

**BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION**

**Faculty of Science Education**

**THE INFLUENCE OF TEACHER-PUPIL INTERACTION ON PUPILS' PARTICIPATION  
AND PERFORMANCE IN HUMAN GEOGRAPHY AT ADVANCED LEVEL.**

**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION, IN PARTIAL  
FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR A POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN  
EDUCATION**

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## AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I, Rumbidzai Sophia Chatindiara, declare that this project is my own work and that it has not been previously submitted at the Bindura University of Science Education or any other university.

Signature.....  .....Date...30 August 2016

Supervisor's name: Vimbai, S. Matswetu

Signature  .... Date: 30 August 2016

## Dedication

This project is dedicated to my late loving husband, Stuart Endai Mavatu, you were my pillar and source of inspiration.

## Acknowledgements

Firstly all glory and honour to the Almighty God for taking me this far.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my research supervisor, Ms. V Matswetu for sparing time and effort towards the completion of this project. I would like to thank her for her assistance, despite her busy schedule, she was always available to assist.

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## Abstract

The study sought to examine the influence of teacher- pupil interaction on pupils' participation and academic performance in the study of Advanced level human Geography. The study also established the methods of teaching that the teacher can employ which enhances high teacher- pupil interaction and stimulates high pupils' participation and achieve high academic performance. Data were collected using observations and Focus Group discussion (FGDs). The study found that teacher-pupil interaction is key in enhancing pupil participation and improving academic performance. The study also concluded that teaching method has an influence on pupils' level of participation and the resulting academic performance. Pupils participate more when there is high teacher- pupil interaction which is enhanced by pupil- centred methods of teaching such as group learning activities e.g. group works and collaborative learning as well as pair works. On the other hand the study established that teacher- centred methods such as the lecture method have a low teacher-pupil interaction and hence low participation of pupils resulting in low academic performance. The study recommends that teachers ought to employ pupil-centred methods of teaching to enhance pupils' participation and a high academic performance in Advanced Level Human Geography.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Introduction

The aim of students attending school is to perform better academically and produce good results. It is therefore the mandate of the teachers to assist pupils to realise their goals. One of the ways to assist pupils meet their goals is to implement those teaching methods that enhance teacher-pupil interactions, and to interact in such a way that pupils' level of participation and performance in the classroom is improved. Teacher-pupil interaction has an influence on the level of students' participation as well as their academic performance. Some methods of interaction promote participation whilst others lower the level of participation with most of the pupils being passive throughout the lessons. This chapter focused on the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, assumptions of the study, delimitation of the study, limitations and definitions of key terms. A summary will hem the chapter.

### 1.1 Background of the study

Several studies have been done on teacher- pupil interactions and their influence on pupils' participation and their academic performance (Grill 2009; Felder and Brent, 2007; Sadker and Sadker, 1992). The world over, a lot has been documented on how teaching method influences participation and academic performance and various conclusions have been drawn from the studies.

Studies done on the influence of teaching method on pupils' level of participation and their academic performance have shown that teacher-centred methods of teaching are

associated with low levels of students' participation, students are usually passive as they are expected to listen carefully and absorb the information as given by the teacher (Grill, 2007)

The student- centred methods of teaching have been seen to promote a lot of participation amongst pupils and between the teacher and the pupils. The studies by Felder and Brent (2007) at North Carolina University have shown that cooperative learning promotes face to face interactions between group members and between the teachers and students. That interaction has been seen to increase pupils' level of understanding as pupils work as teams and are highly participative and their performance is usually high. Grill (2007) also noted that teachers must use differentiated instruction methods and these teaching styles must be so involving to students, they must be group focused and inquiry driven which thus promote student participation.

High teacher-pupil interactions has also been seen to give better understanding of concepts. Students who interact more with the teacher are expected to achieve good results. The conclusion has been reached by scholars like Duffy (2001), Sadker and Sadker (1992), Jule (2002) who investigated on how gender influence students' participation and academic performance. These scholars noted that male students were given more attention by teachers of both genders and so they were highly motivated as the lessons progressed and so would interact more with the teacher and amongst themselves and their performance was usually above that of the girls.

The nature of the relationship between teachers and pupils influence the pupils' level of participation. Baker (2006) argued that strong teacher student relationships may be one of the most important factors in changing a child's educational path for the better. In line with that, Downey (2008) argued that the relationship should not be a classroom relationship only but has to extend out of the classroom. He noted that the classroom relationship builds on how the teacher and the pupil interact outside the classroom and that relationship will then continue in the classroom with the pupils interacting more amongst themselves and with their teacher. Pupils need to be connected to the teacher, the more they are connected the more they are willing to participate and improve their academic performance.

The school culture and the classroom environment affects the level of students' participation. In the classroom, female students often feel inhospitable in their classrooms due to the everyday inequalities carried into these classrooms (Hall, 1982). So, in essence those pupils who realise that the teacher does not give them enough attention in class are likely to be less participative as the lessons progress. However due to a limited time frame, the researcher did not focus on individual pupil interaction with the teacher but did focus on the methods of teaching that enhances teacher pupil interaction and improves their academic performance.

## 1.2 Statement of the problem

Various studies referred to in the background of the study show that teachers employ various teaching methods to enhance pupils' participation and improve their academic

performance. At the same time teacher-pupil interaction has been identified to be one of the ways of stimulating participation and improving academic performance. However, to my knowledge, it is yet to be understood how teacher- pupil interaction influence the participation and academic performance in Advanced Level Human Geography which is what the researcher sought to find out in this study.

### 1.3 Purpose of the study

The study sought to explore teacher pupil interaction and how it influences pupils' participation as the lessons progress; and how the different teacher- pupil interactions influence pupils' academic performance. The study also aims to establish methods of teaching that stimulate teacher pupil interaction and note if that has a bearing on the pupils' level of academic performance. The findings of the study will therefore help the teachers to know the best ways of teaching and interacting with pupils which will help realise the best out of the pupils.

### 1.4 Objectives of the study

- To establish how teacher- pupil interaction influence pupils' participation in Advanced Level Human Geography.
- To establish how teacher- pupil interaction influence pupils' academic performance in the Advanced Level Human Geography.
- To understand how teaching method influence pupils' participation and academic performance in Advanced Level Human Geography.

## 1.5 Research Questions

1. How does teacher- pupil interaction influence pupil's participation in Advanced level Human Geography?
2. How does teacher- pupil interaction influence pupils' academic performance in the Advanced Level Human Geography?
3. How does teaching method influence pupils' participation and academic performance in Advanced Level Human Geography?

## 1.6 Significance of the study

This research was carried out so it can benefit the following stakeholders in the education sector. Students studying Advanced Level Human Geography, the researcher and teachers teaching Geography at Advanced Level. The researcher will realise the best ways of interacting with pupils and how that interaction helps pupils perform better academically. The teacher will be trying various methods of interaction and observe what makes pupils participate meaningfully. The findings of the study may enable the teacher to evaluate the various methods of interaction and adopt the methods of teaching which enhances teacher-pupil interaction and high academic performance. The pupils may develop an appreciation of the ways of interacting with the teacher and the significance of participation in improving their academic performance as teacher emphasises certain ways of interacting. Other teachers who teach Advanced Level Human Geography will start appreciating and employing the methods of teaching that stimulates participation of pupils and enhance their level of understanding. At the same time teachers will also note the importance of teacher pupil interaction in improving pupils' mastery of concepts. The researcher will give some

soft copies of her research findings to Geography teachers at seminars and workshops usually help in the district and province. If the heads of humanities department attend such seminars and workshops, as is always the norm, they will also know how best the students can be taught in this subject and they can have staff development workshops to equip the geography teachers with the correct methods of teaching A Level Human Geography.

