

**An exploration of the livelihood and coping
strategies of urban teachers in post economic crisis
Zimbabwe, 2009-2015.**

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DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICITY

I, Everisto C Bakasa declare that this dissertation is my original work. Where secondary material has been used (either from a printed source or from the internet) this has been appropriately acknowledged and referenced in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Sociology, Faculty of Humanities at the University of Pretoria.

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the experiences and survival strategies of teachers in Zimbabwe in the context of low salaries that were brought by the adoption of the multicurrency system in 2009. The specific objectives were to: (i) examine the main socio-economic challenges that teachers are facing after the dollarization of the economy; (ii) establish how the teachers are coping with the challenges; and (iii) illuminate some of the key areas in which in which government may improve conditions and enhance teachers' wellbeing so as to retain them in the education sector. To achieve its objectives, the study adopted a qualitative interpretive research paradigm. Data collection entailed conducting in-depth interviews with 20 male and female teachers drawn from primary and secondary schools in high and low density areas of the capital Harare. The objective of the interviews was to explore the coping strategies of the teachers in the post-crisis period. The livelihood framework provided the theoretical and analytical framework for the study. The key thesis of this framework is that there is a direct link between assets and the options people possess in practice to pursue alternative activities that can generate the income level required for survival. The interview guide was thus designed to solicit information of the respondents' income levels; income-generating activities, expenditure and purchasing patterns, rural-urban ties, social networks, and community participation. The key findings of the study were that: the main socio economic challenges that the teachers are facing after the dollarization of the economy include poor salaries, poor living conditions, poor working conditions, demotivation, and restricted career growth paths and to cope with these challenges, the teachers are using the five identified forms of capital—human, physical, natural, financial, and social— to sustain their livelihoods. However a salient finding was that the teachers generally reduced their expenditure and diversified their sources of income as coping strategies. The study concludes with the following three policy recommendations. First, the government should consider using tangible compensation to improve teachers' remuneration. Second, the government should also improving infrastructure in educational institutions to ensure that working conditions are conducive for teachers to carry out their work effectively. Third and finally, the government in partnership with organizations that promote children's rights should mobilize resources that can be used to improve teacher motivation. These could include incentives, accelerated promotions and manpower development.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

During the pre-independence era the education sector in Zimbabwe was characterised by discriminatory policies and a bi-modal system that ensured that the provision of education to the majority black population remained low at all levels, and that their transition from primary to secondary schools did not exceed 50% (Mapolisa & Tshabalala, 2013). It is against this background, and the conviction that “good education is the gateway to success and the cornerstone of social emancipation, economic achievement and national development” (Mapolisa & Tshabalala, 2013:2255) that from the time Zimbabwe gained independence from Britain in 1980, the government adopted a deliberate policy to address the imbalances in education by invested heavily in the sector (Kapingidza, 2014). This investment saw, among other things, primary and secondary education enrolments increasing by 79% and 84 % respectively in the first ten years after independence (Government of Zimbabwe, 2009), and by the end of the decade the country had achieved universal primary education (Chagonda, 2010).

The education sector however suffered immensely during the peak of the economic crisis and hyperinflation that occurred between 2007 and 2008 to the extent that achievements in education in the first two decades of independence were undone. The Zimbabwean economic crisis is said to have begun around 1997 and the major cause being attributed to the disastrous economic restructuring programme which was directed by international financial institutions and economic mis-steps by government. The restructuring triggered economic collapse in the country and set an inauspicious precedent for what has over the years come to be known as the Zimbabwean crisis. This crisis has to be understood as being made up of a combination of events which, in combination, led to hyperinflation (the highest in the world in 2007/2008), an economy in free fall, a contracting productive sector (manufacturing and agriculture) and a highly impoverished local populace. In the period between 1991 and 1997:

an estimated “18 000 government jobs were abolished and the civil service bill was reduced from 15.3% of the GDP in 1990 to 11.35% in 1994 ... there was a disassembling of the controls on foreign exchange; a significant curtailing of

tariffs “except for some import competitive tariffs ... an extensive liberalization of foreign investment regulations; abolishing of controls on prices; elimination of local zoning and trading restrictions ... and labour markets were largely deregulated ... particularly regarding wage determination and employers rights to hire and fire” (Bond and Manyanya, 2003: 37).

This situation had an enormous impact on the standard of living of the general population. For example, by 1996 annual earnings for civil servants as a percentage of the level in 1980 fell by 65% and declines in earnings were also experienced by domestic workers (-62%), construction (-56%), teachers (-50%) and farm workers (-48%) (Bond and Manyanya, 2003: 35). That in subsequent years most workers could not afford the basket of basic commodities in the Consumer Council of Zimbabwe’s basket this suggesting a steep decline in real wages. For example, by 2008 it was reported that the salary of a doctor in the public health sector was the equivalent of less than US\$1 per month, showing the dire economic situation in the country (Todd *et al* 2009).

As mentioned earlier, structural adjustment in the 1990s was a turning point in the economic conditions of the country but fortunes were worsened by economic mismanagement. After 1997 the government made unbudgeted gratuity payments to war veterans (Todd *et al*, 2009). During the same period, the Zimbabwean dollar crushed against all major currencies and the economic situation has never recovered until today. The situation was further worsened when Zimbabwe sent troops to the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 1998, this resulted in massive expenditure. These two unbudgeted expenditures contributed to the ballooning of the fiscal deficit (Makochehanwa, 2007). The farm invasions of 2000, prior to the general elections destroyed the once robust agricultural sector as most of the productive White commercial farmers were driven out of the farms (Besada & Moyo, 2008). This put Zimbabwe in a huge foreign and domestic debt and the country was isolated from major international funding institutions. Among other things this lowered per capita income during the period prior to January 2009 (Hanke, 2008). For example the government’s implementation of the land reform programme lowered agricultural output, especially in tobacco, which accounted for one-third of Zimbabwe's foreign-exchange earnings. Once a net exporter of food, Zimbabwe had turned into a net importer and this caused a serious impact on the economy. Zimbabwe’s year on year inflation peaked to a stupendous 89.7 sextillion percent in November 2008 which was the second highest rate of hyper-inflation in recorded

history (Hanke, 2008). What made the situation unbearable was that during this time prices in shops and restaurants were pegged against the United States dollars. As hyperinflation accelerated the value of the Zimbabwe dollar declined fast against other currencies, yet official exchange rates published by the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe were infrequently updated (Hanke 2008). This meant that prices were adjusted several times a day. Any Zimbabwean dollars acquired needed to be exchanged for foreign currency on the parallel market immediately or the holder would suffer a significant loss of value. This greatly affected the salaries of workers, including teachers, who were still paid in Zimbabwean dollars. All in all salaries easily lost their value in a day because the Zimbabwean dollar had lost its aspect of being a store of value as the price of any biodegradable good would decrease slower than the value of the money that was used to buy that good (Mapolisa & Tshabalala, 2013). If local businesses were keeping prices relatively stable by pegging prices against foreign currencies, then hyperinflation essentially reduced the pay that each worker received by half every day (Sibanda *et al*, 2014). For example teachers in the capital city of Harare could no longer afford to pay for public transportation to and from work (Kapingidza 2014).

The Zimbabwe Congress of Teachers Union's monthly lists of salaries consistently showed teachers to be amongst the lowest paid workers. In October, November and December 2008, teachers' monthly average salaries were Z\$729,000, Z\$3 million and Z\$12 million, respectively (Changoda, 2012). When converted to US dollars using the exchange rate of that time it meant that a teacher was being paid about \$10 per month in comparison, for example, to military in which the lowest ranked soldier was earning close to \$18 in December 2008 (The Worker, January, 2009 in Chagonda 2012).

These poor salaries resulted in the mass exodus of teachers from the profession. According to teachers unions' estimates, almost half of the teachers in the public service quit the profession and looked for alternative employment. Some left to search for better jobs in other countries, with destinations varying from neighboring Southern African countries to New Zealand, Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States (Chagonda, 2010). Others responded to the collapse of the education sector by joining the informal sector, which had become very profitable as conditions in the formal sector had deteriorated. Essentially, during the economic crisis, Zimbabwe experienced a shortage in foreign currency and most basic commodities, and the hyper inflationary situation that characterised the crisis provided an opportunity for people to hoard goods and resell them later at an inflated price. This booming

speculative informal economy attracted many teachers because their salaries could no longer sustain them (Chagonda, 2010).

While some of the teachers left the profession and became full time dealers, others only used the informal sector as a moonlighting activity to supplement their salaries. They would travel to neighbouring countries during the weekends to buy goods for resale. These teachers took advantage of the visa-free initiative that saw Zimbabwean civil servants being allowed to travel to countries like South Africa without a visa to join the informal sector as cross border traders and money changers.

