data

Fig 4.3 Comparison of transport challenges

Fig 4.3 above compares the two transported related exams challenges with a view to establishing has had the greatest intensity and thus the loudest call for intervention. as seen above, the two factors have affected exams administration with equal ferocity and thus all have to be addressed soonest if this is to be tamed.

Transport delays – all the questionnaire and interview respondents concurred that transport delays were perennial problems in both the collection of exams material and the return of exams scripts. All schools except 1 school has its own means of transport with the rest resorting to public transport. This does not only lead to delays, but also puts the whole examinations consignment under threat. One respondent cited an incident in which he failed to travel to his school owing to unavailability of transport and to hire a taxi the following from own pocket to ensure learners don't skip the examination. The same has happened with exams scripts being delayed for days following heavy rains in 2017. Suggestions from interviews were that schools could pool resources together and hire a truck for the whole cluster. However, some schools are so under resourced that cannot even afford the pool charge. The end result has been premature death of this noble idea and the continuation of the crisis.

Damage and loss of examinations material- all the respondents from interviews and questionnaires pointed out that they had challenges ranging from loss to damage of examinations material due to use of public transport. On a number of occasions examinations have been lost aboard public transport. They cited an example of a school in the cluster that became a center for investigations after examinations leakage. According to the New Zimbabwe Paper of 18 October 2012 reported that a headmaster from a school in Matabeleland North school had misplaced 13 examination papers while hitch hiking from Bulawayo. The respondents also voiced concern over

the absence of an examination transportation code of conduct which they said also contributed to the transportation problems being encountered. They said at the end, people just transport exams material anyhow which exposes them to damage or loss. A case cited was that of a headmaster in Karoi who lost examinations to a person he had given a ride in his car, Voice of America (2006). A follow up question was asked as to how the code would be enforced when ZIMSEC does not have its own transport. the dead end was that without its own means of transport, ZIMSEC, could not come up with an enforceable code of conduct.

What mechanisms do you have in place to guard against examination cheating?

The University of Leicester in its exams regulations define examinations cheating as encompassing all activities that involve actual, intended or attempted deception and or dishonest action in relation to any academic work. This could be by the students alone or in connivance with teachers or exams administrators. In Zimbabwe, both cases have been on the increase. The level of awareness of examinations cheating among the respondents was awesome. All the 12 respondents concurred that cases of examinations cheating were on the increase in the cluster. However, the desire to maintain integrity of all those involved in examinations centers has seen cases being swept under the carpet and this has not helped the case either. Modes of examinations cheating identified were bringing unauthorized material into the exams rooms, forging of identity documents (common among external candidates), and exchange of exams material during exams, writing answers on palms or hands or anywhere considered accessible during the exam, use of toilet walls and insertion of scripts by teachers. As noted by Cambridge University, cheating has increased because of commoditization of education the world over. Table 4.3 below examines the responses for this item.

Table 4.3 Measures against exams cheating

ITEM	RESPONSES AND FREQUENCY			
Measures against exams cheating	Cleaning walls	Multiple invigilators	Serious vetting	Educating candidates
FREQUENCY	1	12	12	7

Source: Primary Data

The table above summarizes responses on the exams cheating security measures at schools in the cluster. Cleaning of walls, multiple invigilators, serious vetting and educating of the candidates were widely used cheating bursting measures in the cluster and these are fully disused below.

Cleaning all toilet and exams walls- this approach was being used at one school after a teacher followed a student to the toilet after several visits to the toilet by the student. The teacher discovered that among the graffiti on the wall, were faintly written answers. This was an eye opener in exams administration.

Multiple invigilators – all the respondents concurred that it was common practice that any examination was administered by at least 2 invigilators. This was to ensure that they complement each other in detecting cheating by students through various ways and also that when one goes out there is someone to monitor the exam. Multiple invigilators also minimize connivance between the teacher and the students and also helps kill any attempts at removing from concealment, any material intended for cheating. However, it was also noted that despite multiple invigilators, cheating by invigilators was also on the increase. The unanswered question was: who will guard the guards?

Serious vetting – there was consensus among the 12 respondents that proper vetting was a strong measure against cheating. Vetting involves removing of any extra clothing beyond the shirt or blouse so that hands and palms can be seen as well as any extra or hidden material. It also involves proper document verification. Document verification involves asking external candidates to recite information on their IDs.

Educating the candidates – chances and occasions of connivance among the candidates were also reported by 9/12 of the respondents. It was reported that some candidates can share examinations materials during the exams in the full view of others without being reported. 7/12 said educating the candidates on the ‘bads’ of exams cheating would help curb this practice. JHSS (2014) came up with the suggestion of forming student intelligent committees which would link up with and identify individuals who. This help brings about the much-needed awareness if exams’ cheating is to be eradicated.

What mechanisms do you have in place to guard against examination leakages?

According to the Journal of Humanities and Social Science (JHSS, 2014) examinations leakage is the illegal filtration of an examination question paper from its system or accessing of the examination question paper by a candidate before the paper is officially opened in the examination room. Occurrences can happen anywhere in between the setting and opening of the examination question paper before candidates in the exams rooms. The main mechanisms identified by the two sets of respondents were strong rooms, security guards and procedure. Table 4.3 below summarizes this item.