### 1.7 Delimitation/ Scope of the study

The study will investigate the influence of teacher- pupil interaction on pupils' participation and performance in the study of human Geography. The investigation covers the nature of teacher pupil interactions as well as the teaching methods and how they influence pupils' level of participation and pupils' academic performance. The research also seeks to establish teaching methods and ways of teacher pupil interactions that enhances pupils' participation and academic performance. The study will be carried out at one High school in Mutoko District which is in Mashonaland East Province. Mutoko Centre is one hundred and forty kilometres to the east of Harare and the school is twenty-five kilometres north of Mutoko Centre. The School has an enrolment of six hundred pupils and twenty-four teachers. Four teachers teach Geography, two up to ordinary level and two up to advanced level. There is only one Form 6 Geography class with 13 pupils who participated in the since they are the ones studying Advanced level human geography, an area under the current research study.

### 1.8 Limitations

The following challenges were anticipated by the researcher:

- The time period scheduled for this study is just one semester and this time period was too limited and the researcher would have preferred doing it on a

comparative analysis comparing views of pupils from various A level Geography groups over two to three terms but the time could not allow. However, the researcher had to source as much information as she could from the available sample workable with within the workable time period so as to answer her research questions.

### 1.9 Definition of key terms

**Interaction** is a process whereby two or more people engage in reciprocal actions in verbal or non- verbal actions (Kus and Altun, 2014)

**Collaborative learning** is a learning process whereby pupils work in small groups to address a problem or a task assigned by the teacher. In this study collaborative learning will be regarded solely as a group task of working on exam questions as a group and then giving answers to the class. It enhances learning and achievement by encouraging peer to peer interaction and cooperation (Bishop, 2000).

**Cooperative learning** is a method of teaching which employs small- group techniques with cooperative objectives.

### 1.10 Summary

This chapter focused on, the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, assumptions of the study, delimitation of the study, limitations, and definitions of key terms. The next chapter reviews literature related to the study.



## Chapter 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.0 Introduction

A great deal of literature emphasises the centrality of strong and effective relationship between teachers and students in improving pupils' academic achievement in various learning environments. (Tisome, 2009, Grill (2016), Stipek (2002), Whitaker (2004). The purpose of this chapter is to reveal literature that has been studied and written pertaining to teacher- pupil interactions as well as their effects on pupils' participation and academic performance.

Interaction refers to any sort of interaction i.e. student-student or teacher- student discussions, group discussions and any type of classroom participation (Long and Sato, 1983). Interaction is based on the assumption that it leads to better learning and activates learner's competence. Grill (2016) asserted that, "literature maintains that another way of helping learners learn any targeted task easily and quickly is to increase the amount of classroom interactions."

Whitaker (2004) asserted that good teachers recognise the importance of connecting with their students. If they fail to connect with their students, then influencing their minds is almost impossible. He realised that interaction with students builds a relationship between students and teachers. So pupils and teachers must always interact within and outside classroom so that they build a relationship which works well as the lessons progress, if pupils interact with their teachers outside classroom then even the classroom atmosphere is

interactive. Whitaker (2004) added that it's not the programmes that determine academic performance but the teachers and pupils' interactions and the way they relate are central.

In line with Whitaker (2004), Terry (2008) summarised the importance of teacher- pupil interaction in a simple question, "Does my teacher like me?" the answer that the pupil give himself or herself is what determines her academic performance. So teachers need to interact with their pupils in a way that makes them feel the teacher likes her and makes the pupil interact more with the teacher with the intention of keeping the relationship with the teacher.

## 2.1 Ways of enhancing interaction in classrooms

Interaction can be enhanced by providing teachers with the appropriate resources to meet the students' needs beyond academic instruction. (Tisome, 2009). The classroom can be decorated with pictures that are relevant to the studies underway as is common in most Zimbabwean primary schools. This enables the pupils to interact with each other or with the teacher in trying to understand the pictures shown. Interactions can be possible through the use of various forms of media such as chalkboard, charts, electronic media and diagrams. The use of these forms of media stimulates debates as pupils look at something tangible from which ideas and questions can be generated and that enhances interactions within a classroom. However, from another angle as a teacher I have realised that the use of media has to be under careful teacher monitoring as some pupils end up being carried away by the diagrams and might end up discussing things that are out of context.

Tosome (2009) argued that classroom interaction is partly influenced by out of classroom interactions between pupils and the teacher, even the relations between themselves as pupils. A pupil who is always reprimanded by the teacher or who is usually in disciplinary issues with the teacher might end up hating the teacher and being so negative in the subject, so that student is usually passive as the lessons progresses and his / her performance is usually poor (Stipek, 2002). This is common even in my own teaching experience that students with poor out of classroom relationship with the teachers do not usually interact with the teacher in the classroom. Again for students who do not relate well amongst themselves outside the classroom, they also avoid interaction in the lessons, they avoid making contributions to support or to criticise each other. Those pupils who experience a more nurturing relationship with their teachers tend to have better attitudes towards academics and often perform better than their peers who lack the same support system (Stipek, 2002). So teachers must strive to have a nurturing relationship with all pupils so as to have a positive relationship which makes them perform better.

Teachers can also enhance classroom interactions by positive outside classroom interactions for instance a teacher has to know her pupils and give the necessary scaffolding that is needed for those pupils who need it. The scaffolds will enable these pupils to participate well when they are in classroom with others. This has been observed by various teachers at the school where the study was undertaken, teachers give low achievers extra help in their offices so that when they are in classroom they will be able to participate well.

Wiseman and Hunt (2001), values teacher efficacy that is the realisation that he or she can have a positive effect on their student whether it's outside or inside the classroom. Having a positive effect can start with how the teacher interacts with the pupils and making them feel liked by the teacher. In line with this, Whitaker (2004) asserted that teacher efficacy influences a student's academic desire and desire to achieve; teacher efficacy is key in determining pupils' academic motivation and performance.

Though various scholars (Stipek (2002), Whitaker (2004), Terry (2008) as discussed above, highlights a number of ways of enhancing interactions between pupils and teachers and that it is the duty of the teacher to create an interactive classroom atmosphere, Stewart (2008) argues that at times the school culture makes it difficult for the teacher to enhance the interactions for instance the out of classroom interactions. Some school cultures promote whilst some school cultures are restrictive.

## **2.2 Influence of teacher-pupil interaction on academic performance**

Various scholars have agreed that teacher- pupil interactions is key in improving academic performance (Sadker and Sadker, 1992; Hall (1982), Jule (2002, Lin et al (2015). Lin et al (2015), in studies in a Taiwanese University concluded that teacher student interaction is key to academic performance. The study established that students with high teacher pupil interactions performed better than those with low teacher pupil interaction. He also concluded that the interactions must be backed up by provision of suitable and sufficient learning material and support. So this means that if interaction is not backed up by provision of suitable and sufficient learning support then the interactions won't yield the best results.

What then do we have to do in our local schools where learning material is usually insufficient?

