

Manifestations Of School-Level Mediation Factors During Syllabus Implementation: A Case Of Localised Advanced Level Geography Syllabus

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ABSTRACT

This article investigated manifestation of school-level factors mediating the implementation of the Zimbabwe localised Advanced level Geography syllabus introduced in 2002. Employing a concurrent triangulated strategy, the population entailed 19 high schools offering Advanced level Geography in the Gweru district comprising rural, high density, low density and mission high schools, 287 Advanced level Geography students, 103 former students, and 21 Geography teachers. Stratified random sampling of 12 (63%) schools ensured inclusion of school categories typical of Gweru high schools. 287 (88%) current students and 52 (50%) former students were selected as sample participants using stratified random sampling technique. 12 teachers were selected purposively. Questionnaires, lesson observations and structured interview techniques concurrently employed generated data for the study. Data were analysed using frequencies (numbers), and in some instances, with corresponding percentages. Major findings were that teachers did not cover all syllabus topics. Most teachers did not have detailed lesson plans and largely used the scheme-plan. Objectives were clearly stated and linked to syllabus goals. Lesson deliveries were teacher-centred and employed traditional as opposed to interactive, child-centred methods. Textbooks available were inadequate, outdated and of little relevance to the new syllabus. Mission and low density urban schools were better resources compared to rural and high density urban schools. The study recommends that, over and above staff-developing teachers on all syllabus topics, schools should provide relevant material resources and technology that enhance interactive methods where students can actively participate and gain ownership of their learning.

Key Words: syllabus, implementation, advanced level geography, mediation factors, localised syllabus, teaching methods.

INTRODUCTION

Implementation of the new localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus introduced in 2002 has been accompanied by a number of challenges for both students and teachers. This seems to have received little or no empirical research attention and tends to elude syllabus developers. I argue the presence of school-level factors that mediate the implementation of the localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus and its effective teaching and learning in the classroom.

In Zimbabwe, the responsibility of curriculum development, research and curriculum review is rests with the Curriculum Development Unit, recently named Evaluation and Syllabus Development (ESD) Unit, and Zimbabwe School Examinations Council (ZIMSEC), which are semi-autonomous government agents within the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. In order to carry out this enormous mandate, ZIMSEC, works in close consultation with other stakeholders in curriculum matters, such as teachers through subject panels (Gatawa, 1990).

There are various phases involved in the process of curriculum development, for example, diagnosis, planning, implementation, stabilisation and evaluation. This article concerns itself mainly with school-level factors mediating the implementation of the localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus introduced in Zimbabwe in 2002. Investigating mediating factors the implementation of the localised Advanced level syllabus should assist in unearthing implementation challenges faced by schools since its inception in 2002. Arguably, findings should help in proffering recommendations for improvement as far as development and implementation of the syllabus is concerned. It focuses on teachers, students, learning resources and time allocation among other factors that play a crucial role as far as syllabus implementation is concerned.

The implementation of new programmes and curricular innovations are critical components of educational reform (Chavhunduka and Moyo, 2003). Zimbabwe experienced a number of changes in almost all subject areas of the secondary school curriculum due to the localisation of curricula in 2002. In Geography, there has been a general updating and rationalisation of topics while other traditional areas such as Hazardous Environments and Environmental Management aspects have been integrated into Physical and Human Geography. It is therefore vital to determine how the localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus is being implemented by focussing on school-level mediation dynamics in efforts to establish challenges encountered and suggest the way forward.

The implementation stage of a syllabus is the most vital stage in curriculum change (Fullan, 2001). On the other hand, syllabus implementation is the single most difficult phase of curriculum development (Mampuru, 2001). So syllabus implementation is a crucial, difficult and unavoidable phase in curriculum development. This is because without implementation, a syllabus cannot be evaluated to ascertain its strengths, successes, shortcomings and weaknesses. Syllabus implementation is crucial as it is at this stage that the syllabus is consumed by its target users, especially the learners. Syllabus implementation is the systematic process of ensuring that the new syllabus reaches the immediate beneficiaries - the learners (Mampuru, 2001). Whichever way we look at it, syllabus implementation involves two major stakeholders: the teachers and learners. This is because teachers are the main implementers and the learners are the main targets or direct consumers of the syllabus (Alonsabe, 2005).

In addition, financial support is required for materials and equipment to contextualise a localised syllabus and provide human support. It is commonly held that the nature and quality of the curriculum offered in a school is closely related to the resources which are available and, most importantly, how well they are used. The shortage of teaching and learning materials is a de-motivating factor and may be a contributing factor to the poor quality passes. Evaluation and monitoring of progress is important in curriculum implementation (Urevbu, 1999). In most innovations, evaluation is very often planned too late. People in initial phases of an innovation are pre-occupied with the more practical issues of making the innovation work, and when they feel that not everything is working as smoothly as they had hoped they criticise the innovation (Fullan, 2001). According to (Circular B15 of 2000), syllabus review is supposed to be done after every five years, which has not taken place since the inception of the localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus. For any change to occur, there has to be curriculum implementation, which involves mediatory factors such as availability of inputs, contexts and quality of delivery. Curriculum implementation involves interaction between those who have created the programme and those who are charged to deliver it (Ornstein and Hunkins, 2009) utilising requisite mediating resources.

THE PROBLEM

Since the localisation of the Advanced Level syllabi in high schools in Zimbabwe in 2002, numerous challenges have hampered its successful implementation. However, the challenges should not be viewed as threats to the curriculum but should be seen as opportunities to improve on future implementation of the localised Advanced Level curriculum. This study interrogated the implementation of the localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus by focussing on factors mediating the implementation process, largely dependent on teacher mediation in syllabus implementation. Determination of such school-level mediating factors should assist in identifying suggestions for improvement towards more effective implementation of localised syllabi at high school level in Zimbabwe. The main guiding research question was: What are the manifestations of mediation factors in implementation of the localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus?

