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Challenges of embracing the Zimbabwe Culture Hut Concept in selected Bindura rural primary schools

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ABSTRACT

The role of culture in education is incontestable, particularly during the early years of schooling where it is mandatory to bridge the gap between the home and school. In line with Zimbabwe's Culture Policy of 2004, Zimbabwe's Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education introduced the Culture Hut Concept at primary school level. The study sought to explore infant teachers' and primary school heads' perspectives on the challenges of implementing the Culture Hut Concept in a postcolonial context. Accordingly, the postcolonial theory paradigm guided this study. The study adopted a qualitative case study research design. A semi-structured questionnaire, focus group discussions and individual face-to-face interviews were used to collect data. The study participants, who were purposefully selected, included 3 school heads and 15 infant school teachers from Maizelands Cluster in Bindura District of Zimbabwe. Data were analysed using the constant comparative method for thematic coding. The study findings revealed that the major constraints were educators' low levels of confidence purportedly due to insufficient knowledge on the Culture Hut requirements, failure by school heads to ensure implementation through monitoring teachers and involving the community, negative attitudes towards cultural issues by teachers, learners and parents and scarce resources. Participants believed that the challenges they faced could be resolved and they proposed some intervention measures. The study recommends staff development as well as enlightening the community on the benefits of implementing the Culture Hut Concept in education.

Key words: culture hut concept, culture policy, implementation challenges, intervention strategies, Zimbabwe