Some researchers have also concluded that academic performance is to some extent influenced by teacher pupil interactions and those that interact more with the teacher have a higher chance of achieving better results than those who do not interact much (Sadker and Sadker, 1992; Hall (1982), Jule (2002). Studies have seen teacher pupil interactions as gender biased in favour of boys who then outperform girls (Sadker and Sadker, 1992; Hall (1982), Jule (2002). In both pre- college and college classrooms, the societal and teacher expectations often lead to unequal treatment of male and female students with male students interacting more with the teacher (Luffy, 2001). Sadker and Sadker (1992) have argued that the classroom interaction ground is never levelled, teachers of both gender gives more attention to male students. For Hall (1982), the classroom climate is frequently inhospitable to women due to the daily inequalities carried into these classrooms, and that has made girls' performance to lag behind that of boys. Jule (2002) argued that boys are given more linguistic space than girls that is boys are seen to be given more talk time and to interact more with the teacher as the lessons progresses and that has given the boys higher chances of interacting with the teacher and to perform better academically.

Stipek (2002) summarised that teacher- pupil relationship and interactions determines pupils' academic performance. Students want to feel connected to the teacher. The majority of the pupils who do not do well in certain subject areas are a result of poor relationships and absence of or little interaction with their teachers. So this supports the notion that

students perform poorly if they do not relate well with their teachers and perform quite well when they are relating well with their teachers. So for Stipek (2002), nature of interaction plays a major role in determining level of interaction in classroom as well as the pupils' academic performance.

Skinner (1993) asserted that a good teacher – pupil relationship positively influences learning, the more connected a student feels, the more he or she is willing to attempt a given task and to seek help when it is needed. The feeling of connectedness motivates the students to participate as a way to please the teacher by performing well.

Teachers' nature of interaction with pupils determines pupils' level of performance. For instance, if a teacher's interactions with pupils shows negative expectations to pupils, their level of participation in class goes down and so does their academic performance and in cases where teacher's expectations are associated with high academic performance, the pupils perform well (Pianta, 1999). Students by nature, desire their teacher's approval and attention.

For Marzano and Marzano, (2008), the quality of teacher- student relationships is the keystone for all aspects of classroom management. The teacher must thrive to create a pleasant classroom atmosphere which highly motivates the pupils' classroom participation and academic performance.

Although the above researches have concluded that teacher- pupil interactions are key in improving pupils' participation and academic performance. Stewart (2008) notices the influence of the school culture on the nature of interactions that can be there between pupils and the teachers. Stewart (2008) noted that some school cultures are restrictive to interactions and in such learning environments, the teacher interacts within the confinements of the school policy and usually the interactions will be restricted to classroom only which even lowers the pupils' participation in class and their academic performance will be lower than those of a less restrictive school culture. The latter promotes teacher- pupil interactions and hence high level of participation and a higher academic performance

### 2.3 Influence of teaching methods on academic performance

Grill (2016) noted that teaching methods determines classroom interaction levels and academic performance. He argued that the level of understanding and interaction in a teacher centred lecture and in a student- centred lesson is different. Teacher-centred lessons are delivered in lecture sessions and in one way presentations where students are expected to absorb information. With this method of teaching there is little or no interaction with the teacher. In line with this, Raja (2012) also asserted that in a traditional classroom, the teacher controls the class with authority, there is no active role of students during teaching- learning process which is usually teacher- centred. Grill (2016) further noted that pupils are highly active and interactive when teachers play a facilitator's role. This method helps students to develop critical thinking skills and to retain knowledge and

students are nurtured towards discovery learning and that makes them perform better in class.

Constructivist teaching methods as suggested by ancient scholars like Vygotsky (1978), are teaching styles which are group focused and inquiry driven. Such methods are designed to promote student participation. These methods include pair works, group works and class discussions. Group works warrants peer feedback and there is interaction among peers and teachers. Student- student interactions such as think- pair- share exercises is when students are given in class assignments and pupils think individually about the question asked, talk to their peers about an idea and then report their findings back to the class. This method works well in nurturing and valuing divergent thinking (Felder and Brent, 2007). Cooperative learning should also be used as they encourage student to student classroom interactions which enhances the pupils' understanding and academic performance. Grill (2016) asserted that teachers have to avoid to be all things to all pupils.

Downey (2008) asserted that “teachers need to know how their daily work in classrooms can be influenced by interactions and instructional strategies that research has shown can make a positive change in the lives of the children who are at great risk of failure.” So the instruction method must stimulate participation and interaction between teacher and pupils which makes pupils understand concepts better and improve their academic performance.



In medical schools, practical learning and active learning or learning by doing has produced competent and effective doctors (McKimm and Jollie, 2007). In medical schools, group learning has been used to come up with solutions and problems. Group learning used involves tutorials, seminars, group exercises and project, role play, discussions and the teacher is the organiser and facilitator. Such group learning activities have encouraged participation and enhanced active learning which resulted in the medical doctors performing quite well in the medical field. McKimm and Jollie (2007) further asserted that, regardless of the subject matter, students working in small groups tend to learn more of what is taught and retain it longer than when the same content is presented in other instructional formats.

Billard and Felder (2007)'s research studies on the effective way of teaching sciences like chemical engineering concluded that group activities give a better performance in the subject. Group activities were done on things that the pupils would be tasked in the assignments and tests, and pupils performed quite well. The study concluded that pupils must first be given challenges for example questions to answer, problems to solve or experimental observations to interpret. That then ensures participation and interaction between teacher and pupils and pupils will understand concepts and perform better.

According to Felder and Brent (2007)'s studies in higher education learning, cooperative learning has proved to promote face to face interactions with students or group members where they provide one another with feedback; challenging reasoning and conclusions and teaching and encouraging one another. For Fielder and Brent (2007), cooperatively taught

students tend to exhibit higher academic achievement and high level reasoning and critical thinking skills and a degree of understanding of learned material as compared to students taught traditionally with instructor- centred lectures.

#### 2.4 Teacher pupil interactions and teaching methods employed in Geography

In his studies at a Canadian University, in the teaching of Geography at Grade 10, Vajockzi, (2008) concluded that interaction in the classroom is an essential part of teaching learning process. The researcher noted that Geography lessons progressed well and pupils achieved good results when they are involved in the learning process. Of note was the centrality of cooperative learning and collaborative learning. Cooperative learning is important in the classroom as it employs small- group techniques with cooperative objectives, a procedure which encourages student participation and academic performance. Collaborative learning enhances interaction as well in the learning of Geography as teacher designs a learning problem or task then assigns small groups of students to address the problem together and reach a consensus on an issue (Vajockzi, 2008). That enhances learning and achievement by encouraging peer to peer interaction and cooperation.

Bishop (2000) noted that in the teaching of Geography direct instruction is also essential in the teaching of Geography. This is when the teacher presents material in small steps and checks for understanding. In ordered fashion, students answer turn by turn with teacher giving immediate feedback to their answers.

In studies carried by Kus and Altun (2014), in Istanbul, Turkey, on effective ways of teaching and learning Geography, they concluded that cooperative learning method is effective and increase students' achievement. Cooperative learning enables students to learn better and adopt a positive attitude to each other, to school, to teacher and their self-esteem improves.

According to the NGESP (1994) lessons must be engaging and motivating for pupils and fieldworks can help achieve that; there must be encouragement of opportunities for discussions to enable pupils to reflect and deepen their understanding of concepts. So the use of classroom discussions is important in enhancing teacher pupil interactions which enhances participation and improve academic performance.

The literature reviewed above has shown how various methods of teaching enhances teacher pupil interaction and how such interactions influence academic performance in pupils. The various methods of teaching Geography has also been advocated for by various scholars. The study therefore aims at understanding which of the methods is most relevant in the teaching of human geography at Advanced level. The research also seeks to establish the importance of teacher- pupil interaction in academic performance. An understanding of the methods of teaching and importance of teacher pupil interaction is key in improving the academic performance of pupils in human geography at Advanced level.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the methodology employed in the study that sought to establish how teacher- pupil interaction influence pupils' classroom participation and academic performance in Advanced Level Human Geography one high school in Mutoko District. The research design, population, sample and sampling, data collection, instruments and procedures and analysis employed in the study are outlined and discussed in this chapter.