METHODOLOGY

The research adopted a triangulated mixed methods design as the strategy for this study. The triangulated mixed methods design facilitated the generation of data that gave useful information (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011) about the implementation of the localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus in Gweru district high schools. The strategy used was the concurrent triangulation strategy which uses both quantitative and qualitative methods of data generation concurrently in order to best understand the phenomenon of interest (Creswell, 2009). In this study concurrent procedures entailed collecting both quantitative and qualitative data at the same time during the study followed by integrating the information in the overall results (Creswell, 2009). In this study, the researcher used both quantitative and qualitative methods in an attempt to confirm and cross validate or corroborate the findings. Thus, interviews were employed as a follow-up to questionnaires. Observations and content analysis were used to check the validity and complement the data gained from questionnaires and interviews as Wolcott (2001) advises.

The population was made up of twenty-five Advanced Level Geography teachers, a hundred and three former Advanced Level Geography students, three hundred and twenty-six current Advanced Level Geography students, one Zimbabwe School Examinations Council (ZIMSEC) Geography subject Manager, one Evaluation and Syllabus Development officer (ESD) - research and curriculum development, and one Geography inspector from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education.

Gweru district is one of the ten education districts in Midlands province. The district has been preferred in this study because the education district comprises of different types of school categories such as rural day schools, rural mission schools, high-density urban schools and low-density urban schools. Furthermore, the researcher resided in Gweru District, making it cost-effective, in terms of money and time to conduct the study in and around Gweru. Gweru district has nineteen Advanced Level schools offering Advanced Level Geography. This study targeted all the nineteen schools but then a sample of twelve schools was selected by stratified random sampling, that is, dividing the schools into homogeneous groups (groups containing similar characteristics) that is rural day schools, mission schools, low-density urban schools and high-density urban schools. The twelve schools represented 63% of the total number of schools in Gweru district. This guaranteed equal representation of different school categories in the sample. The researcher managed to administer a questionnaire to each of the twenty-one (84%) teachers who were at stations at the time of the study.

From a population of three hundred and twenty six current students, stratified random sampling was used to select 287(88%) current Advanced Level Geography students to fill in a

questionnaire. Purposive sampling was used to select individuals who had done Advanced Level Geography in Gweru district high schools. Out of the one hundred and three former Advanced Level students, the researcher managed to administer a questionnaire to 52(50%) students. The former students were either working in schools as relief teachers or studying at a local university. The researchers purposively selected twelve Advanced level Geography teachers to be included in the sample for the qualitative data. The sample for the interview represented 12 (48%) of the total number of teachers teaching Advanced Level Geography. Purposive sampling involved selecting subjects because of some desired characteristic they possessed (Patton, 2002). Purposive sampling of twelve teachers for interviews was done in order to gather specific information from a sample from the Advanced Level Geography teachers who had taught and supervised the previous external Advanced Level Geography Cambridge examinations as well as the current localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus.

The data led to participants outside the cases (schools) such as officers from ZIMSEC, Ministry of Education and CDU. Purposive sampling was employed to select these officers by virtue of positions they occupied. All these were key people as far as the implementation of the localised Advanced Level Geography was concerned. This assisted the researchers to gather data about their observations, opinions and experiences that enabled a better understanding of factors mediating the implementation of the localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus.

Because the study employed a mixed method approach to collect both qualitative and quantitative data, the researchers found the use of the questionnaire, interview, lesson observation and content analysis as ideal data generation tools for the study. In line with emphasis that Cohen et al. (2011) makes, it was pertinent to address issues of validity in this research. In this study validation was employed to establish how sound or effective the data generation instruments were or the degree to which the instruments measured what they were supposed to measure (Kumar, 2005; Haralambos et al., 2008). Following advice from Cohen et al. (2011), instruments were pre-tested in one of the schools in the population but was not part of the final sample of schools studied. This led to fine-tuning of instruments. Reliability was obtained when the instruments gave the similar results after a second administration with different participants. To analyse quantitative data, we employed descriptive statistics (frequencies and, at times corresponding percentages). Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected in this study. Consequently, the data were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively for deeper understanding.

RESULTS

In an attempt to establish mediation factors during syllabus implementation, Advanced Level Geography teachers, former and current Advanced Level Geography students completed a questionnaire. Lesson observations and analysis of schemes of work were conducted. The following sub-headings were created: status of teaching and learning resources in schools, methods used and the instructional media used by the Advanced Level Geography teachers.

Teacher mediation

Twenty-four lesson observations were conducted to establish teacher-mediation during implementation of the localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus. Six lessons were observed per school type as shown in table 4.1.1 below.