Table 4.3 Measures against leakage

ITEM	RESPONSES		
	1	2	3
Mechanisms			

Source: Primary Data

Key: 1-strongroom, 2-guards, 3-procedure

The above table summarises the security measures against exams leakages that were identified among the participating schools. Following is a full discussion on each measure, its strength and implications for the exams integrity and how it fares against the best practices in examinations administration.

Strong rooms- the Cambridge dictionary defines a strong room as a special room with strong walls and a strong door where valuable things can be kept safe. Information from the respondents showed that despite the necessity of such a facility to exams safety, only one school had the facility. This even raises more questions as to how the schools are maintaining exams integrity. One interviewee said they keep the exams at the headmaster's house and bank on his integrity. This vindicates calls by Makamure (2006) that writing examinations in Zimbabwe was a nightmare. She lamented the plummeting of examinations standards since ZIMSEC took over from Cambridge. Claims of security beef up by means of security guards at night do not make part of best practices in examinations administration. This explains why the cluster has stalked controversies linked to examinations leakages. According to the Cambridge exams regulations, no school can be granted an exams center status if it doesn't have a strong room. But surprisingly, our ZIMSEC does that without any consideration paid to this and such is how we have compromised our exams integrity.

Security guards- only 2 schools said they were using security guards to help protect examinations material at schools at night. While this might not be the approach, it is a commendable demonstration of security awareness. As with the other schools, there was virtually no security measure in place serve for benevolence which has been violated uncountable times. An ideal situation would be having ZIMSEC security staff guarding the material right from the collection centers and back.

Procedure- all the 12 respondents mentioned adherence to examinations procedures and the exams code of conduct as strong enough measures to deter any malpractices. The respondents further said that anyone who compromised or tempered with examinations was not fit to be in the ministry and risked their profession and integrity as well. However, a further scrutiny of the issue reveals that many teachers have been exonerated of any wrong yet there was overwhelming evidence of exams malpractice. In addition, the respondents said that the sentences meted out to offenders in Zimbabwe have not been deterrent enough and this has same offenders repeating the same offense. 3/3 of the interview respondents claimed that increased examinations leakages came with the licensing of many private colleges which, in their bid to increase their enrolments and create an impression of excellence, propagated exams leakages. This becomes true and explains why ZIMSEC has taken away center status from most of these colleges. Another issue raised was that of temporal teachers and other degreed professionals who found themselves in the teaching fraternity without the prerequisite qualifications and were in there for survival. 7/12 of the respondents claimed that the moral values of the profession are inculcated at college which they said were lacking in those other professionals whom they said were partly responsible for the leakages.

What security measures do you have in place to ensure the safety of exam papers and scripts?

Answers to the above question were identical to those dealing cheating and leakages of examinations.

4.3 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter covered the examination, presentation and analysis the research results in accordance with the research's objectives and questions. It was discovered that indeed the administration of exams in the Sherwood-Munyati cluster of Kwekwe District was punctuated by a myriad of challenges. Best practices from the world over on examinations administration were cited as recommendations for the improvement thereof. Major findings of the research and the recommendations are covered in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

The major highlights of chapter one included providing a setting for the research through the background of the study, highlighting the problem statement and objectives and questions to be answered during the study.

Chapter two reviewed literature from various scholars on the challenges faced in the administration of public examinations locally and abroad. Best practices in exams administration were cited as well to give a greater emphasis on the importance of a holistic approach to the examinations process if its integrity greatly valued.

The research methodology was covered in chapter three with questionnaires and interviews being the data collection instruments. The chapter also covered issues like the target population, sampling methods.

Data presentation and analysis was covered in chapter four. A thematic and concurrent analysis approach was used with best in-class examples being cited as recommendations for improving the cluster's examinations administration.

Chapter five summarises the whole research as well as giving the research's major findings and recommendations.

5.1 MAJOR CONCLUSIONS

The following were the research's major conclusions on the challenges of examinations administration in the cluster:

1. **Transport is a poses a serious challenge to exams integrity in the cluster through delays, exposure and damage of exams material-** This was all owing to the utilisation of public transport in the collection of question papers and submission of exams scripts.
2. **Exams cheating were on the increases in the cluster** - it was thus prudent to conclude that this mirrored exactly what was happening across the country and the world over. This is vindicated by reports of exams cheating as reported by the Cambridge University.
3. **Leaking of examinations was now a rampant problem in Zimbabwe** - the practice has become well-coordinated even from the highest echelons in the ministry down to the invigilator and tutor. Reports of connivances between teachers and students have been reported with some teachers actively taking in or aiding cheating through various ways. There is serious decomposition of values and ethics in as far as the integrity of the teaching profession is concerned.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

After carrying out this survey, the researcher feels compelled to make the following recommendations:

1. Enforcement of ethical standards through stiffer penalties to offenders. There may be need to amend the relevant pieces of legislation to ensure that deterrent sentences are meted out to the culprits.
2. Formation of student intelligent committees. As previously highlighted these help in the detection and reporting of cases of exams leakages in the cluster. This should be embraced at the national level with rewards being offered for leakage syndicates busters.

3. Provision of transport and security personnel by ZIMSEC. ZIMSEC is an independent exams body that should fight to ensure that its integrity is upheld at all costs. Suffice to say that central to the pursuit of this is exams security. With Zimbabwe highly celebrated literacy levels, ZIMSEC should by now an exams body for the whole region if not Africa as a whole.

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