

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT PEACE AND GOVERNANCE



EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

ADAPTION STRATEGIES IN ZIMBABWE: A CASE STUDY OF

MAKONI DISTRICT.

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**RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PEACE AND GOVERNANCE,
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REQUIREMENTS FOR THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE HONORS DEGREE IN PEACE AND GOVERNANCE**

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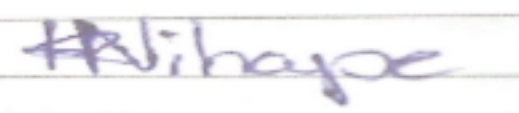
ABSTRACT.

This study aimed to investigate the experiences and perceptions of local communities, government officials, and representatives from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) regarding climate change adaptation strategies in Makoni District, Zimbabwe. The research aimed to explore the challenges and opportunities faced by these stakeholders in adapting to climate change, and to assess the effectiveness of existing adaptation strategies. A mixed methodology approach was employed, combining in-depth interviews with 30 key informants and focus group discussions with 60 local community members. The findings revealed that climate change has significantly impacted agricultural productivity, food security, and livelihoods in Makoni District. While government officials and NGOs have implemented various adaptation strategies, local communities reported limited access to these initiatives and inadequate support. The study concluded that effective climate change adaptation strategies require collaborative efforts among local communities, government officials, and NGOs, and recommended the development of context-specific adaptation initiatives that prioritize community needs and participation.

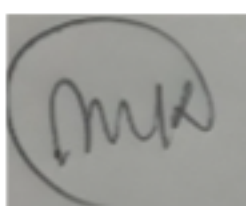
DECLARATION FORM

I Hellen T Nihape studying the Bachelor of Honor's Degree in Peace and Governance am aware that plagiarism is a serious academic offence and that falsifying information is a breach of Community Development research ethics therefore I truly declare that **EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTION STRATEGIES IN ZIMBABWE: A CASE STUDY OF MAKONI DISTRICT** is my original work.

1. The dissertation report titled: is my original work
2. The research has followed all ethics in Peace and Governance
3. I grant Bindura University of Science Education to use the research for educational purposes.

Student Signature  Date 31/03/2025

Supervisor Signature:  Date 12/10/2025

Chairperson Signature  ...Data

DEDICATION.

I dedicate this to the researcher's family and friends for their priceless efforts and contributions to the researcher's entire academic life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As I reflect on the journey that has led me this milestone. I am filled with gratitude for the countless individuals who have supported me along the way. To my loving family who have sacrificed so much for me to achieve this goal I thank you from the bottom of my heart . I also wish to thank my supervisor who believed in me and pushed me to reach my full potential . To my friends colleagues and peers thank you for your support and guidance . This achievement would not have been possible without each and everyone of you.

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS.

ADB African Development Bank

CBA..... Community Based Adaption

IRB.....Institutional Review Boards

NCP.....National Climate Policy

NGO.....Non govenmental Organization

SDG..... Sustainable Development Goals

SLF.....Sustainable Livelihoods Framework

SPSS.....Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

UNDP.....United Nations Development Programme

WB.....World Bank

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the Study

Climate change represents an urgent global challenge, manifesting significant repercussions across numerous sectors, such as agriculture, water resources, and housing. The increasing frequency and intensity of climate-related events, including droughts, floods, and rising temperatures, threaten not only environmental stability but also human livelihoods and social systems worldwide. The complex interplay between these factors underscores the critical nature of addressing climate change through effective strategies that promote resilience and sustainability (IPCC, 2021).

In response to the global climate crisis, numerous adaptation strategies have emerged, aiming to mitigate the adverse effects of climate change across different regions. These strategies vary widely, with some nations focusing on technological innovation, while others may prioritize community-based approaches and policy reform. Effective adaptation is crucial for safeguarding vulnerable populations and ecosystems, thereby promoting sustainable development in the face of an evolving climate landscape (UNFCCC, 2020).

Africa, as a continent, is particularly susceptible to the impacts of climate change. Its diverse ecosystems and socio-economic conditions place many communities at risk of facing severe challenges such as food and water insecurity, health crises, and economic disruptions. Reports indicate that African countries are experiencing intensified climate events, significantly affecting agricultural productivity and exacerbating poverty levels (African Development Bank, 2021). The continent requires targeted interventions to effectively address these multi-faceted issues and enhance resilience among its populations.

The need for Afrocentric climate change adaptation strategies in Africa cannot be overstated. Various initiatives have been developed, focusing on sustainable agricultural practices, water resource management, and infrastructure development to bolster resilience.

ce against climate extremes. Nonetheless, the effectiveness of these strategies varies, and there is an ongoing need for comprehensive evaluations that address both successes and shortcomings (World Bank, 2020). Understanding how these strategies operate within specific contexts is essential for fostering climate resilience across the continent.