Table 4.1.1 Teacher-mediation shown by lesson observation
N=24

Question	Observations							
	MS		LDUS		HDUS		RDS	
Comment on the following aspects of the delivered lesson.	yes	No	Yes	no	Yes	No	yes	no
a) Was there a prepared lesson?	2(8%)	4(17%)	1(5%)	5(20%)	0(0%)	6(25%)	0(0%)	6(25%)
b) Were the objectives clearly stated?	5(20%)	1(5%)	3(13%)	3(13%)	4(17%)	2(8%)	3(13%)	3(13%)
c) Were the objectives related to syllabus goals	5(20%)	1(5%)	5(20%)	1(5%)	4(17%)	2(2%)	4(17%)	2(8%)
d)Teacher-pupil interaction	5(20%)	1(5%)	5(20%)	1(5%)	5(20%)	1(5%)	2(8%)	4(17%)
e) Pupil-pupil interaction	4(17%)	2(8%)	3(13%)	3(13%)	3(13%)	3(13%)	2(8%)	4(17%)
f)Use of instructional media	3(13%)	3(13%)	2(8%)	4(17%)	2(8%)	4(17%)	2(8%)	6(25%)
g) Use of appropriate methods/ strategies	5(20%)	1(5%)	4(17%)	2(8%)	5(20%)	1(5%)	3(13%)	3(13%)
h) Were the lesson objectives achieved?	6(25%)	0(0%)	5(20%)	1(5%)	5(20%)	1(5%)	3(13%)	3(13%)

Of all the lessons delivered, only 3(13%) of the teachers had prepared separate detailed lesson plans with the rest of the teachers using what was in their scheme-cum plan. Fifteen (72%) of the lesson objectives in scheme-cum plans were clearly stated. Eighteen (75%) of the objectives formulated in their scheme-cum plan of work were related to the syllabus goals. Of the twenty-four lessons observed, 17(71%) had teacher-pupil interaction, 12(50%) had pupil-pupil interaction, 9 reflected use of learning instructional media, 17(71%) were using appropriate methods for the content taught. Teachers managed to achieve lesson objectives in 19 (79%) of the lessons observed. Generally, teachers were teaching without separate detailed lesson plans, their lessons lacked innovation, and were teacher-centred rather than student-centred. Teachers were also teaching without employing appropriate learning or instructional media.

Status of teaching and learning resources in schools

The Advanced Level Geography teachers and current and former Advanced Level Geography students completed a questionnaire on the status of teaching and learning resources in schools. The evidence is summarised in (Tables 4.2.1 and 4.2.2, 4.2.3, 4.2.4 and 4.2.5). Analyses of schemes of work and lesson observations were also conducted to establish the resources in schools as evidenced by information in (Tables 4.28 and 4.29).

Table 4.2.1 Status of teaching and learning resources in schools shown by the Advanced Level Geography teachers (N=21)

Question	Responses	Frequency			
		MS	LDUS	HDUS	RDS
Number of teachers per school type.		5	6	6	4
Which textbooks adequately meet the syllabus requirements?	Available textbooks are not adequately meeting the syllabus requirements because the textbooks are out-dated; especially Case-Studies of newly introduced topics in the localised syllabus are not covered.	2	3	3	1
	We need textbooks with local examples and current and contemporary issues included.	3	3	3	3
What is your perception of the adequacy of teaching materials at your school to teach the localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus?	Teaching materials have to improve especially textbooks.	3	3	2	2
	Need more weather instruments.	0	1	2	1
	We do not have materials such as current World, Maps, Atlases, World Globe.	0	1	1	1
	The school has to buy more teaching and learning materials such as geographical computer packages, simulation games and structures for modelling.	2	1	1	0

Table 4.2 shows that all the respondents agreed that the available textbooks in their schools were not adequate to meet the syllabus requirements because the textbooks were either out-dated or the newly introduced topics in the localised syllabus were not covered therein. The teachers also indicated that the textbooks lacked local examples, current and contemporary issues. In terms of the adequacy of teaching materials at schools to teach the localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus, teachers revealed that their schools had inadequate resources such as weather instruments, world maps, atlases, world globe, geographical computer packages, simulation games and structures for modelling.

The Advanced Level Geography teachers were also required to indicate the textbooks they were using to cater for the implementation of the localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus and the adequacy of the textbooks. The teachers indicated that the textbook-pupil ratio in their Advanced Level Geography classes was high (see Table 4.2.2 below).

Table 4.2.2 Status of teaching and learning resources in schools shown by the Advanced Level Geography teachers

N=21

Question		MS	LDUS	HDUS	RDS	Explanations
List the textbooks you are using to cater for the localised 'A' Level Geography syllabus (9156).	Buckle (1984)	3	1	0	0	
	Waugh (1995)	5	6	5	3	
	Carr (1998)	5	3	2	1	
	Nagle (2000)	2	1	1	0	
	Pritchard (1986)	2	0	1	0	
	Munowenyu (1997)	3	2	1	1	
	Lennon et al (1996)	2	0	0	0	
	Small (1982)	3	2	2	0	
	Briggs (1984)	1	0	0	0	
	Hammond (1982)	1	0	0	0	
	Zarima et al (2009)	4	2	3	0	
What is the adequacy of the available textbooks in teaching of the localised 'A' Level Geography syllabus (9156). Please explain your answer.	Very adequate	0	0	0	0	
	Adequate	2	1	0	0	
	Somewhat adequate	1	2	2	1	Textbooks are not locally published and are expensive to buy; Textbooks do not cover contemporary issues.
	Not adequate	2	3	4	3	Textbooks are written by foreigners; No single textbook that cover the whole syllabus; Need textbooks with local examples; Textbooks pupil ratio too high.
What is the textbook-pupil ratio in your 'A' Level Geography classes?	Waugh (1995)	1-2	1-5	1-10	1-15	
	Carr (1998)	1-3	1-8	1-15	1-20	
	Pritchard (1986)	1-3	Nil	nil	nil	
	Munowenyu (1997)	1-2	1-10	1-12	1-15	
	Lennon et al (1996)	1-7	Nil	nil	nil	
	Small (1982)	1-4	1-10	1-15	nil	
	Zarima et al (2009)	1-5	1-10	1-13	1-20	
	Buckle (1984)	1-8	1-12	nil	nil	
Nagle (2000)	1-9	1-15	1-20	nil		