### 3.1 Research Methodology

#### 3.1.1 Qualitative Research

Luttrell (2010) asserts that qualitative research refers to a way of conducting and conceiving research where the researcher is the key instrument or the tool for designing, collecting and analysing data. This is why the researcher decided to use qualitative research in this study, since the researcher is the key tool and is at the centre of the study. The qualitative research enables direct observations of the human behaviour in their natural setting and that is why Denzin and Lincoln (2005) described it as a naturalistic research of inquiry into everyday living; that has made it relevant for the researcher to use qualitative research for observations were directly made within a learning classroom environment as lessons progressed i.e. in their natural learning set up.

Luttrell (2010) further noted that qualitative research provides understanding and description of people's personal experiences of phenomenon and brings out their own view point. This has made the method qualify in the research underway it seeks to understand

pupils' personal experience on how they interact with the teacher and how the various interactions influence their understanding of concepts and their academic performance. Pupils were free to give out their own viewpoints pertaining to the teacher- pupil interactions and citing the interactions which they prefer which enhances their participation and an improved academic performance, they were also at liberty to suggest ways of interaction and methods of teaching which the teacher might not be using but which the pupils prefer to improve their participation and performance.

Qualitative research has also been noted to be very flexible and offering an in depth analysis and it has the potential to observe a variety of aspects of a social situation (Barbie, 2006). In this case, the qualitative enables the researcher to observe a variety of teacher- pupil interactions and their influence on participation and performance. Again, the flexibility nature of qualitative research enables the teacher to observe her ways of interaction and see how pupils participate and perform and if need be, the teacher adjusted her methods of interaction and teaching to enhance participation of pupils as the lessons progressed.

Qualitative research employs non-statistical methods of analysis such as focus groups, observations, videotapes, case studies and interviews (McRoy, 2011). It is therefore relevant to this research which collected data using video recordings and focus group discussions in an endeavour to establish methods of teacher- pupil interactions which enhances pupils' participation.

### 3.1.2 Research Design

#### **Action Research**

Action research is a disciplined process of inquiry conducted by and for those taking the action. The primary reason for engaging in action research is to assist the actor in improving and or refining his or her actions (Sagor, 2000). Hine (2014) cited implementation of changes as the main reason for action research and that is achieved through repeated cycles of planning, observing and reflecting individuals and groups engaged in research with an aim of improving the educative process. In this case, action research was the most relevant research design as the teacher was planning and observing herself in action and how pupils were participating as the teacher employ various methods of teaching and then reflect the actions.

Risby (2016) stated that action research is inquiry or research in the context of focused efforts to improve the quality of an organisation and its performance. It is also designed and conducted by practitioners who analyse the data to improve their own practise. So this approach is quite relevant in that the researcher is also intending to improve the pupils' performance as well as improving her own methods of teaching and teacher-pupil interactions with the aim of improving the results. The overall goal is therefore to improve the results of the organisation (the school) at which the study is being undertaken.

Hine (2014) demonstrated that action research can be done by individuals. That characteristic makes the method relevant in this study as the teacher is collecting data as an

individual to improve her interactions with pupils so as to enhance their participation in class and their actual academic performance improved.

Action research is a process of getting solutions through problem solving activities which are progressive. In other words, the process is ongoing in addressing issues and improving practices. The research underway is also progressive in nature whereby one method is applied and results are evaluated and another one is also tried and where need be the methods can be adjusted so as to improve the teacher-pupil interaction and the pupils' performance in Human Geography.

Action research helps practitioners to be able to address challenges that exist in their practise and helps them develop knowledge directly related to their classrooms (Hine, 2014). In this case the researcher is to develop knowledge directly related to her Geography classroom and develop the capability of solving any challenges that might be hindering effective instruction delivery.

### 3.2 Population

A population in research refers to the whole group about which certain specific information is required. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2009), a research population is generally a large collection of individuals or objects that is the main focus of a study. In this case, the population is made up of one Advanced level Geography class of 13 students of mixed sex.

### 3.3 Sample size

Leedy and Ormrod (2009) described a sample as a group of a target population under study. It is a smaller group drawn from a population carefully selected in order to closely reflect the characteristics of the subject (David, 1997). A sample is basically a representative of the population with typical attributes of the population being studied. A sample has to be small and manageable so as to enable interaction with the researcher. In this study, the sample size is 13 i.e. the whole class of Advanced level Geography male and female students studying human Geography. The class is small and manageable as a sample, besides the research was on-going as lessons progressed so all pupils had to be invited so they won't lose out in classroom learning activities. However, for FGDs, 8 of the 13 participated and signed the consent letters.

### 3.4 Sampling Techniques

Purposive sampling technique has been employed by the researcher. This technique involves the selection of information from rich participants or people who are knowledgeable and informative about the phenomenon under investigation so as to ensure an in-depth study and understanding of the phenomenon. Purposive sampling is therefore the ideal sampling technique as the purpose of the study is to understand how interaction in class influences the students' participation and academic performance in the teaching and learning of Human Geography at Advanced level. So the 13 pupils who were studying Advanced Level Geography participated in this study.



### 3.5 Data collection techniques

One of the essential components in conducting a research is data collection. In this study, the researcher used two data collection methods which are lesson observation and focus group discussions.

#### 3.5.1 Lesson observations

An observation is the action or process of observing something or someone carefully in order to gain information; it is the active acquisition of information from a primary source (O'Leary, 2013<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/>). Observation is a means of assessing teaching and learning and also as a way of developing teachers' skills and knowledge.

Taylor- Powell and Steele (1996) asserted that listening and seeing are key to observation.

So in this study, the researcher decided to use observation to note how teacher interact with the pupils and how the methods of teaching influence pupils' level of participation as the lessons progresses. So as the teacher was a participant observer, she could not capture all the details of what happens as the lessons progresses, so the teacher decided to use video recording as the lessons progressed so that she will carefully observe it later.

Observation is likely to be affected by observational bias which occurs when researchers only look where they think they will find positive results, so the teacher decided to use focus group discussions as well to compliment the observed teacher- pupil interactions and the classroom participation. End of week tests were also used to supplement the results from focus group discussions and observations.

Video recording is the recording of activities or events as they take place. In this study, videos were taken as the lessons progressed so that teacher will capture the interactions between pupils and teacher and identify teaching methods and forms of teacher-pupil interactions which stimulates students' participation and the ultimate academic performance. The advantage of video recording is that it can support an exploratory research design or data discovery phase. It can be reopened for more analysis to be made which is not possible with some other forms of data collection. Video recording can also capture things that a researcher might not have noticed at the time of being present since the researcher is also a participant observer some forms of interactions and their influence on participation might be missed but observed later on the video. It's also sharable and the participants can be provided with the video data for reflection and discussion to support data collection. It can also be effectively used to support empirical comparison of strategies, style and interaction across a dataset (Carey, 2012). This makes videotaping a relevant data collection method in this research where a comparison of various methods of teaching has to be made in order to come up with the best method of teaching and interactions which enhances pupils' participation and performance in Advanced Level Human Geography. However, Pink (2001) argued that though video is key when exploring and unfolding interactions over time, especially where there is an interest in the use of gestures, bodily movement and interaction with objects, it has the disadvantage that it is partial, i.e., it excludes and includes elements. The researcher tried to overcome this by showing all participants though at times focus would be on the speaker as the lessons progressed. Again, the teacher had to also conduct focus group discussions to supplement what might have been missed by the videos.