The adoption of the multi-currency system in 2009, however, weakened the informal sector and resuscitated the dying formal sector. The multi-currency system saw Zimbabwe using foreign currency, particularly the South Africa Rand and United States Dollar (US\$) as legal tender in the country. This “dollarization of the economy”, as it became popularly known in Zimbabwe, was a government attempt to bring about some macroeconomic stability in the country and also to stem the effects of hyperinflation (Chagonda, 2012). It entailed, among other things, the government paying its workers in foreign currency. The government also started paying every civil servant a monthly allowance of US\$100. This brought some form of revival to some of the weakened sectors including education, and many teachers started returning to work, particularly given that those who had resigned were allowed to rejoin the profession. The Progressive Teachers Union of Zimbabwe (PTUZ) reported in April 2009 that out of about 100,000 teachers in public schools before the crisis, 60,000 had gone back to work after the government started paying civil servants in foreign currency (The Worker, May 2009 in Chagonda, 2010).

The rapid rejoining of teachers to the education sector can thus be attributed to the decline of the informal sector which was no longer able to sustain the livelihood of informal sector dealers in the context of a “dollarized” economy. However the rejoining of many teachers should not be equated with the total revival of the education sector. Indeed, it can be argued that although the dollarization of the economy resuscitated the education sector, Zimbabwe’s education system’s standards continued to fall even after the adoption of multi-currency system as seen by the decrease in national examination pass rate. For example, the national pass rate in Grade 7 (the last year of primary school) decreased from 68 per cent in 2008 to 37 per cent in 2009 while the ‘O’ level (last year of high school) national pass rate decreased

from 23 per cent to 14 per cent during the same period (MoESAC, 2011). Among other things, these declines are indicators of the education system's overall poor state of health (Moyo, 2009), as the sector is not given adequate resources, while huge budgets are allocated to security and home affairs for the protection of power by the ruling party (Sibanda *et al*, 2014). Thus, although most teachers who had left the profession have now re-joined it, the teaching sector has remained restive and morale has been low because of low remuneration and poor working conditions (Chireshe & Shumba, 2011). Zimbabwean teachers are therefore generally demotivated and have low job satisfaction levels. In consequence the teaching sector in Zimbabwe is increasingly becoming unattractive, yet again. Indeed, studies such as IIEP (2006) and Gwaradzimba and Shumba (2010) have shown that the majority of teachers report that they would not choose the teaching profession if given a second chance. This situation is concerning given the government's commitment to improve education and to restore it to the state it was before the economic crisis.

It is against this background that the study answers the question: What are the main socio-economic challenges that teachers are facing after the dollarization of the economy in Zimbabwe and how are the teachers coping? It is envisaged that the overall findings will illuminate some of the key areas in which government may improve conditions and enhance teachers' wellbeing so as to retain them in the education sector.

1.2 Problem statement

Although the teaching sector in Zimbabwe now guarantees a fixed salary which is relatively more stable than during the crisis period, current research on Zimbabwean teachers (for example, Noko, 2011; Sibanda, 2014) shows that salaries in the sector are still not sufficient for teachers to sustain themselves. Recent studies such as Moyo (2009) and Chireshe and Shumba (2011) also show that motivation levels among teachers in the country continue to be low largely due to challenges such as poor salaries, poor accommodation, and general poor working conditions.

Furthermore, although inflation in Zimbabwe has, since 2009, markedly declined to levels that are among the world's lowest (Hobbes, 2014), the high cost of living seen in 2008 has continued to prevail. This coupled with high levels of unemployment, means that Zimbabweans who are income earners now wholly or partially support more than their

immediate families, some having as many as 14 dependents. While an average family of six needs approximately US\$580 per month to cover minimum essentials, (The Zimbabwean, 2014) teachers currently earn much lower than that. The challenges brought about by the low salaries have also been aggravated by the irregular payment of salaries by the government.

1.3 Aims and objectives

The broad objective of the study is to investigate the experiences and survival strategies of teachers in Zimbabwe in the context of low salaries after the adoption of the multicurrency system. The specific objectives are:

1. To examine the main socio-economic challenges that teachers are facing after the dollarization of the economy.
2. To establish how the teachers are coping with the challenges.
3. To illuminate some of the key areas in which in which government may improve conditions and enhance teachers' wellbeing so as to retain them in the education sector.

1.4 Rationale for the study

Available literature on the coping strategies of Zimbabwean teachers (for example, Chireshe & Shumba, 2011, Gwaradzimba & Shumba, 2010; Mapfumo *et al*, 2008) has mainly focused on the experiences and livelihoods of teachers during the economic crisis. Little is therefore known about the post-crisis period. This study seeks to contribute to closing this research gap by exploring the experience and coping strategies of Zimbabwean teachers beyond the economic crisis period.

1.5 Theoretical framework

To achieve its objectives, this study adopted the livelihood framework which views the world from the point of view of individuals, households, and social groups who are trying to make a living in volatile conditions and with limited assets. This framework provides a platform for understanding the opportunities and assets available to poor people and the sources of their vulnerability, as well as the impact upon them of external organizations, processes and policies (Scoones, 1998 and Ellis, 2000). Despite some criticism of the livelihood framework in relation to concepts such as the role of capital and assets in the development of strategies

(Mosetsa, 2011), it has been found to be very useful in examining the activities of an individual or household within the broader processes of social, economic and political change (Mosiane, 2012). The framework has also been used to better understand and disaggregate the efforts of the poor to earn a living and their long-term strategies for survival.

A livelihood is generally defined as comprising the capabilities, assets and activities, which are all required for a means of living (Adugna, 2006). The important feature of this livelihood definition is to direct attention to the links between assets and the options people possess in practice to pursue alternative activities that can generate the income level required for survival (Ellis, 2000). Assets may be described as stocks of capital that can be utilized directly, or indirectly, to generate the means of survival of the household or to sustain its material well-being at different level above survival. Assets can be identified as five different types of capital: human, physical, natural, financial, and social capital (Carney, 1998 and Ellis, 2000). This capital can be stored, accumulated, exchanged, or depleted and put to work to generate a flow of income or other benefits (Rakodi, 2002).

Livelihood approaches propose that thinking in terms of strengths or assets is vital as an antidote to the view of poor people as ‘passive’ or ‘deprived’. Central to the approach is the need to recognize that those who are poor may not have cash or other savings, but that they do have other material or non-material assets- their health, their labour, their knowledge, and skills, their friends and family and the natural resources around them (Rakodi and Jones, 2002). Livelihood strategies are composed of activities that generate the means of survival. The strategies people adopt to attain livelihoods is highly influenced by their asset position. According to Scoones (1998) people depending with the context they are in may choose income diversification as one of the livelihoods option they can adapt. Diversity refers to the existence, at a point in time, of many different income sources, thus also typically requiring diverse social relations to underpin them (Adugna, 2006). The reasons that households or individuals pursue diversification as a livelihood strategy are often divided into two overarching considerations, which are necessity or choice. Necessity refers to involuntary and distress reasons for diversifying. Choice, by contrast, refers to voluntary or proactive reasons for diversifying. But in practice these categories are less distinct from each other (Ellis, 2000).

Sustainable livelihoods analysis helps illuminate important strengths and also major constraints to livelihoods. The proposed study is aimed at analysing and understanding how, in different contexts, Zimbabwean teachers as individuals or a group manage to cope with and/or adapt their livelihoods. Everyone's livelihood, however inadequate, is made up of these three components – activities, assets, and entitlements – together with the short term coping mechanisms and long term adaptive strategies that the person employs in times of crisis so that in adjusting to hardships, loss, and change, she or he can maintain a livelihood (Ellis, 2000). In line with this, the livelihood approach will provide an opportunity to understand factors limiting teachers' access to productive resources, assets, and opportunities and strategies they employ in tackling them. The approach will enable an understanding of which assets the teachers have or lack to attain livelihoods and to what extent their access and control of assets is restricted or enhanced by the structure and process. Ultimately an analysis of these outcomes will show the negative and positive results of the pursued livelihood strategies. In doing so, this will shed light on the teachers' capabilities to attain a certain livelihood outcome using the available assets or within the livelihood constraints.

The concept of diversification is helpful to assess teacher's activities in the process of maintaining their daily life. As urban livelihoods are characterized by a dependence on cash incomes, the study will investigate the teachers' efforts to increase their incomes and reduce expenditures. Another analytical principle of the livelihood approach, which is relevant to the study, is the vulnerability context. Poverty in urban areas is affected by a combination of factors that produce a wide range of vulnerabilities. The urban poor are more immersed in the cash economy. The concept of vulnerability is helpful because it emphasizes on understanding the wider shocks and stresses to which the teachers' livelihoods are subject. On the other hand, it helps to analyse whether the teachers are resourceful and resilient to maintain their livelihoods, since their resourcefulness and resilience determine their survival. Gaining better understanding about what resources the teachers have or lack to maintain livelihoods, how do they pool these resources and diversify activities in order to reduce risk, ensure their well-being and co-ensure one another to earn a livelihood is vital before any intervention which attempts to make their livelihood productive and efficient.