The most popular textbooks available in schools were 19 copies of Waugh (1995). *An Integrated Approach*; 11 copies of Carr (1998). *New Patterns: Process and change in Human Geography*; 9 copies of Zarima and Mutodi (2009). *Total Geography*; 7 copies of Munowenyu's

(1996) *Advanced Level Geography*; and 7 copies of Small's (1984). *Hydrology and Geomorphology* (7). On the adequacy of the available textbooks for teaching of the localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus, twelve of the twenty-one respondents indicated that the books were inadequate. Evidence from interviews showed that the situation was made worse by the fact that the textbooks were written by foreigners and lacked local examples and case studies relevant to the localised syllabus. Textbooks available were not locally published and were expensive to buy. The pupil-textbook ratio was still very high at rural day schools (RDS), high-density urban schools (HDUS) and low-density urban schools (LDUS) with the sharing ratio for Waugh's (1995) *An Integrated Approach* being 1 textbook per 15 students, 1 textbook per 10 students and 1 textbook per 5 students respectively. In some instances, the textbooks were not even available in the schools as shown in Table 4.2.2 above. The exception was in mission schools where the sharing ratio was as low as 1 textbook per 2 students.

The current Advanced Level Geography students completed a questionnaire on status of teaching and learning resources in their schools and the following results were obtained (see Tables 4.2.3 and 4.2.4).

Table 4.2.3: Status of teaching and learning resources in schools shown by the current Advanced Level Geography students (N=287)

Question	Frequency			
	MS	LDUS	HDUS	RDS
Number of students per type of school	74(26%)	76(26%)	94(33%)	43(15%)
From the following list of Geography textbooks, tick those that are available at your school.				
Waugh D. (1995)	74(26%)	71(24%)	47(16%)	23(8%)
Carr M. (1999)	61(21%)	51(18%)	31(10%)	17(6%)
Munowenyu E.M. (1996)	41(14%)	31(10%)	27(9%)	10(3%)
Small R.J. (1984)	52(18%)	34(11%)	37(12%)	7(2%)
Pritchard J.M. (1986)	33(11%)	17(6%)	4(1%)	0(0%)
Pritchard J.M. (1984)	21(7%)	11(3%)	8(2%)	0(0%)
Buckle C. (1984)	23(8%)	10(3%)	4(1%)	1(.3%)
Small R.J. (1982)	30(10%)	11(3%)	3(3%)	0(0%)
Cleves P.G. and Lennon (1996)	31(10%)	14(5%)	7(2%)	0(0%)
Nagle A. (2000)	21(7%)	5(1%)	3(1%)	0(0%)
Zarima and Mutodi (2008)	11(3%)	7(2%)	2(.6)	0(0%)
How many students share one textbook in your class?				
Waugh D. (1995)	1-2	1-5	1-10	1-15
Carr M. (1999)	1-3	1-8	1-15	1-20
Munowenyu E.M. (1997)	1-2	1-10	1-12	1-15
Small R.J. (1984)	1-4	1-10	1-15	Nil
Pritchard J.M. (1986)	1-3	nil	Nil	Nil
Buckle C. (1984)	1-8	1-12	Nil	Nil
Small R.J. (1982)	1-10	nil	Nil	Nil
Cleves P.G and Lennon (1996)	1-7	nil	Nil	Nil
Nagle A. (2000)	1-10	1-15	1-20	Nil
Zarima and Mutodi (2009)	1-5	1-10	1-13	1-20

The current Advanced Level Geography students reaffirmed that Waugh (1995) *An Integrated Approach* and Carr (1998) *New Patterns: Process and Change in Human Geography* were the most popular textbooks in schools with 215 (78%) and 160 (56%) respectively in terms of their availability. But of major concern was the absence of Lennon and Cleves (1996) *Techniques and Fieldwork in Geography*, and Pritchard (1984) *Practical Geography for Africa* which were 52 (18%) and 40 (14%) respectively. The textbooks above form the basis of both Sketch map and Fieldwork at Advanced Level Geography, and notably, they were not even available at rural day schools. As already been reflected in Table 4.2.2, the pupil-textbook ratio was very high at rural day schools (RDS), high-density urban schools (HDUS) and low-density urban schools (LDUS) and significantly low at mission schools (MS).

Table 4.2.4 Status of teaching and learning resources in schools shown by the current Advanced Level Geography students
N=287

Question	MS	LDUS	HDUS	RDUS
What is the extent of relevance of content in the available textbooks to the localised 'A' Level Geography syllabus. Tick the appropriate box.				
Very Relevant	23(8%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Relevant	11(4%)	7(2%)	32(11%)	6(2%)
Somewhat Relevant	5(2%)	31(11%)	31(11%)	4(1%)
Not Relevant	35(12%)	38(13%)	31(11%)	33(12%)

The current Advanced Level Geography students thought the extent of relevance of the content in available textbooks was very little relative to the requirements of the syllabus. Of the two hundred and eighty-seven who responded to the questionnaire, 208 (72%) indicated that the available textbooks were not relevant to the content requirements of the localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus.

The former Advanced Level Geography students completed one of the question items in a questionnaire on status of teaching and learning resources in their schools when they were studying Advanced Level Geography syllabus and the following results were obtained as shown in Table 4.2.5 below.

Table 4.2.5: Status of teaching and learning resources in schools shown by the former Advanced Level Geography students
N=52

Question	Frequency							
	MS		LDUS		HDUS		RDS	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	yes	no	Yes	No
Did the textbooks available adequately cater for the requirements of the localised 'A' Level Geography syllabus 9156? Please support your answer.	9(17%)	13(25%)	3(5%)	10(19%)	3(5%)	7(13%)	2(3%)	5(9%)
	Explanation Lack of case-studies; Textbooks are Eurocentric; Munowenyu (1996) is shallow; most topics were covered; practical books were scarce; some areas were not adequately covered; there were no textbooks which clearly explain about sketch maps and sketch section; and, for diagram techniques Pritchard is out-dated.							