### 3.5.2 Focus Group Discussions

The focus group discussions were used in this study with Advanced Level Geography students learning Human Geography. The focus group discussion data complimented data from videos recorded. A lot of scholars have defined a focus group discussion as a group discussion in which six to twelve participants talk about a topic under the guidance of a researcher who plays a moderator's role (Zireva, Mamvuto and Mukabeta 2013). So having 13 pupils in the Geography class, the pupils were split into two distinct groups one with six pupils the other with seven. The participants, who are the students talked under the guidance of the researcher, one of my colleagues. To avoid a biased selection of group members, the teacher created 13 cards, 7 of the cards labelled 1 and 6 other cards labelled 2. So those who picked 1 constituted group 1 and those who picked cards labelled 2 were placed in group 2. Then, using their first name initials, each pupil was given a unique pseudo name for privacy and anonymity.

Focus group discussions are dynamic in that it sets an environment where the moderator can modify questions to suit the group. This makes the researcher understand more about the phenomena under research and can even probe the participants to reveal detailed data and deep insights. Fern (2001) argued that surveys are good for collection of information about people's attitudes and attributes but if there is need to understand issues more deeply and meaningfully focus group is best. In this study, students freely discuss how teacher- pupil interaction and teaching method influence their class participation and performance.

Cresswell (1998) noted that focus group discussions enable the discussion of sensitive issues to be done more comfortably than in interview sessions. Issues to do with teacher-pupil interactions and their influence on students' participation and academic performance can be sensitive, so pupils tend to find confidence in numbers and freely reveal information pertaining to the issue under research. Alexis (2010) noted that one of the weaknesses of the focus group discussions is that they are subject to moderator bias as some researchers can lead a discussion to reach a certain conclusion. Again, if focus group discussion is not properly constituted, a few individuals may dominate the discussion at the expense of others (Fern, 2001). However, in this case, the researcher outlined discussion ground rules before the focus group discussion started, emphasising the rights of the speaker and respecting a participant as he or she gives his or her point of view so as to minimise dominance and bias in the discussion.

### 3.6 Procedures of data collection

#### 3.6.1 Video recording

The teacher/researcher sought consent from the pupils before taking the videos. The teacher started by explaining to pupils that she is carrying out a study on teacher pupil interactions in a classroom environment and videos will be taken to show the interactions. The teacher encouraged pupils to behave normally as they always do, for the video will not be used against them or anywhere outside the research project. This was to ensure that pupils participate without fearing to be shown to the public on how they participate in class, teacher emphasised on privacy of the information captured. So as the lessons progressed, videos were being taken to note teacher pupil interactions and the forms of interactions and methods of teaching which enhances better participation and academic performance. An

observation checklist for the lesson observations was created (See Appendix 1). So after the lesson, the teacher went through the video with the checklist. End of week tests were given and test scores were recorded and used to analyse whether the methods of teaching used for that week and level of interaction has improved pupils' academic performance.

### 3.6.2 Focus Group Discussions

Focus group discussions were done with Advanced Level Geography students studying Human Geography at one high school in Mutoko District. The researcher approached members who constitute the focus group. The researcher gave detailed discussion of the intention of the study. Following the invitation to participate in the research, the researcher gave consent forms to the participants which spelt out the ethical issues regarding their taking part. After pupils have read and completed the form, the researcher made arrangements on the schedules on focus group discussions to spell out time and venue. The researcher engaged one A Level Agriculture teacher, as the Head of Humanities Department was on sick leave, to meet each group for a FGD session when both the teacher and the pupils were free, after their mid- year examinations. Participants were arranged into two groups, using criteria stated above, one group had six members while the other one had seven members. However, since the consent letter spelt out clearly that pupils attend the FGDs willingly, some pupils couldn't show up for the FGDs only 8 of the 13 attended.

### 3.7 Data analysis

Transcription of focus group discussion was done. Data coding was also done and emerging themes were identified. Since analysis is qualitative, analysis was done using words and at some point words spoken by participants were presented as they are. The researcher presented data in a systematic way, that is, data was presented under subheadings as: Theme, Sub-theme and Excerpts.

### 3.8 Summary

This chapter highlights the methodology employed in qualitative research. The chapter also highlights the population, the sample and sampling procedures, research instruments used in the study, data collection procedures and little given on analysis. The next chapter focuses on data presentation, analysis and discussion.

## CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents, analyses and discusses data from participants pertaining the influence of teacher- pupil interaction as well as teaching method on pupils' participation and academic performance in the study of human geography at Advanced level. The data were collected using observations and focus group discussions. The data is presented, analysed and discussed by themes. The themes are derived from research questions below:

- How does teacher- pupil interaction influence pupil participation in Advanced Level Human Geography lessons?
- How does teaching method influence pupils' participation in Advanced Level Human Geography?
- How does teacher- pupil interaction influence pupils' academic performance in the Advanced Level Human Geography?

The participants are a total class of Advanced level human Geography pupils. They are 13 in total, 7 females and 6 males.

### 4.1 The influence of teacher- pupil interaction on pupil participation in Advanced Level Human Geography lessons

Data collected from FGDs indicate that teacher- pupil interaction influences pupil's participation in Advanced Level Human Geography lessons in various ways. Some of the responses that were given by pupils in the FGDs include:

- We interact more with the teacher when she asks questions and we respond to them.

- When teacher gives us a piece of work to work on before the lesson, we participate more when the lesson is progressing.
- We interact more and participate more when the teacher gives us presentations and we present them in front of class where the teacher and other students makes additions and subtractions where necessary
- In groups and cooperative learning, we interact more amongst student and with the teacher as she corrects us and so we participate more.
- Fieldworks promotes pupils' participation.
- Teacher must come to class in a happy mood so we interact freely with her and participate more.

Similar observations were made by the researcher as the lessons progressed. The researcher noted that there is more interaction between the teacher and the pupils as the lessons progressed. There is high teacher- pupil interaction when group works, collaborative learning, presentations and question and answer sessions are done. The researcher also observed the importance of coming to lessons with a cheerful and smiling face, pupils are free to participate and interact with the teacher and amongst themselves. However, the researcher did not observe a notable difference in her mood.

The responses of the pupils are evidence that the teacher and pupils interact with each other in a variety of ways. The various opportunities for teacher- pupil interaction increases the pupils' level of participation. Some forms of interaction like teacher asking



pupils questions with the students responding to the questions are by nature interactive and makes pupils participate. Student M said that

*.... the teacher asks us questions and we respond to the questions.....*

The teacher has observed that when she takes the lead that is asking follow up questions say after pair or group presentations; a lot of pupils are able to participate meaningfully. The findings are in line with Lin et al (2015), in his studies in a Taiwanese University concluded that teacher student interaction is key to participation and ultimate academic performance. So the teacher must always find ways of interacting with pupils like asking questions and probing.

Teacher- pupil interaction really has an influence on the general participation of pupils. The way in which teacher and pupils interact influences their participation in class. In FGDs, student K said that

*Teacher must come to lessons with a cheerful face so that we are free to participate as we feel so close to the teacher, if the teacher is moody, we so demotivated and afraid to give our contributions...*

Student C asserted that

*Our relation with our teacher is good and things are ok...*

The teacher has not noted the differences in her mood and its influence on the pupils' level of participation. However, what the student echoed is in line with Skinner (1993) who asserted that a good teacher – pupil relationship positively influences learning, the more connected a student feels, the more he or she is willing to attempt a given task and to seek

help when it is needed. The feeling of connectedness motivates the students to participate as a way to please the teacher by performing well. Jule (2002) talks of the linguistic space that is the time the teacher interacts with pupils. He noted that male students are given more talking time in class than girls and teachers, irrespective of their sex, are ready to interact with male pupils as the lessons progress and thus male pupils participate more than female pupils. Fountain (1999) noted that the society itself restricts female interaction as most African societies and religions do not tolerate females to speak in front of males. Such cultures therefore make some female students uncomfortable to interact with elders, teachers among them, and so they end up not participating as the lessons progresses. The female students therefore feel disconnected to the teacher and participation is minimal.