1.6 Structure of the dissertation

In addition to this chapter which provides a background to the study, the dissertation comprises of following four additional chapters. Chapter 2 provides a literature review; with a focus on survival and coping strategies using livelihood assets. Chapter 3 is a discussion on the methodology used. Chapter 4 details the key findings, and Chapter 5 is the last chapter and it pulls the strings together by summarising the key findings of the study and presents recommendations and key areas in which in which government may improve conditions and enhance teachers' wellbeing so as to retain them in the education sector.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

An important feature of the livelihood framework is the direct attention to the links between assets and the options people possess in practice to pursue alternative activities that can generate the income level required for survival (Ellis, 2000). As discussed in Chapter 1, assets may be described as stocks of human, physical, social, natural and financial capital that can be utilized directly, or indirectly, to generate the means of survival of a vulnerable individual or household or to sustain their material well-being at different levels above survival. This chapter presents a review of the literature in this regard. The chapter begins with an elaboration of the five different categories of capital: human, physical, natural, financial, and social capital. Thereafter a discussion of other coping and survival strategies often adopted by the poor and vulnerable in many developing societies is presented.

2.2 Livelihood assets

According to Krantz (2001), one of the most important assets possessed by the poor is their human capital which, according to Ellis (2000) includes labour, education, skills, and health. Human capital is a direct asset as its attributes are owned by the individual to whom they apply. It therefore varies according to household size, skill levels, leadership potential and health status (Ellis & Freeman, 2004). The ownership of labour is particularly important especially in the context of the city economy in which income deriving from the sale of the labour is a key asset for the urban poor and vulnerable due to the commoditized nature of cities which increases dependency on cash income (Serrat, 2010). Overall, a lack of human capital can affect the ability to secure a livelihood more directly in urban labour markets than rural areas (Rakodi, 2002).

Physical capital, on the other hand, comprises the basic infrastructure and producer goods needed to support livelihoods (DIFD, 2001). Examples of this capital include buildings, irrigation canals, roads, tools and machines. A lack of particular types of infrastructure is considered to be a core dimension of poverty in that without adequate access to services such as water and energy, human health deteriorates and long periods of time are spent in non-productive activities such as the collection of water and fuel wood (Ellis & Mdoe, 2003).

In the context of the sustainable livelihoods framework social capital are the social resources upon which people draw in pursuit of their livelihood objectives. These are developed through networks and connectedness, membership of more formalised groups and relationships of trust and reciprocity (Ferragina 2010). Generally mutual trust and reciprocity lower the costs of working together. Social interaction is seen as capital when it is persistent, giving rise to stocks (of for example, of trust and knowledge) on which people can draw, even if the social interaction itself is not permanent (Rakodi & Jones 2002).

The other type of livelihood asset—natural capital—refers to the natural resource base (such as land, water, trees) that yields products utilized by human population for their survival (Meikle, 2002). Natural capital is very important to those who derive all or part of their livelihoods from resource-based activities such as farming, fishing, gathering in forests, mineral extraction, etc. (DIFD, 2001). The overall argument is that human kind cannot survive without the help of key environmental services and food produced from natural capital (Naidoo *et al* 2009). Like other livelihood assets, natural capital also has direct impact on other forms capital. For example health, which is a component of human capital, will tend to suffer in areas where air quality is poor as a result of industrial activities or natural disasters (e.g. forest fires).

Finally, financial capital denotes the financial resources that people use to achieve their livelihood objectives (Serrat, 2010). It refers to the availability of cash or equivalent that enables people to adopt different livelihood strategies (Krantz 2001). Financial capital is probably the most versatile of the five categories of assets as it can be easily converted to other forms of assets (DIFD, 2001). It is chiefly likely to be in the form of savings, and access to credit in the form of loan (Meikle *et al*, 2001). The availability and accessibility of affordable credit is important in reducing the likelihood of severe indebtedness of the urban poor (Meikle, 2002). The lack of financial services suitable for poor or vulnerable urban households thus constrains their ability to save and obtain credit (Rakodi, 2002).

It is evident from the foregoing discussion that on their own, and in combination with each other, livelihood assets can provide a multitude of different ways to generate positive livelihood outcomes. It should be noted however; that the strategies people adopt to attain livelihoods is highly influenced by their asset position. The livelihoods of the poor and vulnerable are also determined by the context in which they live and the constraints and

opportunities their location presents. This is because context largely determines the assets accessible to people, how they can use these, and thus their ability to obtain secure livelihoods (Rakodi, 2002).

In urban areas livelihood strategies centre on income-earning activities in either the formal or informal sectors, as wage employees, unpaid family workers or in self-employment (Rutherford *et al*, 2002). Indeed a close look at the urban setting will reveal that many of the specific assets that could be expected to fall under the headings of ‘physical capital’ or ‘economic and social infrastructure’ (for example, sewerage, school, transport infrastructure, banking systems) are significant in that they are not owned by the men and women who use them as livelihood assets (Meikle *et al*, 2001). Therefore in an urban setting it is not sufficient to merely look at existence of assets meant to promote livelihoods, but to also look at if the available resources are accessible to the poor and vulnerable as their survival and coping strategies are centred on the assets they have access to.

2.3 Survival and coping strategies

Coping and survival strategies research has been developed to explore how people living in marginal situations manage to manipulate resources in innovative and complex ways in order to get by in times of risk (Wallace, 2002). While research on survival strategies has generally focused on either increasing income or minimising expenditure as ways that poor and vulnerable people use to get by, it has become explicitly recognized that poverty and vulnerability are multi-dimensional, dynamic and not based on access to income alone, and that people respond to hardship in diverse ways (Adugna, 2006). A sophisticated re-working of the coping strategy debates has found that people often create strategies that mobilized various types of livelihood assets (De Haan *et al*, 2002). While this examination of coping practices still tends to focus on guarding against poverty and ensuring survival, it also allows for analysis of variations among individuals and households as well as accounting for structural and life-course factors. The following sub-sections give an overview of some of the most common survival and coping in developing countries.

2.3.1 Expenditure reduction

One broadly used survival strategy in sustaining livelihoods is minimising expenditure (De Haan *et al*, 2002). The huge body of research that focused on how poor people developed

ways of coping in face of an economic recession in developing economies found out that, people have generally minimised expenditure as a strategy (Nelson, 2002). This includes cutting back on the use of utilities, changing diets, and limiting consumption in order to cope during a crisis (Rutherford *et al*, 2002). In Indonesia, for example, Setiawan (2001) found that rural households that were confronted with declining income responded by cutting back on less essential goods, changing dietary habits and eating more of their crops.

This was also seen in hyperinflationary Brazil where people changed their dietary habits by skipping other meals (De Haan *et al*, 2002). In Kenya it was noted that people changed their purchasing habits during times of crisis by making small frequent purchases (Government of Kenya 2001). Adugna (2006) in his study of street children in Ethiopia also found similar patterns whereby people in vulnerable situations try to avoid or reduce expenditure on food by decreasing overall consumption of food, eating a meal per day and of less quality food, begging for leftover food, or scavenging rather than buying. To save on transport costs people can often opt to travel long distance on foot rather than using public means of transport (De Haan *et al*, 2002). This has been seen, for example, in Zimbabwe where poor workers have to walk or ride on bicycles for long distances as a way of saving money in order to sustain their livelihoods (Chazovachii 2012). In Mexico, which is another country that experienced hyperinflation, people travelled long distances to work in farms and factories near the American border as a way of reducing transport costs (Nelson 2002). Other common short term cost cutting strategies taken by poor urban households include stinting on education, basic food stuffs and medical costs (Meikel, 2002). In all these cases minimizing expenditure was done as a way of increasing savings or expanding choices.

It is noteworthy that minimising of expenditure is mainly adopted as a short term strategy and it is often adopted out of necessity. This differs from long term strategies which aim to invest in future capacity to build livelihoods (De Haan *et al*, 2002). Furthermore while minimising of expenditure is one of the first strategies that people employ in times of crisis (Adugna, 2006), in some cases this strategy can be inequitable and socially unsustainable in the long term as it may only cater to the short term priorities of the more powerful household members at the expense of the interests of other household members. For example the reduction of health and educational expenditures may lessen the ability of poor men and women to use or sell their labour in the long term.

2.3.2 Rural-urban linkages

In many African countries urbanisation has divided families into two geographically separated but mutually supportive households; one in the urban area and the other in the rural area (Namwata *et al* 2010). During the economic crisis in Zambia cooper miners in mining towns maintained strong linkages with the rural areas and often used relatives there as a survival strategy (Namwata *et al*, 2010). Studies of urban-rural linkages as an economic survival strategy reveal that these linkages have indeed assumed new importance with rising urban poverty across most of Africa (Lesetedi, 2003). It is generally assumed that urban migrants are the ones who remit earnings to their rural homes rather than them receiving money from the same. However research done in the past shows that there was limited flow of money from rural areas to urban areas (Oucho 1996; Rakodi 2002). It can thus be argued that remittances from rural to urban areas are rare but by no means totally absent. For example, Lesetedi (2003) found out through research in Gaborone, the capital city of Botswana, that people who worked in the city maintained rural-urban links through ownership of property, engaging in economic activities, and participating in social activities in the rural areas. The exchange of money, goods, and visits, frequency of communication with relatives and friends, and regular consultation with people living in rural areas are important resources that many urban dwellers draw on in times of adversity.