In Zimbabwe, the vulnerability to climate change is heightened by economic dependency on agriculture, which is predominantly rain fed. This situation renders communities and agricultural practices particularly susceptible to climatic variability, resulting in pronounced droughts and floods, thereby threatening food security and community viability (Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Tourism and Hospitality Industry, 2013). It is crucial to evaluate the national adaptation measures in place, to assess their efficacy in addressing the multifaceted impacts of climate change across various districts.

Despite the implementation of several adaptation strategies in Zimbabwe, there exists a critical gap in empirical evidence regarding their effectiveness. In particular, limited research has been conducted in regions like Makoni District, which is classified as highly vulnerable due to inadequate infrastructure and reliance on climate-sensitive agricultural practices (Government of Zimbabwe, 2019). Evaluating the effectiveness of existing strategies in this district provides an opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of their impact and to identify pathways for improvement.

The consequences of ineffective climate change adaptation strategies extend beyond immediate environmental impacts, affecting the broader development goals of Zimbabwe. Climate-related disasters hinder economic growth and undermine efforts towards poverty alleviation, leading to food insecurity and potential displacements among vulnerable communities (United Nations Development Programme, 2018). Moreover, as certain populations face heightened risks, climate change exacerbates existing inequalities, necessitating targeted evaluations and interventions (World Bank, 2019).

Conducting an in-depth evaluation of climate change adaptation strategies in Makoni District will not only yield insights specific to that region but will also contribute to a

broader understanding of effective practices within Zimbabwe. Thus, by identifying strengths and weaknesses in current strategies, the study will provide actionable recommendations to enhance policy decisions and direct investments toward more effective initiatives (Manicaland Provincial Development Committee, 2019). The engagement of a diverse array of stakeholders will ensure that the findings reflect the experiences and needs of the community, thus facilitating participatory development approaches.

Adopting a mixed-methods research design, this study aims to gather both qualitative and quantitative data to comprehensively assess the effectiveness of climate change adaptation strategies in Makoni District. Engaging stakeholders from governmental, non-governmental, and community sectors will enrich the evaluation process, allowing for a holistic understanding of the current landscape of adaptation efforts. This multifaceted approach will ultimately contribute to building resilient local strategies that cater to the specific needs of vulnerable populations in the face of climate change.

1.1 Purpose of the study

This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of climate change adaptation strategies in Zimbabwe.

1.2 Statement of the Problem.

Climate change poses a significant threat to global stability, with developing nations like Zimbabwe bearing a disproportionate burden of its impacts, particularly in marginalized regions such as the Makoni District. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, 2021), Zimbabwe is particularly vulnerable to climate-related events such as droughts, floods, and rising temperatures, which exacerbate food insecurity, poverty, and socio-economic inequalities. The government of Zimbabwe and various stakeholders have implemented multiple climate change adaptation strategies aimed at reducing vulnerability and enhancing resilience among local communities (Government of Zimbabwe, 2020). However, there exists limited empirical evidence on the effectiveness of these adaptation strategies, which raises pertinent questions about their actual impacts

on local livelihoods and the sustained ability of communities to cope with climate-induced stresses (Chigonda et al., 2021). Reports indicate that while some strategies are being enacted, communities often lack the necessary resources, knowledge, and infrastructure to effectively implement those (Madzivhandila et al., 2022). Furthermore, institutional challenges, coupled with socio-economic pressures, have limited the participation of local communities in decision-making processes related to climate adaptation, thereby undermining the success of these strategies (Paradza & Mapfumo, 2021). Consequently, a critical examination of the existing adaptation strategies within Makoni District is necessary to identify their strengths and weaknesses and to inform more effective, community-driven responses to climate change. Addressing this gap is crucial for not only enhancing the resilience of communities in Makoni but also for informing policy at broader scales as Zimbabwe confronts the escalating challenges posed by climate change.

1.3 Objectives of the Study.

The study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of climate change adaptation strategies in Makoni District, Zimbabwe. The research outlines five key objectives:

- ✓ To catalog and describe the adaptation strategies currently employed by local authorities and communities in Makoni.
- ✓ To assess the impact of these strategies on community resilience, wellbeing and environmental sustainability.
- ✓ To examine the role of local governance in facilitating or hindering the implementation of these strategies.
- ✓ To identify obstacles faced by stakeholders in executing adaptation strategies and assess their implications for community development and peace.
- ✓ To propose actionable suggestions for improving the effectiveness of these strategies.