Information provided by students in FGDs shows that whenever there is group learning, be it group works, collaborative learning or group presentations, pupils are highly participative and most of them were agreeing that it is indeed motivating to work as a group. The same was observed by the researcher as the lessons progressed. Student H asserted that

*...group works motivate us to read to understand concepts to the level of our colleagues and so we are motivated to read and give meaningful contributions to the group.....*

The findings are in line with Felder and Brent (2007)'s studies in higher education learning of chemical engineering, collaborative learning has proved to promote face to face interactions with students or group members where they provide one another with feedback; challenging reasoning and conclusions and teaching and encouraging one another, thereby generating a high participative class. Grill (2016) asserted that teachers have to avoid to be all things to all pupils, learning itself must be engaging to the students.

Both the FGDs and the observations have shown that pupils participate more in lessons when they are doing a piece of work that they have been assigned to work on in the previous lessons. Most of the pupils have been observed to be participative. In FGDs, Student C said that

*When teacher gives us work to research in preparation for the next lessons, we are highly motivated and participate more.....*

The same observations were made by the researcher as the lessons progressed. When the teacher gives pupils a piece of work to research in advance, the pupils research and are usually very participative in the next lessons and they will be making very meaningful contributions.

FGDs have also revealed that students desire fieldwork to enhance their participation.

Student P said that,

*Pedestrian counts would have been easier to understand if students had gone for a fieldwork in the demarcation of the Central Business District....*

Though observations have not been made on the impact of fieldwork on learning in this study, previous studies have noted the centrality of fieldworks in the learning of practical geographic aspects (NGESP: 1994)

#### 4.2 Influence of teaching method on pupils' participation

The study also revealed that various teaching method influence pupils' participation differently in Advanced Level Human Geography lessons. At the same time, pupils were

showing a preference to certain teaching methods at various learning stages. For instance, in FGDs, pupils indicated that they prefer the lecture method only when the teacher is introducing a new topic and will prefer working in groups when the topic has been laid down for them by the teacher. Student P asserted that,

*.....we want the lecture method only when the teacher is introducing a new topic as she gives direction on the new topic.....*

The relevance of employing various methods of teaching is in line with the findings of Raja (2012) in his research studies Pakistan in the teaching of English using pair works and group works. He concluded that that group work and pair work is best used when it is not the only classroom interaction pattern, but when it is combined with other strategies.

#### 4.2.1 Lecture method

The lecture method has been cited by pupils as one method of teaching that the teacher uses in lesson delivery. Both FGDs and observations have shown little participation with this method. Student P said that

*...the teacher rarely uses the method, usually when she is introducing a new topic and sheds light on what we are going to cover in that topic as we listen carefully to a point where she gives us presentations...*

The method itself does not directly enhance participation but prepares the pupils to participate more in the future lessons, otherwise on its on pupils will be listening and usually passive (Grill, 2016) and noting down major areas of note. Raja (2012), asserted that in a traditional classroom, the teacher controls the class with authority, there is no active role of students during teaching- learning process which is usually teacher- centred. The

researcher also observed that the lecture method is less interactive between teacher and pupils and amongst pupils themselves. The researcher observed that pupils will be quiet and listening attentively as the teacher lectures. The interactions are usually minimal with very few pupils, if any, asking for clarification after the teacher has lectured.

#### 4.2.2 Collaborative learning

Collaborative learning is an exercise of assigning group questions and pupils give feedback on the questions they are assigned to work on. In this study, in collaborative learning the teacher was using past exam questions. In FGDs, pupils echoed that they participate highly when they are given questions to work in groups and then they work together to come out with solutions. Student K had this to say,

*We really enjoy it when we are given questions to work on in groups and then we give feedback*

Observations made by the researcher has also revealed that cooperative learning results in high participation of pupils, even those who would look down as teacher ask questions to the class, with cooperative learning they raise their heads up and contribute meaningfully. These findings are consistent with the research findings of Felder and Brent (2007)'s studies in higher education learning where cooperative learning has proved to promote participation among group members. Collaborative learning enhances participation of pupils which is what every teacher must aim to achieve, Grill (2016) asserted that teachers have to avoid to be all things to all pupils, learning itself must be engaging to the students.

#### 4.2.3 Group work

Group work were also noted to be method of teaching which enhances understanding and enhances participation. Both FGDs and observations have shown that pupils participate well when they do group works. Student H said,

*Group works are motivating in nature, in that one is motivated to go and read more so that when group works are being done everyone will contribute meaningfully....*

Student E added that

*.... group works enhances participation as pupils give feedback and teacher and other students put their contributions...*

Researcher observed that in group works, pupils participate highly and give meaningful contributions. The findings are in line with the findings of (McKimm and Jollie, 2007) in learning in medical schools where he concluded that pupils participate more when they work in groups. Davis (1999) also asserted that, regardless of the subject matter, students working in small groups tend to learn more of what is taught and retain it longer than when the same content is presented in other instructional formats. Though group works have been observed to increase pupils' participation, student K strongly argued against them saying,

*In group works, some pupils do not contribute anything as they do not even research on the task given, it is painful to work for others....*

He preferred individual presentations which the teacher rarely employs for it has proven to give insufficient information when an individual works alone and gives feedback.

#### 4.2.4 Fieldworks

There was an overwhelming agreement by students on the need for field works. Pupils strongly spoke of the fieldworks in the FGDs. They argued that fieldworks are hands on and pupils understand better as they are directly involved and participating within the learning process. Student M said that,

*Central Business District demarcation should have been done practically where we go to an urban area and do it practically...*

That improves pupils' participation and understanding. Though the teacher did not use fieldworks due to administrative reasons and economic challenges, what the pupils echoed is in line with NGESP (1994) that noted that lessons must be engaging and motivating for pupils and fieldworks help in achieving that in the teaching of practical Geography.

Fieldworks are a practical way of learning that is learning by doing, which enhances understanding. McKimm and Jollie (2007) observed the importance of, practical learning and active learning or learning by doing in medical schools; it has produced competent and effective doctors in London.

The teacher observed the same ideas revealed by students in the FGDs. The teacher observed that pupils participate more when they undertake group works, cooperative learning and presentations, pupils participate in giving feedback, additions and subtractions from the class. However the teacher did not observe pupils engaged in fieldwork to note their level of participation. The teacher has also observed that pupils are usually shy to present as individuals and the research presentation is usually not sufficing so here there is a variation in what has been observed and what was echoed by the students. Though some

pupils were echoing that group works are sometimes not effective, the researcher has observed high participation with this method. The pupils did not show an interest in pair works and yet the researcher observed that pair work helps improve participation with the usually quiet students participating as well.

#### 4.3 The influence of teacher- pupil interaction on pupils' academic performance

Findings from both the FGDs and the observations indicate that the interaction between teacher and pupils has an influence on the overall academic performance of pupils and the views are presented below.