2.3.3 Income diversification

People may also respond to social and economic change such as unemployment and industrial restructuring by engaging in a number activities that can maximise income (Anderson 2000; Clark 2002 and Bloch 2006;). This can include taking up more responsibilities either in or outside their workplace to generate additional income. In Zimbabwe, for example, workers in the banking sector responded to the effects of the financial crisis by engaging in activities outside their sector, becoming involved in small to medium sized businesses (Chagonda, 2010). Teachers on the other hand engaged in cross border trading as a moonlighting activity in order to generate additional income (Chagonda, 2012).

Another income diversifying strategy is to increase the number of household members that are incorporated into the labour market or that are working in order to increase the resources available to the household (Meikel, 2002). In an urban setting where livelihoods are mainly centred on income derived from the sale of labour this may also be key in guarding against

household vulnerability to the vagaries of the employment market (Reardon 2001). Meikle (2002) has distinguished between income raising strategies common in rural and urban areas. In the latter, domestic services such as cleaning and childcare (especially by girls and women), urban agriculture, renting out of rooms, home gardening, hawking, vending, casual labour and “piece jobs” have been identified as the main income diversifying strategies. In rural areas migration for seasonal work and the seasonal food for work is the most common strategy particularly in villages and small towns in which agriculture is the primary source of livelihoods (Scoones, 1998).

It is worth noting that just like expenditure reduction, some of these income-diversification strategies can be unsustainable in the long term. Some studies, for example, have noted that income diversifying strategies employed by people in economic crisis sometimes involve illegal activities. An example is a study by Muula and Maseko (2005) on survival strategies of Malawian health workers which found out that the workers adopted various strategies including unethical and criminal behaviour in order to diversify their sources of income. The study revealed that some pharmacists’ assistants and technicians were stealing drugs and selling them to drug vendors and private clinics. Studies on income diversification strategies have also found that in the most vulnerable and marginal cases, children are often forced to drop out of school to become members of the work force so as to help increasing household income and saving, and /or to reduce expenditures (Reardon, 2001).

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter reviewed literature on livelihood assets as well as the survival and coping strategies of workers in times of hyperinflation. It emerged from the review that livelihood structures are complex and usually revolve around the incomes, skills and services of all family members in an effort to reduce the risks associated with living near subsistence (International Institute for Sustainable Development, 1999). The review of the literature on the coping strategies of Zimbabwean teachers in particular illuminated the experiences and livelihoods of teachers during the economic crisis and at the same time revealed the paucity of research and literature on the post-crisis period. This research gap further reaffirms the importance of this study which used the livelihood framework to investigate urban Zimbabwean teachers’ experience *after* the country’s economic crisis, and to highlight the key resources that the teachers drew, and continue to draw, on to maintain their livelihoods.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methods used to undertake the study. The chapter sets out with a discussion on the research design. This is followed by a discussion of the study site, the study population, the selection of the study population and the methods used to collect data. This chapter also discusses data analysis and ethical considerations.

3.2 Study design

Given the paucity of research on the survival and coping strategies of Zimbabwean teachers after the dollarization of the economy, it was deemed imperative for this study to use an approach that could explore and describe the teachers' experiences in detail. Thus a qualitative interpretive research paradigm was adopted. Qualitative research examines motifs, themes, distinctions and perspectives (Berg, 2001). Unlike in quantitative research where analysis is shaped by the use of statistics or tables discussing how the data relate to hypotheses, in qualitative research social life is examined from multiple points of view so as to understand and explain how people construct identities.

Being interpretive in nature it considered the experiences of individuals as the main source of interpreting social reality. For Weinberg (2002), the interpretive paradigm allows the researcher to understand the situation of the phenomena being studied and to interpret meanings within the "social or cultural context" of the participants (May 2011). Therefore, this research paradigm allowed the researcher to construe the experiences, thoughts, and perceptions of the research participants in their own setting and cultural context. Conducting this study within this research paradigm enabled the understanding of the actions and views of the respondents from an individual perspective.

3.3 Study setting

As civil servants, teachers in public schools were more affected by the crisis and continue to face irregular salaries from government, the study was conducted in four public schools (two primary and two secondary) in Harare, the capital city of Zimbabwe. The schools were

purposively selected from low- and high-density areas of the city (one primary and one secondary school in each area).

The choice of Harare as the study area hinged on a number of factors including that:

1. The cost of living in Harare is generally higher than other parts of Zimbabwe. Thus teachers in Harare need more money to sustain themselves and their families than teachers in rural areas.
2. Teachers in the capital have a relatively higher burden of paying more for their accommodation and are also most likely to commute to and from their workplace compared to their counterparts in other areas.

To the extent that government salaries for teachers are the same in rural and urban areas, the above suggests that teachers in urban areas are more likely to have more financial burdens than those in rural areas.

3.4 Study participants

Participants for the study were teachers—who had been teaching for at least ten years—drawn from the primary and secondary schools described above. The ten year criterion was meant to ensure that the study captured the experiences and perspectives of teachers who were in the sector during the pre-crisis as well as the post crisis periods. The participants were also teachers who have been living in Harare for more than five years. Five teachers were selected from each of the four purposively selected public schools, thus will bring the total number of participants to 20. It is noteworthy that the study could have been strengthened by interviewing representatives of teachers' unions. This would have provided information of the unions' perception of the teachers' situation in the post hyperinflation Zimbabwe. This was however not feasible given time and budgetary constraints.

3.4.1 Selection of study participants

The process of selecting participants for the study was done using the purposive sampling technique. The purposive sampling technique, also called judgment sampling, is the deliberate choice of an informant due to the qualities the informant possesses. Simply put, the researcher decides what needs to be known and sets out to find people who can and are willing to provide the information by virtue of knowledge or experience (Bernard 2002, Lewis & Sheppard 2006). The rationale for using this sampling technique was to ensure that the study captures the experiences and perspectives of teachers who were in the sector during

the pre-crisis as well as the post crisis periods. It was also to ensure that the participants had been living in Harare for more than 10 years. These set criteria were thus used to purposively select the teachers for the study.

3.5 Data collection

Data was collected using in-depth interviews which take the form of a conversation with the intention that the researcher explores the participants' views, ideas, beliefs and attitudes about certain events or phenomena (Weinberg, 2002). As a qualitative method, in-depth interviews enabled probing and made it possible to understand the perceptions, opinions and thoughts of the interviewee (Limb & Dwyer, 2001). An advantage of in-depth interviews is that the interviewer can probe more to get better clarity and there is freedom for respondents to express their opinions about the subject at hand (Benya 2009).

The interviews were conducted using an interview guide designed to solicit information on respondents' income levels; income-generating activities, expenditure and purchasing patterns, rural-urban ties, social networks, and community participation. (See Appendix 1)

The interviews—which lasted between 45 minutes to an hour—were held at the schools at a mutually agreed time that was convenient to the teachers but not during school hours so as not to disturb the participants during working hours. The interviews were conducted in English and, if the respondent so preferred, in Shona which is the local Zimbabwean language that is mainly spoken in Harare. All interviews were, with the consent of the respondents, audio-recorded. If a respondent did not give consent for audio-recording, detailed notes were taken.

3.6 Data analysis

On completion of the data collection process, all interview recordings were transcribed and where necessary translated into English. Thereafter thematic data analysis was undertaken. Thematic analysis can be defined as a qualitative analytic method of identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The categories and patterns emerged from the data rather than being imposed on the data prior to data collection. Since the data analysed involved a small sample, the process of organizing data and data reduction was done by means of categorising the responses until prominent themes could be identified and described. Themes are important points emerging in the data in relation to the research question and should represent some level of patterns in responses or meaning within the data (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). The findings were compared and interpreted according to themes:

income levels, income-generating activities, expenditure and purchasing patterns, use of basic social services, rural-urban ties, social network and community participation. By looking at the categories that developed from the information, the researcher was able to provide meaning to the data (Creswell 2003).

3.7 Ethical considerations

The study was granted ethical approval by the Postgraduate Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Pretoria. Permission was also sought from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education in Harare Province which is the office that is responsible for all public schools in the capital. Once permission was granted by the Ministry a letter explaining the study in detail together with the permission from the Ministry was presented to the head teachers of the selected schools to request permission to undertake the study in their schools. The letter requested the head teacher to encourage five teachers to volunteer for the study.