The inadequacy of available textbooks was also mentioned by 32 (67%) of the former Advanced Level Geography students who responded to the questionnaire, revealing that the available textbooks in schools were not adequately catering for the requirements of the localised syllabus. The reasons given were that the textbooks lacked local case-studies and examples and that they were Eurocentric. Some textbooks such as one by E.M. Munowenyu (1997) were said to be shallow and that practical textbooks had no clear explanations on sketch sections, sketch maps and diagram techniques. Lesson observations were also conducted to establish the status of the teaching and learning resources in schools as shown in table 4.2.6 below.

Table 4.2.6: Status of teaching and learning resources in schools shown by lesson observations
N=24

Question	Observations			
	MS	LDUS	HDUS	RDS
Number of lessons observed per type of school.	6(25%)	6(25%)	6(25%)	6(25%)
What books are referred to in class and to be used in the students, homework?				
Munowenyu (1997)	6(25%)	3(13%)	5(20%)	0(0%)
Carr (1998)	5(20%)	2(8%)	1(4%)	1(4%)
Waugh (1995)	6(25%)	5(20%)	4(16%)	5(20%)
Small (1982)	3(13%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Pritchard (1986) (Practical Book)	2(8%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Cleves and Lennon (1996) (Practical)	3(13%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Buckle (1984)	1(4%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Mutodi and Zarima (2009)	3(13%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Nagle (2000)	2(8%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Bradford and Kent (1984)	2(8%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)

The observations indicated that the most popular textbooks in schools were: Waugh (1995) 20(83%); Munowenyu (1997) 14(58%); and, Carr (1995) 9(37%) respectively. A closer look at Table 4.26 indicates the other textbooks were only referred to by students at mission schools. The least referred to textbooks were Pritchard (1986), Small (1982), Bradford and Kent (1984), Cleves and Lennon (1996), Buckle (1984), Mutodi and Zarima (2009), and Nagle (2000) with less than 2(12%). Observation of lessons also revealed that Waugh (1995), Munowenyu (1997) and Carr (1995) were mostly referred to during lesson delivery and for students' use for homework, which this confirms their availability in all the school types. An analysis of schemes of work was conducted to establish the status of teaching and learning resources in schools as shown in table 4.4.2.7 below.

Table 4.2.7: Status of teaching and learning resources in schools shown by analysis of schemes of work
N=12

Question	Analysis			
	MS	LDUS	HDUS	RDS
Textbooks used by the teacher.				
Waugh (1995)	3	3	3	3
Carr (1998)	3	3	2	1
Munowenyu (1997)	3	2	2	1
Pritchard (1986)(Practical Book)	3	2	1	0
Small (1982)	2	1	1	1
Cleves and Lennon (1996) (Practical)	2	1	0	0
Mutodi and Zarima (2009)	2	1	0	0
Buckle (1984)	2	0	0	0

Analysis of schemes of work prepared revealed that of the most popular textbooks used by the teachers in scheming were: Waugh (1995) used by 12; Carr (1998) by 9; Munowenyu

(1997) 8; Pritchard (1986) 6; Small (1982) 5; and the rest were used by 3 and below. Textbooks available in schools for use by teachers as shown by Table 4.8 were inadequate in both rural day schools and high-density urban schools; however mission schools and low-density urban schools had quite a handful of textbooks as compared to their counterparts.

The Advanced Level Geography teachers and the current and former Advanced Level Geography students agreed that textbooks were inadequate. The textbooks lacked local examples, current and contemporary issues. Evidence shown by (Tables 4.3 and 4.4) indicates that the pupil-textbook ratio was very high at rural day schools, high-density urban schools and low-density urban schools and significantly low at mission schools. The worst scenarios were where fifteen or twenty students shared a single textbook. Lesson observations and analysis of schemes of work also confirmed the inadequacy of textbooks in schools for the smooth implementation of the localised syllabus.

Teaching methods used to implement the localised syllabus

The Advanced Level Geography teachers and the current Advanced Level Geography students completed a questionnaire and indicated methods employed in teaching of the localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus. Analyses of schemes of work and lesson observations were also conducted to establish the methods used by the teachers. The following results were obtained as shown in Tables 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.3 and 4.3.4 below.

Table 4.3.1 Methods used by Advanced Level Geography teachers

Question	Response	Frequency				Explanations
		MS	LDUS	HDUS	RDS	
Of the recommended approaches which ones do you use in the teaching of 'A' Level Geography? Rank in order of preferences. Please explain your answer.	Discovery method	3	0	0	0	Interaction method helps students to be highly alert.
	Lecture or Chalk and Talk	6	5	5	4	Helps cover the syllabus.
	Question and Answer	2	2	2	2	Makes teaching easier.
	Group Discussion or Presentation	2	3	3	4	Encourages students to research and share ideas.
	Tutorials	0	0	0	0	
	Fieldwork	3	1	0	0	Encourages pupil-pupil interaction.
	Problem-Solving	0	0	0	0	
	Simulation Games	0	0	0	0	
	Debates or song or Dance	1	0	0	0	
	Demonstration	0	1	0	0	
	Project Method	0	0	0	0	Method is for university students
	Brainstorming	0	0	1	0	

Of the recommended teaching methods, the most frequently used methods by the teachers were: lecture or chalk and talk [20]; group discussions [12]; and, question and answer [8]. The

least employed approaches by the teachers in a descending order were: fieldwork [4]; discovery method [4]; debate song and dance [1]; demonstration [1]; and, brainstorming [1]. The following were not being used at all by the teachers: problem-solving; project method; and, simulation games. Reasons given for the most used methods were that the lecture method allowed quick coverage of the syllabus while group discussion allowed students' participation, and discovery methods helped students to be highly alert in class.