##### 4.3.1 Pupils' view of teacher-pupil interaction on academic performance

The influence of teacher- pupil interaction on pupils' academic performance in Advanced Level Human Geography has been echoed differently by students in FGDs and various views has been raised on what they see as enhancing their academic performance, besides the methods of interaction between teacher and the pupils. Pupils were showing that the teaching method itself has an influence on their academic performance. They said that collaborative learning and group works, where the pupils are given group questions to work on and combine ideas and present them to class with the teacher commenting helps them answer questions better when writing tests individually. Student C asserted that,

*Group discussions help us improve our academic performance, that is, when the area is examined, pupils quickly recall their colleagues' ideas on feedback presentations.*

What the students asserted is in line with the observations made by the teacher as the lessons progressed. The teacher would use one teaching method in a week and give pupils



an end of week test and the pupils' performance were very high as pupils were examined after group works and collaborative learning.

Besides the influence of teaching methods on academic performance, pupils raised other issues that they view as enhancing their performance. For instance, student E stated that

*Writing of personal notes helps us grasp concepts better and improve our performance*

whilst Student L strongly felt that

*Reading more is much more important than writing notes for reading helps us understand and perform better....*

Students also stated that, writing tests on weekly basis and invitation of teachers from other schools to mark their work and to come and give them feedback is essential in improving their performance. However, the pupils unanimously agreed that though they are not attending seminars they strongly feel that seminars might improve their performance as they interact with students from other schools. The researcher observations in the previous years of teaching Advanced Level Geography has shown that the invitation of other teachers and attendance of seminars help pupils improve their performance. However, the teacher is yet to implement these in the candidates' final term that is the third term, when the school administration avails the budget for seminars. Otherwise what the pupils echoed in the FGDs is in line with the researcher's observations in her years of teaching Advanced level human Geography.

#### 4.3.2 Observed academic performance

The researcher observed that in the weekly tests she marked, academic performance differed with the method of teaching employed for that week. The teacher used four teaching methods that is, lecture method, pair works, group works and collaborative learning. Each method was scheduled to be used for one week though group works stretched for two weeks since they could not be finished in a week. After employing a method, the whole week, one lesson for the week was used for test writing and pupils wrote the tests individually. The teacher would mark, record, give feedback and evaluate the performance. Table 2 below shows the pupils' academic performance when different teaching –learning methods were employed.

| <b>Pupil</b> | <b>Lecture method</b> | <b>Pair works</b> | <b>Group works</b> | <b>Group works</b> | <b>Cooperative learning</b> |
|--------------|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| N            | 05                    | 17                | 07                 | 08                 | 07                          |
| S            | 14                    | 21                | 13                 | 11                 | 21                          |
| E            | 10                    | 21                | 11                 | 18                 | 20                          |
| P            | 14                    | 18                | 11                 | 12                 | 14                          |
| L            | 13                    | 17                | 10                 | 09                 | 17                          |
| B            | 14                    | 10                | 19                 | 18                 | 14                          |
| L            | 10                    | 16                | 10                 | 19                 | 20                          |
| T            | 10                    | 17                | 16                 | 14                 | 19                          |

|                      |                   |                   |                   |                   |              |
|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| P                    | 09                | 10                | 06                | 09                | 22           |
| C                    | 15                | 09                | 13                | 10                | 19           |
| K                    | 14                | 18                | 15                | 16                | 20           |
| T                    | 05                | 17                | 07                | 10                | 15           |
| M                    | 06                | 10                | 07                | 11                | 11           |
| <b>Possible mark</b> | <b>25</b>         | <b>25</b>         | <b>20</b>         | <b>20</b>         | <b>25</b>    |
| <b>%pass rate</b>    | <b>46</b>         | <b>69</b>         | <b>69</b>         | <b>77</b>         | <b>92</b>    |
| <b>Date</b>          | <b>03/06/2016</b> | <b>10/06/2016</b> | <b>17/06/2016</b> | <b>24/06/2016</b> | <b>09/07</b> |

**Table2: Pupils' academic performance as various teaching methods were employed.**

A 92% pass rate was recorded after employing cooperative learning and pupils got very high marks above 80% and only 1 student failed the test. For the two tasks written after group works, the pass rates were very high with 69% and 77%. Test written after pair works have shown a high pass rate of 69% and the lowest pass rate of 46% was achieved when the lecture method was employed.

The observed high pass rate after teaching employing pair work has made the researcher conclude that pair work are also an effective way of teaching. The observation is consistent with the research findings of Woodward (1995) who concluded that pair work and group work are the staple of the 'communicative' classroom, and are the fundamental way in which teachers can give learners the opportunity to practice what they have been exposed to meaningfully. However this observation made by the researcher is contrary to the pupils' views expressed in the FGDs, the pupils did not

show any interest in pair works. This might be because the teacher did not put into consideration the pairing discrepancies following the findings of Zohairy (2014) who concluded that, though low achievers prefer to be paired with high achievers, high achievers must be paired together whilst low achievers must be paired together and the low achievers must be given easier tasks. The teacher should have adopted a pairing discrepancy that the pupils desired and maybe they would have shown interest in the pair works. The lowest pass rates were achieved when the teacher used the lecture method, pupils did not do quite well as the teacher was taking the central stage and a pass rate of 40% was achieved. The findings are in line with the psychologists such as Vygotsky (1978) who argued that much important learning by the child occurs through social interaction with a skilful tutor. Pupils must be participative in class not to just absorb data given by the teacher, therefore the method has proved to be ineffective in the teaching and learning of human Geography.

The FGDs and the observations revealed that pupils perform highly when group learning is done. Group learning activities such as group works and cooperative learning have proved to give very high results. This is so because when group works and group tasks of questions and answers are done, the pupils perform highly in the tests as teacher would have shed much light on how those questions are tackled. The conclusion is in line with previous research findings of (McKimm and Jollie, 2007) who concluded that in medical schools, group learning activities have encouraged participation and enhanced active learning which resulted in the medical doctors performing quite well in the medical field. However, the researcher also noted something which the students did not mention, that

tests written after pair works were also done well. However, seminars have not been tried during the course of the term, in future the teacher will try these seminars as well if funds are availed by the school administration.

The research carried has shown that teacher- pupil interactions are key in stimulating pupils' participation. The pupils' level of participation is influenced mainly by the nature of teacher- pupil interactions both inside and outside the classroom, pupils need to feel connected to the teacher and so participate better. Again, the methods of teaching employed by the teacher influences pupils level of participation, when the teacher employs teaching methods that are interactive in nature that is when teacher uses pupil-centred methods of teaching such as group works, question and answer sessions and collaborative learning as well as pair work, pupils are highly participative. Such teaching methods which enhances teacher pupil interaction has been observed to make pupils participate more and hence perform better academically in Advanced level human Geography. On the other hand, methods of teaching which are teacher- centred such as lecture method resulted in low teacher- pupil interaction and low participation and so the resultant academic performance was low.

#### 4.4 Summary

The chapter presented, analysed and discussed data under the following subheadings which were derived from research questions: The influence of teacher- pupil interaction on pupil participation; influence of teaching method on pupils' participation and the influence of teacher-pupil interaction on academic performance in Advanced Level

Human Geography lessons. Various conclusions have been reached in this research but from both the FGDs and observations, it was revealed that group learning activities like cooperative learning and group works stimulates a lot of teacher-pupil interaction and high participation amongst pupils and enhances a high academic performance.

Therefore, teacher-pupil interactions really influence participation and academic performance in Advanced Level Geography; and that the level of participation is also dependent on the methods of teaching employed. The next chapter summarizes concludes and give recommendations.

## CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter summaries, concludes and makes recommendations based on the research findings. The summary is guided by the research questions and reflects the influence of teacher-pupil interaction on pupils' participation and academic performance. To add on, recommendations, depending on the research findings have been given.