1.4 Research Questions.

This research seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of climate change adaptation strategies

s in Makoni District, Zimbabwe, through inquiry based on following research questions:

1. What climate change adaptation strategies are currently being employed by local authorities and communities in Makoni District?
2. How do these adaptation strategies impact the community's resilience, wellbeing and environmental sustainability in Makoni District?
3. In what ways does local governance influence the implementation of climate change adaptation strategies in Makoni District?
4. What barriers do stakeholders encounter in the execution of climate change adaptation strategies and how do these obstacles affect community development and peace in Makoni District?
5. What actionable recommendations can be proposed to enhance the effectiveness of climate change adaptation strategies in Makoni District?

1.5 Assumptions of the study

This research proposal operates under several key assumptions that underpin the investigation into climate change adaptation strategies in Makoni District, Zimbabwe. It is assumed that local authorities and community members have a clear understanding of the climate change adaptation strategies currently being employed within the district. This assumption is critical, as it suggests that participants will be able to provide insightful responses to the inquiry, thereby allowing for a thorough assessment of the strategies' effectiveness (Smith & van der Linden, 2019).

The research presupposes that there exists a causal relationship between the implementation of adaptation strategies and the community's resilience, wellbeing, and environmental sustainability. This assumption aligns with existing literature suggesting that effective adaptation strategies can significantly enhance a community's capacity to cope with climate change impacts (Adger, 2003). Therefore, it is inherent in this study that observed outcomes in resilience and sustainability can be directly linked to the adaptation strategies in place.

The researcher also assumes that local governance structures are adequately empowered and motivated to influence the implementation of climate change adaptation strategies. The effectiveness of governance in facilitating adaptation measures is pivotal in determining both stakeholder engagement and the overall success of the initiatives (Rosenzweig et al., 2018).

The research also assumes that stakeholders, including community members, local authorities, and NGOs, are willing to share information regarding the barriers they encounter in executing climate change adaptation strategies. This transparency is essential for identifying the obstacles to community development and peace, which are integral to addressing the multifaceted challenges posed by climate change (Mastrorillo et al., 2016). Hence, the study assumes that stakeholders and decision-makers will be receptive to the actionable recommendations derived from the research findings. It is anticipated that these recommendations will be considered valuable contributions aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of climate change adaptation strategies in the district (Jabbour et al., 2018).

These assumptions are, therefore, necessary for informing the research context and shaping the methodology that will be employed to achieve the objectives of this research.

1.6 Significance of the study

The significance of this study lies in its potential to contribute to the understanding of climate change adaptation strategies specifically within the context of Zimbabwe, focusing on Makoni District. As climate change poses increasing risks to agricultural productivity, water resources, and overall community resilience, understanding the effectiveness of adaptation strategies is crucial for local stakeholders, policymakers, and communities. This research seeks to fill a gap in the existing literature, which has predominantly focused on broader regional analyses rather than localized assessments of adaptation strategies in Zimbabwean communities. By evaluating these strategies in detail, the study

will provide valuable insights that can inform more tailored and effective responses to climate change, enhancing the sustainability and resilience of affected communities in Makoni District (Chibamba et al., 2022).

Moreover, the findings of this study are expected to support the development of policies and frameworks that are more responsive to the specific challenges posed by climate change in Zimbabwe. As the country continues to grapple with climate-related issues such as droughts and food insecurity, it is crucial for both governmental and non-governmental organizations to utilize research findings to better allocate resources and formulate strategies that address these challenges effectively. The research will also promote Afrocentric perspectives in climate adaptation discourse, moving away from predominantly Western-centric approaches that may not adequately reflect the lived experiences and challenges faced by communities in Zimbabwe. The implications of this study extend beyond academic contributions; they resonate with practical applications aimed at promoting sustainable livelihoods and peace within vulnerable communities affected by climate variability (Moyo & Nhamo, 2021).

1.7 Delimitations of the study.

This study is delimited to the evaluation of climate change adaptation strategies specifically implemented in Makoni District, Zimbabwe, thereby excluding other regions of Zimbabwe that may face different climate-related challenges. The focus will be on community-level adaptation strategies and the involvement of local governance structures, which means that national policies and large-scale governmental interventions will not be a central concern of this research. Additionally, the timeframe for assessing the effectiveness of these strategies will be restricted to the past five years, from 2018 to 2023, to ensure the relevance and timeliness of the data collected. Consequently, this study will not delve into historical climatic data prior to 2018 or consider long-term trends that may influence strategies but are beyond the scope of the immediate adaptation measures in Makoni District (Chigonda et al., 2020; Mlambo, 2021).