The current Advanced Level Geography students were required to indicate the teaching methods which were frequently used by their teachers in teaching the localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus and the following results were obtained as shown in Tables 4.10 and 4.11 below.

Table 4.3.2 Current Advanced Level Geography students indication on teaching methods used
N=287

Number of students per type of school		MS 74 (26%)	LDUS 76(26%)	HDUS 94(33%)	RDS 43(15%)			MS 74(26%)	LDUS 76(26%)	HDUS 94(33%)	RDS 43(15%)
From the following teaching methods, which ones are frequently used by your teacher? Rank them in order of frequency in the boxes provided.											
Problem solving	Always	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	Lecture method	Always	58(21%)	59(21%)	87(31%)	43(15%)
	Often	11(3%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)		Often	13(5%)	11(3%)	7(2%)	0(0%)
	Rarely	13(5%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)		Rarely	3(1%)	6(2%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
	Never	50(18%)	76(26%)	94(33%)	43(15%)		Never	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Fieldwork	Always	13(5%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	Debate	Always	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
	Often	33(11%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)		Often	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
	Rarely	15(5%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)		Rarely	25(9%)	13(5%)	21(8%)	10(3%)
	Never	13(5%)	76(26%)	94(33%)	43(15%)		Never	49(17%)	63(21%)	73(25%)	33(12%)
Group discussion	Always	17(6%)	23(8%)	21(8%)	26(9%)						
	Often	53(19%)	33(12%)	65(23%)	13(5%)						
	Rarely	4(1%)	20(6%)	8(2%)	1(3%)						
	Never	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	3(1%)						

Table 4.3.2 shows that results from Advanced Level Geography students' questionnaire agreed with evidence from the teachers in that 278 (97%) students indicated that the teaching methods used most by the teachers were the lecture method, with 254 (89%) indicating group discussion. The least used methods were: fieldwork as indicated by 61 (21%); debate indicated by 69(25%); and, problem solving by 24 (8%). Mission schools were the only school categories who attempted to use fieldwork and problem solving as shown in Table 4.3.2 above.

Analysis of schemes of work was done to establish the methods used by the Advanced Level Geography teachers to implement the localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus and the following results were obtained as shown in Table 4.3.3 below.

Table 4.3.3 Methods stated in the schemes of work
N=12

Question	Analysis			
	MS	LDUS	HDUS	RDS
Methods often used by the teacher?				
Lecture Method or Chalk and Talk	3	3	3	3
Group Discussions or Presentations	3	3	3	2
Problem Solving	0	0	0	0
Discovery Method	1	1	0	0
Debate or Song or Dance	1	0	0	0
Question and Answer	3	3	3	3
Fieldwork	2	1	0	0
Simulation Games	0	0	0	0
Case-Studies	3	2	2	1
Systems Approach	2	2	2	1
Integrated Approach	2	1	0	0
Concentric Approach	2	1	0	0
Methods not used by the teacher?				
Lecture Method or Chalk and Talk	0	0	0	0
Group Discussions or Presentations	0	0	0	1
Problem Solving	1	2	2	3
Discovery Method	2	2	3	3
Debate or Song or Dance	2	2	3	3
Fieldwork	1	2	3	3
Question and Answer	0	0	0	0
Simulation Games	2	3	3	3
Case-Studies	0	1	1	2
Systems Approach	1	1	1	2
Integrated Approach	1	2	3	3
Concentric Approach	1	2	3	3

The methods often stated in schemes of work by the teachers were lecture method [12], question and answer [12], group discussions or presentations [11], case-studies [8], systems approach [7], fieldwork [3], integrated approach [3], concentric approach [3] and discovery method [2]. Analysis of schemes of work was conducted to find out whether methods planned were implemented in actual teaching as shown in evaluations of schemes of work and in lesson deliveries observed. However, evidence from lesson observations showed that the following methods were not used by the teachers: simulation games, problem solving, discovery method, debate song and dance, fieldwork, integrated approaches and concentric approaches. Pupils' activities which dominated the schemes of work were also noted (see Table 4.3.4 below).

Table 4.3.4 Analysis of schemes of work on methods planned and pupils' activities
N=12

QUESTION	MS		LDUS		HDUS		RDS	
	yes	no	yes	no	Yes	no	yes	no
Are strategies planned or schemed implemented in actual teaching and learning of lessons?	2	1	2	1	1	2	1	2
	In some instances Fieldwork and Problem solving are mentioned in planning but not implemented. Some strategies planned or schemed for are implemented; such as lecture method, group discussions and presentations.							
Pupil activities which dominate the schemes of work?								
Group discussions	2		2		2		1	
Hands on through local fieldwork	1		0		0		0	
Problem solving activities	1		0		0		0	
Debate	1		0		0		0	
Individual work	2		2		1		1	
Listening and taking notes	3		3		3		3	

As seen in lesson observations, some of the strategies planned for were not implemented in actual teaching and learning, such as fieldwork, problem solving, integrated approach, systems approach and concentric approach. However, mostly the lecture method and group discussions were often implemented as planned. The pupils' activities which dominated the schemes of work were listening and taking notes [12], group discussions [7] and individual work [6].