All in all, the researcher ensured that the basic principles of social research were adhered to throughout the study including during the write-up of the findings. These principles include protecting and respecting the rights, and dignity of all study participants. The researcher also considered ethical considerations of informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation as the pillars of the study. All these principles are briefly described below:

3.7.1 Informed consent

Informed consent entails participants being made adequately aware of the type of information that will be collected from them, why the information is sought, what purpose it will be used for and it will directly or indirectly affect them (Punch 2005). The researcher thus made sure that the participants understood what the research involved, specifically the procedure to be followed, the time demands, as well as the need and use of the use of audio recording. Informed consent was obtained from the study participants using the consent forms in Appendix 2.

3.7.2 Confidentiality

In social research confidentiality is important in studying social behaviour especially when asking about beliefs, background and private or intimate details (Neuman 2006). To protect the confidentiality of the respondents in this study, their names and identifications were not written in the interview transcripts and will not be used in the write-up of the study results. Rather pseudonyms have been used. Furthermore, the transcripts from the interviews are

secured and are kept in the form of soft copies in the personal computer of the researcher which is password protected.

3.7.3 Voluntary Participation

Participants were informed that their participation in the study is voluntary. The researcher explained that failure to participate in the study or withdrawal at any stage would not result in any penalty or negative consequences for the participant.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter provided a description of the study's methodology specifically the study design; study setting; the profile and selection of study participants; methods of data collection and analysis; as well as the ethical considerations that were adhered to throughout the study. The next chapter presents the key findings of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to fulfil the two specific objectives of this study by presenting the main socio-economic challenges that Zimbabwean urban teachers have been facing since the dollarization of the economy and exploring the coping strategies that the teachers are adopting to deal with the challenges. To provide context to the overall results, the chapter begins with a brief overview of the socio-economic characteristics of the study participants.

4.2 Socio-economic profile of study participants

Table 1 shows the number profile of the study participants in terms of gender, age, marital status, highest teaching qualification, number of years living in Harare; number of people in household and income bracket.

Table 1: Characteristics of study participants

Characteristic	Total number
Gender	
Male	7
Female	13
Age	
35-40	2
40-45	7
45-50	10
50-55	1
Marital Status	
Married	17
Never married	0
Widowed	2
Divorced/separated	1
Cohabiting	0
Highest teaching qualification	
Diploma	13
Degree	7
Income bracket	
(\$350- \$400)	5
(\$400-\$450)	3
(\$450-\$500)	10
(\$500- \$550)	2
Number of years in Harare	
10-15 years	4
15- 20 years	7
20 and more	9

Number of people in household	
1	0
2-5	16
5 and more	4

As the table illustrates, the majority of the participants were female. This was to be expected as there are more females than males in the teacher population of Zimbabwe particularly in the urban schools where a sizeable number of respondents were drawn (Mapolisa and Tshabalala 2013). The teachers were aged between 35 years and 55 years with a larger proportion falling under the age range of 40 to 50 years. The majority of the participants were married and the remaining being either widowed or divorced. Most of the teachers hold a diploma in teaching which the entry qualification in the field is. A few have degrees and some reported to still being in the process of acquiring a degree. The teachers earned a salary which ranged from \$350 to \$550 with the majority of them getting \$450 to \$500. All the teachers have lived in Harare for more than 10 years. Most of them have been living in the capital for more than 20 years. Most teachers lived with 2 to 5 people in their household and a few had more than 5 people in their household.

4.3 Main socio-economic challenges faced by teachers

In as much as it can be argued that the dollarization of the Zimbabwean economy made better the situation of the Zimbabwean civil servants, the findings from the in-depth interviews with the teachers support this only to a minor extent as many of them reported that they are still faced with a number of challenges that are mainly influenced by limited access to livelihood assets. According to the teachers, the main socio economic challenges they face in this regards include poor salaries, poor living conditions, poor working conditions, demotivation, and restricted career growth paths. While the challenges may not be new to the teaching sector, the change in the economic climate in Zimbabwe after the 2009 economic crisis has presented the challenges in a new form that teachers have had to adopt different coping strategies from those that they used before. The following sub-sections present the teachers' articulation their main challenges.

4.3.1 Low salaries

In the years following independence, teachers in Zimbabwe were paid relatively good salaries that made the profession attractive to many. Indeed the majority of the teachers interviewed in this study (all of whom had been in the teaching sector for more than 20 years) reported

that the good remuneration package then was one of the major reasons why they chose to join the profession. For example:

“In the 1980s when I joined teaching it was a very good profession which attracted almost half of the school leaving people. During that time I was able to buy property for myself. I sent my siblings to good schools and even save. The salaries were good that they would cover all this. Things have however changed. Now I struggle to even take care of my own family. People used to look up to me but now I am the one that actually need assistance. I moved from a hero to a zero.” (Male primary school teacher in a high density area)

However, consistent with previous studies such as Chireshe and Shumba (2011), it emerged from the study that in contemporary Zimbabwe poor salaries are a major problem for teachers, particularly in urban areas. Poor salaries can be traced to beginning of the crisis which saw teachers’ salaries being eroded by inflation. However even after the dollarization of the Zimbabwean economy which saw the government paying all civil servants in foreign currency, teachers still report that their salaries are not sufficient to sustain their livelihoods. Kurasha and Chiome (2013) note that the government’s failure to pay teachers a decent salaries is evident in its move to call upon parents to pay teachers incentives as a supplement of their meagre salaries. However even though these challenges still prevail, teachers reported that the situation being better than during the time of the crisis when all their salaries would be eroded in a day by inflation. In this regard most of the teachers interviewed agreed that the introduction of the US dollar in the economy brought some hope for the dying teaching profession but did little to completely address the financial woes of teachers, as one said:

“When the government started paying us with foreign currency in 2009 we thought things were going back to way they were before the crisis. With foreign currency at least one is able to plan and save without the fear of the money being eroded with inflation. It is better taking into consideration that they also gave us an allowance of US\$100.” (Female secondary school teacher in a high density area)

All in all teachers’ salaries fall below the poverty datum line even after the allowance state in the above excerpt has been added. To this end all the interviewed teachers reported that their salaries were insufficient to cover their monthly household expenditure. The teachers

reported that they need an average of US\$800 per month to survive yet their salaries falls way below that; teachers' salaries in Zimbabwe are currently in the US \$350 to US\$550 monthly income bracket (Africa Growth Institute 2014). James a secondary school teacher in a high density area lamented that:

“The salary is not enough to sustain me and my family. Children need to go to school, eat and be clothed, and I cannot afford to do this with my salary. As a teacher I cannot afford to pay my children’s school fees. It’s so disappointing.”

Variations can however be noticed between male and female teachers. Due to the patriarchal setup of the Zimbabwean society, male teachers tend to have larger financial responsibilities than their female counterparts. Most of the male teachers interviewed for this study reported that they are the sole bread winners for their households. Despite being married most of them have partners that do not go to work. On the contrary, most women in the profession are married to men with better paying jobs than them. In light of this it can be seen that there are gender difference on how the issue of low salaries affect teachers. For example, one female primary school teacher in a low density area said:

“My salary is insufficient to sustain my household. [However], I am lucky my husband works in the private sector if it wasn’t for that I do not know how I would survive. My situation is better than those who are widowed or who are sole bread winners. I wonder how they manage with this little salary of ours.”

Despite the gender variations, all the teachers agreed that their salaries were low that they are struggling to sustain their household’s livelihoods. Overall therefore, it can be concluded that the hyper inflationary conditions of the economic crisis has seen teachers being among the lowest paid workers in Zimbabwe, and that the dollarization of the country’s economy has not improved teachers’ welfare much.

4.3.2 Poor living conditions

Teachers also reported living under very poor conditions because of their poor salaries. They can no longer afford things they used to afford before the economic crisis, and many reported that they were living from hand to mouth which means that they were only living under basic conditions. Many reported that they have had to change their purchasing habits to, for

example, doing small frequent purchases, rather than cheap bulk buys, and/or to buy poorer quality food. In essence many teachers have been forced to adopt relatively cheaper and/or poor standards of living because their salaries no longer afford them the same life styles they had before. One of the teachers, for example, said:

“We now live under very poor living conditions because we have to opt for low quality things so that our salaries can sustain us. From the food we eat and the type of housing we have to get the cheap ones if we want to live up to the next salary date.” (Female secondary school teacher in a high density area)

It can thus be argued that the expenditure reduction strategies that the teachers are being forced to adopt has resulted in the deterioration of their living standards. Although this cannot be said of all the interviewed teachers, a considerable proportion of them, especially the ones that do not have other income-generating activities to help them reported poor living conditions as a major challenge they have been facing since the dollarization of the economy.