1.8 Limitations of the study

This research will not comprehensively address all climate change adaptation strategies within Zimbabwe but will focus specifically on Makoni District. While this case study approach allows for an in-depth exploration of local strategies and their effectiveness, it limits the generalizability of findings to broader contexts, such as other districts or regions within Zimbabwe, which may have different socio-economic and environmental conditions. This study will also not include perspectives from all stakeholders involved in climate change adaptation efforts, as the primary focus will be on local government officials and community leaders. This may result in an incomplete understanding of the effectiveness and inclusiveness of the adaptation strategies being evaluated. Therefore, the research findings may not fully capture the complexities and nuances of the impacts of climate change on all community segments. The research will not assess long-term outcomes of adaptation strategies but will focus on current perceptions and immediate effects. This time frame narrowness means we will not be able to determine the sustainability or future implications of the adaptation strategies employed in Makoni District.

Despite these limitations, this research is worthwhile as it addresses the pressing need to understand and evaluate climate change adaptation strategies in a vulnerable region. Zimbabwe is significantly affected by climate change, and Makoni District is characterized by its agricultural dependency, making it imperative to identify effective local strategies that can inform policy and practice, not just locally but also at national and regional levels.

1.9 Ethical Considerations

This research proposal will prioritize ethical considerations throughout the study, ensuring that all participants and stakeholders in Makoni District are treated with respect and dignity. Informed consent will be obtained from all respondents prior to data collection, ensuring they are fully aware of the study's purpose and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Additionally, data will be collected and stored confidentially, adheri

ng to the ethical guidelines set out by relevant Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) and following the principles of the Belmont Report (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979). Moreover, the research will actively seek to minimize any potential harm to local communities and ecosystems, ensuring that the findings are used constructively to inform policy and practice in climate change adaptation.

1.10 Definition of Key terms

- o *Climate Change Adaptation*: Adaptation refers to adjustments in ecological, social, or economic systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli and their effects, which can mitigate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities (IPCC, 2014).
- o *Resilience*: Resilience is the capacity of a system, community, or society to prevent, withstand, or recover from significant disturbances while maintaining its essential functions, structures, and identities (Folke, 2006).
- o *Sustainable Development*: Sustainable development is a development approach that aims to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, promoting balanced integration of social, economic, and environmental goals (Brundtland Commission, 1987).
- o *Livelihood Strategies*: Livelihood strategies encompass the activities and choices individuals or households undertake to secure their means of living, which can include a combination of agricultural practices, labor, and trade (Scoones, 1998).
- o *Vulnerability*: Vulnerability refers to the predisposition of individuals or communities to be adversely affected by climate change. It encompasses exposure to climate hazards, sensitivity to these hazards, and the capacity to adapt or cope with their impacts (IPCC, 2018).

1.11 Dissertation Outline

The dissertation will be structured as follows:

- ✓ Chapter 1: Introduction – This chapter will introduce the research problem, objecti

ves, significance of the study, and the research questions.

- ✓ Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework – A thorough review of existing literature on climate change adaptation strategies globally and in Zimbabwe will be presented.
- ✓ Chapter 3: Research Methodology and Design – This chapter will outline the research design, sampling methods, data collection techniques, and analytical approach.
- ✓ Chapter 4: Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion of Findings – Presentation and analysis of the collected data will be conducted in this chapter, highlighting key findings related to the effectiveness of adaptation strategies.
- ✓ Chapter 5: 5.0 Summary, Conclusions, Recommendations and Areas for further Research – The final chapter will summarize the main findings and provide actionable recommendations for stakeholders in climate change adaptation. It will interpret the results, discussing their implications for policy and practice in Makoni District and beyond.

1.12 Proposed Timeframe

- TMonth 1-2: Conduct a comprehensive literature review and finalize the research design.
- Month 3: Obtain ethical clearance and develop research instruments.
- Month 4-5: Data collection in Makoni District, including surveys and interviews with local stakeholders.
- Month 6: Data analysis and interpretation of results.
- Month 7: Write up the findings and compile the dissertation.
- Month 8: Review, edit, and prepare for submission, ensuring all components are aligned. The entire research project is estimated to be completed within an eight-month period, ensuring sufficient time for rigorous analysis and thoughtful conclusion with academic standards.



Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

Chapter 2 provides a thorough literature review that explores the impacts of climate change in Zimbabwe, particularly how its reliance on rain-fed agriculture heightens vulnerability to climate variability. The review highlights the critical interplay of socio-economic factors and governance structures that shape adaptation strategies and community resilience. By examining the successes and limitations of various adaptation measures, including the promotion of drought-resistant crops and improved water management practices, the literature underscores the importance of localized approaches and participatory governance. Comparative insights from other African nations illustrate the diverse adaptive capacities influenced by contextual factors, revealing that inclusive stakeholder engagement is essential for effective climate responses. This chapter lays the groundwork for an in-depth analysis of climate adaptation strategies, particularly in the Makoni District, integrating theoretical perspectives to better understand the dynamics at play.

2.1 Climate Change and Vulnerability in Zimbabwe

Climate change poses significant challenges to countries worldwide, and Zimbabwe is no exception. The nation's heavy reliance on rain-fed agriculture has rendered it particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate variability. Scholars highlight this dependency as a critical factor, asserting that it heightens the risks of food insecurity and disrupts local livelihoods (Mastrorillo et al., 2019). The impact of climate change in Zimbabwe is characterized by shifting patterns, such as prolonged droughts and erratic rainfall, which compound existing socio-economic issues, including widespread poverty and political instability (IPCC, 2022; Chigonda et al., 2021).

In the broader African context, comparisons with countries like Ethiopia and Kenya reveal a spectrum of resilience in the face of similar climatic challenges. Research indicates that Ethiopia's implementation of community-led irrigation initiatives has yielded some success, enhancing local resilience despite climatic adversities (Adger, 2023; Africa

n Development Bank, 2021). Conversely, Zimbabwe struggles with persistent governance issues that impair the effectiveness of climate change responses, resulting in greater community vulnerability (Hurlbert & Diaz, 2019).

These differences underscore the importance of localized assessments, particularly within regions like Makoni District, where specific conditions and governance structures play critical roles in shaping adaptation strategies. A thorough examination of the strategies in place in Makoni provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of these measures and highlights areas where improvements can be made to build resilience against the impacts of climate change. By focusing on the dynamics at play in Makoni District, the research can contribute to a more nuanced understanding of how local factors influence the success or failure of climate adaptation efforts in Zimbabwe.

2.2 Adaptation Strategies in Zimbabwe

Adaptation strategies in Zimbabwe are essential for addressing the significant challenges posed by climate change, particularly in the agricultural sector. These strategies are designed to enhance resilience within communities affected by climatic fluctuations. According to Zhou and Zha (2019), the Zimbabwean government and various NGOs have implemented diverse initiatives, such as promoting climate-resilient crops and improving irrigation methods. These initiatives have started to yield positive outcomes, as evidenced by communities increasingly adopting drought-resistant varieties to counteract erratic weather (Kahinda et al., 2020).

However, while there are notable successes, the overall effectiveness of these adaptation measures is not consistent across the country. Significant socio-economic barriers, including limited access to financial resources and technology, restrict widespread implementation (Chikowore et al., 2022). When comparing Zimbabwe's situation to that of Malawi, it becomes evident that even well-designed policies can face similar infrastructural and financial challenges, limiting their effectiveness (Mlambo et al., 2021). In contrast, Rwanda presents a different scenario where strong government support and inclusive

planning have led to effective adaptation strategies, showcasing how governance profoundly affects outcomes in resilience initiatives.

To improve the effectiveness of adaptation strategies in Zimbabwe, understanding local contexts is paramount. Tailoring approaches to the specific governance structures, resource availability, and community engagement dynamics will yield better results. Insights into these local elements can help refine policy measures and enhance their effectiveness in boosting community resilience against climate challenges. By emphasizing stakeholder engagement and understanding local needs, policymakers can develop targeted, impactful strategies to better address the vulnerabilities faced by Zimbabwean communities.

2.3 Agricultural Adaptation Measures

Agricultural adaptation measures in Zimbabwe are increasingly important for mitigating the impacts of climate change on food security and productivity. These measures aim to enhance resilience and combat food insecurity among farmers. Research conducted by Dube et al. (2021) indicates that the introduction of drought-resistant crop varieties has contributed to improved yields in various districts, illustrating the potential of innovative agricultural solutions. However, despite these advancements, inconsistent uptake due to significant socio-economic barriers hampers the overall effectiveness of these strategies (Chikowore et al., 2022).

Comparative analysis with neighboring countries reveals further insights into these adaptation measures. For instance, Zambia has successfully implemented similar agricultural strategies, resulting in strengthened food resilience (Chibamba et al., 2022). This contrast emphasizes the need to address systemic issues that hinder Zimbabwe's agricultural performance, such as inadequate access to essential inputs and technology. In contrast, scholars like Chikowore et al. (2022) argue that the discrepancies between Zimbabwe's and Zambia's experiences exemplify fundamental challenges in policy implementation that must be addressed for improvement.