Table 4.3.5 Students' indication on the number of times they have carried out fieldwork activities

N=52

Question		MS	LDUS	RDUS	RDS
How many times have you gone for fieldwork?	None/never	30	83	90	43
	Once	29	0	0	0
	Twice	12	0	0	0
	Thrice	0	0	0	0
	More than 3 times	0	0	0	0
List the areas you have visited so far in doing fieldwork and what you did.	Local stream. River discharge and velocity(one Mission School) Gweru CBD (Land-use survey, delimitation of CBD, Sphere of influence and traffic flows) (one Mission School)				

Table 4.3.5 shows that mission schools were the only ones who had done some fieldwork. Of the 74(26%) students from mission schools, 44 (15%) carried out fieldwork on land use and the delimitation of the central business district, sphere of influence, traffic flows and measuring river discharge and river velocity in nearby streams. Analysis of schemes of work evaluations also indicated that the following topics were covered and fieldwork was done by *one* mission school in the following areas: *Hydrology and Fluvial Processes* (River Discharge and Stream Velocity) and *Settlement Dynamics* (Sphere of influence). Fieldwork was covered as was indicated in evaluations of the schemes of work. The rest of the topics were covered but no

fieldwork was done. These were *Geomorphology, Climatology, Biogeography, Population Geography, Agricultural Systems and Food Production, Manufacturing and Service Industries, Hazardous Environments, Arid and Semi-Arid Environments, Mining, Fuel and Power and Environmental Management*.

The questionnaires completed by the Advanced Level Geography teachers and the current Advanced Level Geography students, analysis of the schemes of work and lesson observations conducted revealed that teachers were employing teacher centred approaches at the expense of student centred approaches in their teaching. The teaching methods often used were the lecture method, question and answer, and group discussions. However, fieldwork, problem solving and simulation games were rarely employed. Of the twelve schools in the sample, only one mission school had managed to carry out fieldwork activities in the following topics: *Hydrology and Fluvial Processes and Settlement Dynamics*.

Use of instructional media

The Advanced Level Geography teachers were asked to indicate the instructional media available at their schools and instructional media they thought their classes needed to effectively teach the localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus (see Table 4.15 below).

Table 4.5.1 Use of instructional media shown by Advanced Level Geography teachers' questionnaire
N=21

Question	Response	Frequency			
		MS	LDUS	HDUS	RDS
List the instructional media available at your school and in your department.	Overhead Projector	5	2	1	0
	Chalk board	5	6	6	4
	Internet	1	2	1	0
	Charts	5	3	2	2
	Globe	3	3	2	1
	Realia (models)	1	0	0	0
	Video Films	1	2	0	0
	Computers	1	1	1	0
	Maps(World and Wall Maps)	2	1	1	0
	Weather stations	2	1	1	0
	Pictures	1	1	0	0
	Newspapers	1	0	0	0
	List the instructional media you think your class would need to effectively teach the localised 'A' Level Geography syllabus.	Video Projector	3	2	2
Video Films		2	1	1	0
CDs		2	2	1	0
Charts		2	3	3	4
Internet		3	4	4	0
Computers		3	3	4	1
Overhead projector		0	4	3	4
Pictures		2	2	2	2

The following were instructional media available at the schools and in departments: chalkboards [21], charts [12], globes [9], overhead projectors [8], weather stations [4], internet [4], video films [3], computers [3], pictures [2], realia models [1] and newspapers [1]. The majority of these instructional media were found in mission schools and low-density urban schools with rural day schools only having chalkboards, charts and globes. For the teachers to effectively teach the localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus, teachers suggested in interviews that they would need video projectors, video films, internet, computers, overhead

projectors, pictures and CDs. Analyses of schemes of work were done to establish if the instructional media employed were student centred or interactive (see Table 4.5.2 below).

Table 4.5.2 Instructional media employed as shown in the schemes of work analysis
N=12

Question	Analysis							
	MS		LDUS		HDUS		RDS	
	yes	no	Yes	no	yes	no	yes	no
Are the instructional media employed student-centred/ interactive? Yes No.	2	1	1	2	1	2	0	3

Only 4 of the forms of instructional media employed by the teachers were interactive or student centred. The majority of the forms of instructional media used by the teachers were teacher centred. The Advanced Level Geography teachers' questionnaire and analysis of schemes of work, and lesson observations revealed that the majority of the teachers who employed instructional media were student teachers. There were a number of instructional media which were not available in schools for them to implement the localised syllabus effectively.

From the lesson observations conducted, teachers were not preparing separate detailed lesson plans other than what was planned in the schemes of work. About 17 (71%) of lessons delivered by the teachers reflected teacher pupil interaction, and 12(50%) reflected pupil-pupil interaction. The responses from teachers and current and former students' questionnaires revealed that the available textbooks and resources were inadequate. The pupil- textbook sharing ratio was very high with at least fifteen students sharing a textbook. The Advanced Level Geography teachers were employing mostly teacher centred approaches at the expense of student centred approaches. Availability of instructional media in schools was inadequate as indicated by the analysis of the schemes of work, lesson observation conducted and a questionnaire item completed by the teachers.

DISCUSSION

The findings from both current and former Advanced Level Geography students revealed that teachers were not covering all the topics in the syllabus. In light of this, teachers should teach all topics in the syllabus in order to give the students a wide choice of questions in examinations or follow the syllabus guidelines. Winter (1998) points out that the greatest problems for curriculum reforms are examinations. If all topics in the syllabus are not covered, this will leave the students with a narrow choice of questions in the examinations and it will affect the quality of results in Geography. There were some topics in the localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus that both the teachers and students regard as easy and others regard as difficult.