4.3.3 Poor working conditions

In addition to poor living conditions, the adoption of the multi-currency system in Zimbabwe has failed to improve the working conditions in the teaching sector. Poor working conditions have persisted in the sector since the time of the crisis due to lack of government funding. There has been a shortage of infrastructure and learning and teaching materials in many schools as the government has been struggling to fund the education sector because of the financial crisis. In September 2009, the Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture (MoESAC) had to launch the Education Transition Fund (ETF) which is a multi-donor pooled fund, managed by UNICEF which sought to support the Government of Zimbabwe in delivering education services by providing teaching and learning materials and technical assistance to the MoESAC (UNICEF 2011:3). The launch of this initiative clearly shows that the government alone had failed to fund the education system. However while this was good the programme did not fully address problems in the teaching sector. Kapingidza (2014) notes that the programme was mainly affected by donor fatigue. In this regard most of the interviewed teachers complained about how things have not changed much in terms of their working conditions despite the dollarization of the economy. Some schools especially in high density areas had malfunctioning ablution blocks which posed as a health hazard for the teachers. Good working conditions should include work health and safety conditions that

protect the health, safety and welfare of workers at work, and other people affected by the work (Gwisai 2006). In some instances, classrooms and other learning rooms were inadequate. One of the teachers lamented that:

“The only thing that has changed is that we are now being paid in United States dollars not Zimbabwean dollars. The working conditions are still poor. Nothing has changed compared to the time of the crisis. There is a shortage of teaching material and the infrastructure in most school is now dilapidated. The crisis crippled the education sector that it’s going to take more than just paying people with a stable currency to restore the field to its original state.” (Male primary school teacher in a low density area)

Essentially, while the teaching sector has been one of the most attractive professions in the 1980s the opposite is now true. Due to under-funding of the sector the teachers report having insufficient equipment to use. Some schools have no proper desks, chairs for the teachers. For some time before the introduction of donor funded programmes in the sector, students had to buy their own stationery and in some cases teachers reported having to use their own money to make copies of books so that they can teach students. While the education transition fund came in and eased the situation a little, the challenge has not been fully addressed. According to Kapingidza (2014) the fund has procured and delivered a total of 22 million textbooks for both primary and secondary schools and in secondary schools it targeted certain subjects like English, Shona, Mathematics, History, Geography and Science leaving others without books. It can thus be argued that the ETF only partly addressed some components of quality education that is, teaching and learning material but teachers remain bitter that their concerns are being side-lined (Kapingidza 2014). The conditions need the teachers to improvise so that they can successfully help the students in their learning process. Because of the shortage of classrooms teachers have been forced to teach large numbers of children. In most cases the sizes of the classes exceed the standard of 33 students set by the ministry (Kapingidza 2014). According to one of the teachers:

“Due to the shortage of classrooms we are made to teach large classes. Sometimes up to 50 children. As if this is not enough, resources like books and other stationery are few that I have to think outside the box to be able to teach the

children. Out of pity I may use my own money to make copies a book so that teaching will be easy.” (Female secondary school teacher in a high density area)

The above remarks show that while through donor funding strides have been covered in providing the shortage of teaching and learning materials, infrastructure is still lagging behind. Some school have severe shortage of furniture with available furniture being old and some of it broken. In severe cases staff rooms may not have furniture and teachers will be using students’ desks (Kapingidza 2014). The deterioration of infrastructure and shortage of text books in some subject makes it difficult for teachers to do their work. Schools need proper and adequate infrastructure to facilitate quality education.

4.3.4 Demotivation.

As Chireshe and Shumba (2011) noted in his study Zimbabwean teachers are no longer committed to their work because they are not satisfied with the current working conditions. Overall, the conditions in the teaching sector have demotivated the teachers to an extent that some of them regret joining the profession in the first place. While in his study Chireshe and Shumba (2011) shows how teachers would not choose the teaching career if given a second chance, the teachers interviewed in this study reported that despite being demotivated they would not leave the profession because after the 2009 economic crisis teaching has become one of the most stable careers in Zimbabwe. Despite its unattractiveness, the profession guarantees a job after completion of the teaching course. Zimbabwe’s unemployment rate has grown to an estimated 95% (The Standard, February 2015). While industries in other sectors have been closing down leading to massive job losses and job insecurity, the teaching sector has managed to keep on recruiting more teachers. According to Mavis, a female secondary school teacher in a high density area reported that:

“In as much I have my grievances with the teaching profession sometimes I think it’s even better. In an era where most people are unemployed and those that have good jobs in the private sector are losing them, at least I know that my job is safe and I will continue to go to work as long as I am still capable. Even though the salaries are very low I am guaranteed of something at the end of each month. Half a loaf is better than nothing.”

While they generally feel demotivated, the interviews revealed that the majority of teachers prefer to come to work rather than be unemployed. This is also despite the often late salary pays.

4.3.5 Limited career growth paths

The demotivation expressed by most teachers is partly aggravated by the limited career growth paths in the teaching sector. Most of the interviewed teachers occupied senior teaching positions and most entered the profession using the teaching certificate which has later been changed to a diploma by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. Most of the teachers have taken further learning and now have degrees in education. While the main reason for furthering education was widening the chances of career development, the current state of the Zimbabwean economy has seen limited career growth for the teachers. Most of them seem to be stuck on the senior teacher position which has little difference in the salary grading with that of an ordinary teacher. It was explained that Government and the Ministry have frozen promotions in the profession. Therefore even if one gets a chance to move up the ladder it can only be on an acting basis. Most of the teachers are therefore only receiving acting allowances for the positions that they are holding. A female teacher in charge of one primary school in a low density area explained that:

“I currently hold the position of teacher in charge of the infancy department on this school. While this means increased responsibilities on my part since I have a class which I should teach, and I also have to oversee all the classes in the infancy department. I am however not paid for this extra responsibility that I have. I have to apply for a teacher in charge allowance every term which is very low in that it cannot even change anything as far as sustaining my livelihood is concerned.”

Overall, relative to other civil service occupations where one can easily be promoted to better paying positions when qualifications are upgraded, this is not the case in the education sector. Seniority in the field is mainly given according to the number of years one has in the profession. There is very little difference in the salary grading between an ordinary teacher and those that hold senior positions while differences are noticeable among those holding administrative positions such as headmaster and deputy headmaster. To this end many teachers have become frustrated and feel trapped in one position in their careers. This has

actually taken out the zeal of continuing education. A number of the interviewed teachers stated that they have not completed their teaching degrees because they feel they are not in hurry to have them as there is no difference in one holding one and not doing so. For example, Jenny a secondary teacher said:

“I was doing a degree with Zimbabwe Open University and I had to stop half way because it felt like wasting the few resources that I had. I saw the people who had finished before me not using the degree. For one to act in higher position one does not need a degree experience is enough.” (Female primary school teacher in a high density area)

4.4 Teachers’ survival strategies

Teachers welfare is one of the most important factor in determining the quality of education that children receive in schools and the effectiveness of the teaching system (Dike 2009; Gwaradzimba and Shumba 2010; International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) 2006; Ololube, 2006). Thus, given the above-mentioned challenges the next question that comes into ones’ mind is how then are the teachers sustaining their livelihoods.

According to Adugna (2006) a livelihood is the command an individual, family or any other social group has over an income or resources that can be used to satisfy their needs. It is against this back drop that the livelihood frameworks posit that different forms of capital can be stored, accumulated, exchanged, or depleted and put to work to generate a flow of income or other benefits. Livelihood strategies are hence shaped by a combination of the assets available and contextual factors which determine the availability of these assets (Meikle *et al*, 2001). The activities undertaken by any poor or vulnerable household will also in part be determined by the assets available to households’ members. However the ability to avoid or reduce vulnerability depends not only on the initial assets available but also on the capacity to manage them and to transform them, for example, into income, food or other basic necessities (Meikle, 2002). The poor or vulnerable may not have cash or other savings, but that they may have other material or non-material assets such as their health; their labour; their knowledge and skills; their friends and family; and the natural resources around them (Rakodi & Jones, 2002). One or a combination of these assets may be exchanged and traded to acquire other forms of assets.

This section uses the five identified forms of capital—human, physical, natural, financial, and social—to explore the survival and coping strategies that the teachers are using to acquire the basic level of survival. A salient finding was that the teachers have generally reduced their expenditure and diversified their sources of income as coping strategies to address the changes discussed in the preceding section.

4.4.1 Human capital

Human capital attributes are owned by the individual to whom they apply, and they include education, knowledge and skills; physical capacity, and the health of an individual or members of a household. Teachers possess human capital in the form of their teaching skills which they acquired through studying for teaching qualification and in this study they reported that this has been one of most important stock of capital that they are using to generate a means of survival amidst the above mentioned challenges. They used this capital to, among other things, offer extra classes and to engage in informal trading.