### 5.1 Summary

This qualitative research study was guided by the following research questions:

- How does teacher- pupil interaction influence pupil participation in Advanced level Human Geography lessons?
- How does teaching method influence pupils' participation in Advanced level Human Geography lessons?
- How does teacher- pupil interaction influence pupils' academic performance in the Advanced Level Human Geography?

Data were collected from a class of 13 pupils in the Advanced level human Geography class at one high school in Mutoko District. The 13 also constituted the sample that took part in the study. In carrying out the study, the ethical consideration of informed consent, confidentiality and safety of participants were also taken into consideration. Data was collected using observations and focus group discussions. Data were, presented, analyzed and discussed thematically with the research questions constituting the sub themes and

were subsequently subtopics during data presentation and analysis. From the study it emerged that pupils and the teacher do interact and that teacher- pupil interaction has an influence on how pupils participate as the lessons progress. It has also been concluded that teacher-pupil interaction is highly influenced by the methods of teaching that the teacher employs. When the teacher employs teacher- centered methods such as the lecture method, the level of participation is usually low and when pupil-centered methods are being used, the level of participation is usually high with a lot of interactions between the teacher and the pupils and amongst pupils themselves. The research also concluded that where there is high teacher- pupil interaction in lessons, the level of pupils' participation is usually high and the academic performance is usually high. For instance when the teacher employed the method of any form of group learning such as group work and collaborative learning, the level of teacher pupil interaction was high and pupils participated highly and their academic performance was very high. In the weekly tests written to evaluate a teaching method employed that week, it was clearly observed that those methods of teaching that are highly interactive in nature also resulted in pupils performing much better in the class, with cooperative learning they raise their hands and contribute meaningfully.

Though a number of challenges have been met during the research for instance, finances from Mutoko to Bindura the teacher still managed to visit the supervisor. Another challenge was on meeting pupils for FGDs. The pupils themselves were too busy with seminars and practical exams such that most of them were not willing to sit down for FGDs for a long period of time. However, the teacher had to persuade the pupils to attend the FGDs and eight of them agreed and so the FGDs were conducted.



## 5.2 Conclusion

The study established that teacher- pupil interaction is key in achieving sound academic performance in Advanced level human Geography. When learning activities are so engaging and involving for the students, there is high teacher-pupil interaction which is key in achieving high academic performance. The FGDs revealed the same results with those observed by the researcher, that is, those methods of teaching such as group works, collaborative learning results in high academic achievement as pupils understand better as they interact more with the teacher and amongst themselves. These findings are consistent with the research findings of Felder and Brent (2007)'s studies in higher education learning where cooperative learning has proved to promote participation and academic performance among group members. Observations have also shown that pair work is interactive in nature and pupils achieve high results.

It has also been concluded that non teacher-pupil interactive methods of teaching such as the lecture method have a low level of participation and the academic performance of pupils is generally low. The passiveness of pupils as teacher- centered methods are used is in line with the findings of Raja (2012) who noted that in a traditional classroom, the teacher controls the class with authority, there is no active role of students during teaching-learning process.

## 5.3 Recommendations

Following the research findings, the researcher makes the following recommendations:

- Teachers must thrive to create a classroom environment that enhances high teacher-pupil interaction as lessons progress so as to enhance pupils' participation.

- Teachers must use teaching methods that are highly engaging for the students especially group learning activities and pair work.
- Pupils should be encouraged to participate in class and work with others in pairs and groups in order to enhance their participation and academic achievement.
- Further researches be done using more than one school or within the same school but researching on the influence of teacher-pupil interaction in the teaching and learning of more than one subject.
- Further studies should be carried out to establish why some pupils' performance remain poor despite the use of various methods of teaching.

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## **APPENDIX**

### **APPENDIX 1: Data collection instruments**

#### **Focus group questions for students**

The researcher is studying a Post Graduate Diploma in Education with Bindura University of Science Education and is carrying out a research on 'The influence of teacher pupil interactions on pupils' participation and academic performance'. You are kindly invited to take part in this study. The information you give is purely for educational purposes and will not be used for any other purpose without your consent. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

1. Does your teacher ask you questions as the lessons progress?
2. How else do you participate in class?
3. Do you do group works, pair works?
4. Do you present feedback to the class?
5. Do you sometimes have individual presentations?
6. Does the teacher or other pupils comment when you make presentations?
7. Of all the activities you do, which ones do you like most and which ones don't you like?
8. What else do you do in the learning of human Geography? What else do you think should be done that is of interest to you?
9. Looking at your performance in weekly tests, can you say the activities you do in class has an influence on your academic performance?

## APPENDIX 2: Observation checklist on teaching method, interaction and performance

| Question                                                                        | Ticks or comments depending on aspect being considered |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| How often does the teacher ask pupils questions?                                |                                                        |
| How do pupils respond to the questions, wrongly or correctly?                   |                                                        |
| Does teacher evenly distribute questions?                                       |                                                        |
| Does students ask questions?                                                    |                                                        |
| What level of questions do students ask?                                        |                                                        |
| Teacher listening carefully to students' questions                              |                                                        |
| Responded carefully to students' questions and answers when necessary           |                                                        |
| Teacher redirecting questions                                                   |                                                        |
| Teacher actively encouraged students' questions                                 |                                                        |
| Teacher probed when pupils present vague ideas                                  |                                                        |
| Initiated classroom discussions                                                 |                                                        |
| Pupil to pupil interaction encouraged                                           |                                                        |
| Teacher giving attention to all pupils                                          |                                                        |
| Pupils' participation when teacher-centred methods are employed                 |                                                        |
| Pupils' participation when student-centred methods are used                     |                                                        |
| Is academic performance in the tests related to pupils' level of participation? |                                                        |

### **APPENDIX 3: INFORMED CONSENT LETTER**

Bindura University of Science Education,  
P. Bag 1020  
Bindura  
Zimbabwe

Dear Mr./Miss.....,

#### **INFORMED CONSENT LETTER**

My name is Rumbidzai Sophia Chatindiara. I am an Education, PGDE student studying at Bindura University of Science Education.

I am writing to request your permission to participate in a research project titled: ---The influence of teacher- pupil interaction on pupils' participation and performance in the study of Human Geography at Advanced Level.

Your school is my case study. To gather the information, I am interested in asking you some questions. I would like you to participate in Focus Group Discussions and video recording with other pupils that will be done as part of the research.

Please note that:

- Your confidentiality is guaranteed. Your name and that of the school will be replaced by a pseudonym in all of the data.
- You will take part in focus group discussions (FGDs) with at least five other pupils of the same sex at school, Wednesday and Thursday afternoon at school.
- Each FGD will take approximately 30 minutes and you will participate in four such FGDs.
- The FGDs will be done once every week.
- Any information you shall give cannot be used against you, and the collected data will be used for purposes of this research only.
- Data will be stored in secure storage and destroyed after 5 years.
- You have a choice to participate, not participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalized for taking such an action.
- Your involvement is purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved.

- If you want to participate in the FGDs, please indicate (by ticking as applicable) whether or not you are willing to allow the FGD to be recorded by the following equipment:

|                        | willing | Not willing |
|------------------------|---------|-------------|
| Audio equipment        |         |             |
| Photographic equipment |         |             |
| Video equipment        |         |             |

I can be contacted at:

Email: rumbidzaisophia@gmail.com

Cell: 0772594849

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

#### DECLARATION

I..... (full names of student) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I want to participate in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

**SIGNATURE OF STUDENT**

**DATE**

.....

.....