A close analysis of the lessons observed indicates that of all the delivered lessons, only 4(13%) of the teachers had separate, prepared detailed lesson plans. The rest of the teachers used what was on their scheme-cum plan of work. Lesson objectives of fifteen of the lessons observed were clearly stated and objectives were related to the syllabus goals. Generally, teachers were teaching without detailed lesson plans, their lessons lacked innovation and they were teacher centred rather than being student centred. Teachers are also teaching without employing appropriate instructional media. However, the teachers are trying their level best to see the success of the implementation of the localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus is concerned.

The findings from Advanced Level Geography teachers and former Advanced Level Geography students and current Advanced Level Geography students indicate that the content in the available textbooks had little relevance to the requirements of the Advanced Level Geography syllabus, and that most of the recommended textbooks were not available in the schools. In terms of the textbooks, mission schools and low-density urban schools were better resourced than high density-urban schools and rural day schools. Ottevanger, (2001) says, on the issue of textbooks availability and their extent in relation to relevance, deficiencies in the availability of such essential materials such as textbooks have very adverse effects on academic achievement in Geography. This was likely to affect the performance of the students in the learning of Geography.

Findings in on the status of teaching and learning resources indicate that mission schools and low-density urban schools were better resourced as compared to the high-density schools and rural day schools. The teachers bemoaned the absence of departmental storerooms, libraries, and weather stations with modern instruments and computers. Provision of teaching and learning materials is an important task for the school. That is, successful implementation of the localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus heavily depends on the nature of the learning materials that the school provides. According to Sheridan (1990), materials must satisfy the demand of the programme offered. Contrary to Sheridan's (1990) and Ottevanger's (2001) advice that teaching materials must support teachers to implement new teaching strategies, the schools did not provide teaching and learning resources towards Geography education in order to allow effective teaching of the subject. Bredekamp (1995) concurs that learning activities and materials should be concrete, real and relevant. There was a critical shortage of textbooks that adequately meet the syllabus requirements and the pupil-textbook ratio is still very high especially in high-density urban schools and rural day schools, the worst ratio being twenty students sharing a textbook. Zvobgo (1994) cites provision of resources as crucial elements in the implementation of any new innovation. Thus the provision of human and material resources is important in the implementation stage. For the successful implementation of the localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus, adequate teaching and learning has to be provided.

As evidenced by the responses from the Advanced Level Geography teachers, current Advanced Level Geography students and schemes of work analysis, the recommended teaching methods most frequently used methods by the teachers were lecture or chalk and talk, group discussions and question and answer. It is of interest to note that the least employed methods by teachers in descending order were fieldwork method, discovery method, debate, song and dance, demonstration and brainstorming. The following methods were not being used at all by the teachers; problem solving, project method and simulation games. This revelation is quite discouraging because it means that teachers are employing more of traditional teacher centred approaches in their teaching at the expense of interactive student centred approaches. This has got a negative impact on the performance of the students since they are not taught to be critical thinkers. The analysis of schemes of work revealed that teachers were not employing the following approaches in their teaching, that is, systems approach, integrated approach and concentric as recommended by the syllabus.

The findings from teachers' questionnaires and interviews, questionnaires for former Advanced Level Geography students, current Advanced Level students and content analysis indicate that there is a grave shortage of instructional media in schools. The high-density urban schools and rural day schools were the most affected. The teaching and learning media employed by the teachers in implementing the localised Advanced Level syllabus promoted passiveness in students. This affects the teaching and learning of Geography as Ottevanger

(2001) and Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2001) note that it is important for teachers to have support materials to support them in implementing new teaching approaches. This means that curriculum implementation materials are those that close the gap between the curriculum developers and curriculum implementers, that is, facilitating the new curriculum or new intentions to be carried out in a way as close to what developers intended as possible. In an analysis of research conducted in developing countries, Stuart (1995) observes that instructional materials, that is, textbooks and reading materials positively affected students' achievements at secondary school level. This implies that the non-availability of relevant instructional materials in schools has an effect on the implementation of the localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study found out that the content in the available textbooks had little relevance to the requirements of the localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus, teachers were employing more of teacher-centred approaches in their teaching at the expense of interactive student-centred approaches, teachers were implementing the localised syllabus without adequate teaching and learning instructional media and resources and teachers were not being innovative and creative in improvising instructional media especially those that promote interactive learning. Teachers were not using the objectives from the localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus when setting their exercises and tests and they were not covering the whole syllabus. Teachers were found not to be innovative and creative in improvising teaching and learning materials in implementing the localised syllabus. There were some indirect factors that influenced the implementation of the syllabus. The teachers were intervening where possible in an attempt to cater for the flows existing in the implementation of localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus.

- The study recommends the following in order to address the challenges of lack of instructional media in schools; teachers should be innovative and creative so that they improvise Geography teaching and learning materials where possible, instead of waiting for conventional instructional media. The teaching and or learning instructional media should be those that promote interactive learning (Chiromo, 2010, Alonsabe, 2005, Ottevanger, 2001, and Zvobgo, 1999). Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2001) and Ottevanger (2001) agree that it is important for teachers to have support materials to support them in implementing new teaching approaches.
- Teachers are encouraged to use the objectives from the localised Advanced Level Geography syllabus when setting their exercises and tests.
- Teachers should be innovative and creative so that they improvise Geography teaching and learning materials where possible.
- Teachers should expose students to interactive teaching methods which promote students' active participation and ownership of their learning (Chiromo, 2010 and Kroma 1996).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This article is dedicated to the late Dr S. T. Marimo with whom the idea of this article was conceived out of his doctoral research prior to his demise. This article is dedicated to, and fulfils a promise I made to remain completing the unfinished work.

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