Provision of extra classes

During the time of the crisis, a large number of teachers migrated to neighbouring countries in search of greener pastures and this left the education sector under-staffed. This meant that in some schools children had to go for the whole term without a teacher. The teachers who remained in the profession took advantage of opportunity and started to offer extra lessons which were lessons that were offered after school hours for a fee. This became a lucrative business for the teachers because parents had no option since there was a shortage of teachers in the country. While this started during the time of the 2009 crisis it has continued even after the crisis. Through these extra lessons teachers are able to earn extra money to supplement their low salaries as one teacher explained:

“Teaching extra lessons has helped me and my family. I conduct extra lessons for a number of children at home. Extra lessons helped us a lot. Sometimes we even forget that we were amongst the lowest paid workers in the country.” (Female secondary school teacher in high density area)

From these remarks it can be seen that extra lessons have been a way by which some Zimbabwean teachers have been able to sustain their livelihood. Through the use of their

human capital teachers have been able to diversify their sources of income. The teachers sell their skills and knowledge to get additional income.

Chambers (1997) highlights the importance of the poor and vulnerable diversifying their income as a broad survival strategy, distinguishing between full time employees with one main source of livelihoods ('hedgehogs'), and poor people with a wide portfolio of activities ('foxes'). 'Fox' households undertake many different activities and strategies. The majority of the interviewed teachers can therefore be classified under fox households because almost every one of them reported engaging in extra lesson teaching at some point after the 2009 crisis. Janice a primary school teacher in a low density area reported that:

“Every teacher was forced to do extra lessons because the salaries alone were not enough to sustain us. Teaching after working therefore provided another source of income. At least if you combine the salary and the extra lessons money you can survive.”

The offering of extra lessons became such a major source of income for teachers that many schools even took part in this initiative, and made it a recognised programme of the school. This initiative has become so organised that extra lessons are now conducted in schools. By collaborating with school in which they are teaching, teachers used school facilities rather than their homes. The lessons are now conducted in school classrooms and this means that the teachers can now teach a bigger number of children. This was mainly targeted at exam classes (in which were students that are to sit for their final national examinations that year). Extra lessons of this sort were done during the school holidays. The use of remedial classes as an income diversifying activity has been reported by both primary and secondary school teachers although there are mostly prevalent in the latter.

This initiative is however reported to have been banned by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary education on the basis that teachers are no longer teaching during normal school times in order to create the need for extra lessons. The other reason given is that it was creating an unequal opportunities to education between the children that could afford going for the extra lessons and those that couldn't. Teachers reported charging between \$15 and \$30 per subject in secondary school while in primary school the prices ranged from \$10 to

\$25. Despite the ban from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary education some teachers are still conducting extra lessons. One of the teachers noted that:

“Extra lessons have been helping us survive as we are getting low wages. The Ministry has however decided to ban the initiative. How do they expect us to survive? I cannot stop doing extra lessons because my life depends on it. These days we are taking few students and we conduct the lessons at home because if you are caught you can get in trouble.” (Male secondary school teacher in a low density area)

Informal trading

Teachers have been involved in informal trading during the time of the crisis. Informal trading has been used a moonlight activity to get additional income. This has still continued even after the dollarization of the economy. Because teachers’ salaries are still not sufficient to sustain the teachers’ livelihoods, a majority of the teachers reported that they were involved in the informal buying and selling of goods. Some of the teachers reported that they are still involved in cross border trading. Just as during the time of the crisis, the teachers use most weekends to travel to neighbouring countries to buy goods which will be sold by other household members while the teachers are at work. One of the teachers reported that

“One way that I have been able to sustain my livelihood is that I am a cross border trader. I was introduced to cross border trading during the crisis but I have not stopped since thing have not really changed for us. I buy electronics and clothes which my wife and children sell while I am here at work.” (Female primary school teacher in a high density area)

Other than cross border trading some of the teachers reported that they bought stationery and break time snacks in town which they resell to students. This is mostly prevalent in schools that do not have tuck shops in the school yard. Teachers take advantage of this and provide the service to diversify their sources of income. One of the teachers said that

“Here we do not have a school tuck shop so some of us sell snack to students during break and lunch time. We also sell stationery like books pencils and pens.” (Female primary school teacher in a high density area)

From the above remarks it can be seen that teachers are still involved in informal trading as a moonlighting activity.

4.4.2 Physical capital

Migration

Migration has been a major coping strategy when people are in vulnerable situations (DFID 2001) and has been one of the major coping strategies that the teachers have been using to cope amidst the above mentioned challenges. In an urban context, migration is mainly done as a way of reducing expenditure (Meikle *et al* 2001). It emerged from the study that many Zimbabwean teachers have also employed this as a coping strategy to increase their accessibility to physical capital. In economic terms, physical capital is defined as a producer good as contrasted to a consumer good. The latter is something that is purchased and consumed for its direct effect on material standards of living; whereas a producer good purchased in order to create a flow of outputs into the future (Ellis 2000). Physical assets include buildings, irrigation canals, roads, tools and machines.

A number of teachers living in Harare have resorted to moving to schools that are near their houses. Housing is often one of the most important assets for urban dwellers, as it is used for productive such as renting of rooms, using extra spaces as workshop areas (Moser, 1998) in addition to shelter (Meikle *et al*, 2001). Most of the interviewed teachers reported owning houses that they had purchased before the economic crisis when teachers’ salaries were good. For example:

“I have my own house in Warren Park which I bought in 1994 when teachers were still teachers not now when you see even a general worker in the private sector gets close to our salary. Even though we have been reduced to nothing I have my house it’s a valuable asset.” (Male primary school teacher in a high density area)

Teachers typically transfer from the districts that they would have been deployed to areas in which they have houses as a way of saving on transport and housing costs. Migration therefore increases the teachers' accessibility to physical capital thus enabling them to reduce on expenditure. For example, Jimmy a secondary school teacher in a high density area said:

“When I joined the teaching profession I was deployed to a rural area. I had to do all I could to be transferred here where I had bought my house. This helps me save because I do not have to rent a place to stay.”

It is worth noting that the major difference between rural and urban schools is that rural schools in most cases provide accommodation for the teachers. Teachers in rural schools thus in most cases do not have to worry about housing and transport. In the urban areas the conditions are totally different with each worker having to find accommodation for their own. The government does provide housing and transport allowance but teachers cut on these expenses in the bid to have additional income from them. Majority of the interviewed teachers therefore live only a walking distance from the schools they are teaching. Even those that did not own a house reported that they had to migrate and relocate their families to areas close to schools that they had been deployed by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. Migration has also involved the reduction of expenditure on transport, as one of the teachers pointed out:

“I have to cut on transport costs so that I can survive. I therefore rent a cottage close to the school that I teach. I cannot afford to buy a house of my own in this low density suburb so had to relocate my family here where I am close to my workplace. I do not own a house so its better I rent somewhere close to the school and save on transport.” (Male secondary school teacher in a low density area)

However in high density areas there were a number of teachers who lived far from the schools and these were mostly women who are married to working partners and can afford to live in middle-income or low density areas. Despite these variations it can be noted that all the teachers expressed the desire to move to schools that are near their homes or to houses near their workplaces. In cases where teachers had not yet moved, this was impeded by the

fact that one would have to find a person to swap with because these transfers are on demand. One teacher is quoted saying that:

“The salaries that we are getting are very low especially when one has to commute to work. In 2012 my husband and I moved from the area that I had been teaching in the past. I had to take two taxis just to come to work. It became very expensive for me because I had to spend about three quarters of my salary just on transport. I was lucky to find someone who wanted to exchange with me because where I was coming from was near to her house. That is how I transferred and I am now working close to my house I walk every day to work.” (Female primary school teacher in a low density area)

Another said;

“I am lucky I work close to my house. At least housing and transport are not an issue for me so I use the housing and transport allowances to cover something else.” (Male primary school teacher from a high density area)

House leasing

As noted earlier houses, as a form of physical capital, can also be used to produce additional income through the leasing of extra spaces and renting out of extra rooms to other people. A number of the teachers, especially those in the high density areas, reported that they rented out rooms to other people in order to diversify their sources of income. These teachers are forced to share their houses with other people so that they can raise additional income required to sustain their livelihood. For example:

“I leased three rooms out of the seven rooms that I have in my house. This helps me get money that I can use to sustain my livelihood and also it helps reduce my expenditure on house rates as I share the water and electricity bills with my tenants.” (Female secondary school teacher from a high density area)

Teachers who owned more than one houses also indicated leasing their other houses has helped them in sustaining their livelihoods. These were mostly female teacher in low density areas who were married to working class men. These teachers also reported that they also

leased their houses to help them sustain their livelihoods. For example, Jika, a primary school teacher from a low density area said that

“My husband and I also own other properties that we acquired before the crisis. We rent out these to other people to get money. The money that we get from these properties actually covers the major share of our total expenditure.”

4.4.3 Natural capital

Natural capital refers to the natural resource base (land, water, trees) that yields products utilized by human population for their survival (Adugna, 2006). Sometimes these are referred to as environmental resources, and are thought of jointly as comprising the ‘environment’ (Ellis 2000). For many scholars natural capital is generally less significant in cities as for most urban residents land and livestock are not important assets (Rakodi, 2002). There has however been a widespread practice of urban agriculture which is often practised on marginal or illegally occupied land in towns and cities (Rakodi & Jones 2002).

In the case of Zimbabwe urban farming has helped many teachers to sustain their livelihoods by diversifying their sources income through selling some of their produce to raise money for basic necessities and as a way of reducing expenditure. People living in Harare have generally and increasingly become involved in this type of farming from the time of the crisis up to now. They typically use open spaces to farm crops like maize and vegetables. The teachers interviewed in this study also reported that they also engaged in urban farming as a survival strategy. For example one of them said that:

“I also practice a little urban farming on a small piece of land. The produce that I get from that land helps me because it reduces my budget on food as I do not have to buy vegetables and maize meal. I grow them on that piece of land. If the harvest is good I even sell the surplus to get more money.” (Female secondary school teacher in a low density area)

Another one reported that

“Urban framing has helped us a lot because I know that the maize that I produce on that small piece of land will help me as I will not buy maize meal for almost

six months. The money that I was supposed to use to buy the maize meal will then be diverted to other uses.” (Female primary school teacher in a high density area)

The pivotal role that urban farming plays in the sustaining of the teachers livelihoods can be seen in the fact that most schools have seen how this type of activity can help the teachers, and thus have given teachers portions of land to farm in the school yard. This practice is mainly prevalent in schools in high density areas. The interviewed teachers in schools located in high density areas reported that school development committees and school administration have actually been using this as a way to incentivise teachers so that they don't move to other schools. James a primary school teacher in high density school remarked that:

“In this school we are allowed to farm in the school yard where it's safe than outside. This has gone a long way in helping me sustain my livelihood because at least some of the food I am producing myself rather than buying. It is very cheap to farm maize for maize meal that to buy the finished product in the shops.”

Judging from such remarks it becomes evident that urban farming is one of the coping and survival strategies that teachers in Harare are using to sustain their livelihoods. Despite the fact that it is done on small pieces of land the teachers reported that it has indeed helped them.

4.4.4 Financial capital

Financial capital refers to stocks of cash that can be accessed in order to purchase either production or consumption goods. This is chiefly likely to be savings, and access to credit in the form of loans. Due to the increased commoditized' nature of cities which increases dependency on cash income (Meikle *et al* 2001) financial capital is mostly constituted by income deriving from the sale of labour. However as discussed earlier, teachers' salaries are low in Zimbabwe as they cannot sustain teachers and their families. This has led the teachers to resort to borrowing money from micro finance companies that have mushroomed in the country. Like most people in the civil service, teachers are being paid below the poverty datum. Thus to adequately provide for their households many have resorted to taking micro-loans. Indeed, these loans have become a well-known coping strategy among the teachers and the majority of those interviewed reported that they were borrowing money so that they would sustain their livelihood. For example:

“I borrow money every time my children want to go back to school. I have two children who are all going to boarding schools. My salary alone cannot manage to send them both to school so I borrow from micro finance organizations and from social clubs that I have joined.” (Male secondary school teacher from a low density area)

Borrowing has been a well-known survival strategy in time of hardships (Adugna, 2006). In this case teachers have been employing it to sustain their livelihoods. However this tends to make the teachers perpetual borrowers as they keep on getting money on credit and thus remaining forever in debt. The majority of the teachers employing this survival strategy reported that sometimes one had to pay two different loans at once as one would obviously take another loan from another institution before finishing paying the other. For example one of the teachers said that:

“ I borrow money mainly at the beginning of the school term so that I can pay my children’s fees and before I finish paying the loan another school term would have begun, in most cases I am therefore forced to take another loan and in the end I have two or more loans being deducted from my salary.” (Female teacher in a high density area)

The teachers also complained of the high interest rates the microfinance organizations are charging. The organizations have been targeting teachers and other civil servants taking advantage of their vulnerable conditions amidst their low salaries. One male secondary school teacher reported that

“Borrowing money from micro finance companies is the last option I employ because their rates are too high. I only go to them when the people close to me do not have money to lend me. The interest rate is too much but sometimes you have no option.”

From the above remarks it can be seen that although borrowing has been a major survival strategy that the teachers have been using to sustain their livelihoods it has also led to micro

finance companies exploiting them thus increasing the teacher's vulnerability in their livelihoods.

4.4.5 Social capital

Social capital is defined as the rules, norms, obligations, reciprocity and trust embedded in social relations, social structures, and society's institutional arrangements, which enables its members to achieve their individual and community objectives (Narayan 1997 in Rakodi 2002). It essentially refers to the social networks and associations in which people participate, and from which they can derive support that contribute to their livelihoods (Ellis 2000). Kutanegara and Nooteboom (2002) revealed that sometimes urban dwellers, particularly the urban poor, maintain strong linkages with the rural areas as a survival strategy. Consistent with this, teachers living in Harare reported getting financial assistance from relatives' outside the country and from the rural areas. Furthermore, through their participation in other community organisations teachers have been able to get some assistance from other people, besides relatives. Assistance ranges from emotional support to financial support.

Rural urban ties

Most urban residents in Africa live in a dual system characterised by two geographically separated but mutually supportive households: one in the urban area and the other in the rural area (Oucho, 1996). Indeed, most of the interviewed teacher reported that they supported and also received some form of support from the rural areas. The teachers revealed that they maintained rural-urban ties because after retirement they will relocate to rural areas. While it is mostly the teachers that reported remitting money and goods to the rural areas they also noted receiving agricultural produce from the rural areas. This agricultural produce received from the rural areas has helped the teachers to supplement their diets and also reduce expenditure on food. One teacher said:

“Every month my family from the rural areas send us bags of maize, peanuts and even biltong. They assist us. I use the peanuts to make peanut butter and we grind the maize to maize meal. Because of them we are able to eat healthy food and also save on food.” (Female primary school teacher in a low density area)

Another said:

“For me I can safely say that I have two households’ one here and the other one in the rural areas because I take care of my mother and my three siblings. I sent them money and cooking oil every month. However they also assist me a lot. When I do not have money to send my children to school, they sometimes sell their livestock and farm produce to help me. So in a way we help each other to sustain our families.” (Male secondary school teacher in a high density area)

Information from these interviews suggests that the social networks that the teachers have with people from the rural areas have been used to raise sufficient income to enable them to sustain themselves despite the challenges they are facing after the dollarization of the economy.

Remittances from outside the country

Due to the high rate of unemployment in Zimbabwe almost everyone in the country has a relative working outside the country from which they receive regular assistance in the form of remittances of money, food, clothes, and in some cases property such as cars. A large proportion of the interviewed teachers revealed that they mainly received financial assistance from relatives in the diaspora. For example Janice a primary school teacher in a low density area said:

“Gone are the days when people used to think that teachers are financially stable and do not need assistance. I get money from my sister who is in the United Kingdom almost every month. It is funny because I am the one who actually sponsored her to go there and used to tell her that she should not send me money. I thought life was even tougher for her that side as she is only working as a domestic worker. These days she sends me money and I cannot even say no because sometimes I will really be in need.”

Janice’s remarks clearly show that remittances from the diaspora also help the teachers to sustain their livelihoods after the dollarization of the economy. Teachers are using the social networks that they have to acquire some other forms of capital that are required for the sustaining of their livelihoods.

Social support mechanisms

Besides receiving assistance from relatives the interviewed teachers reported that they also received assistance from various social and community groups. All the teachers reported that were involved in groups that acted as a social support mechanism in their lives. Social support mechanisms are networks of support that are mutually benefitting that may exist within and between households and with communities which people can call on when in need of, for example, loans, child care support, food, and accommodation (Dersham & Gzirishvili 1998). Most of the female participants reported that they belonged to church groups which they could call on in times of crisis. While these church groups were mostly for spiritual support, the women reported that the groups also acted as an avenue for easy access to loans. Members in these groups help each other financially. As in many cases the groups formed credit clubs which all members make a monthly contribution and the money would be loaned to people who need financial assistance. The benefit of being a member of such a club is that one can access credit at a very low interest rate. One teacher who is a member of such a club explained as follows:

“I belong to the Roman Catholic Church in my area. The benefit of being a member there is that we have formed a credit club which we pay monthly subscription which are then used to loan money to people. As a member I get money there for a very low interest rate compared to if I had gone to a bank or micro finance company.” (Female primary school teacher low density area)

Social networks can be very important assets in sustaining one’s livelihood. While almost all the interviewed female participants belonged to a spiritual group in the form of a church their male counterparts were mostly members of professional and community groups. Teachers in Zimbabwe have formed groups in their areas where they meet and share information of what is happening in their profession. Some male teachers were members of community action groups which seek to change the community for the better. They joined these groups and provided their educational knowledge for the betterment of the community. Another key aspect of social networks is access to information about opportunities and problems for instance information about casual labour markets and other opportunities. According to Jabu a male primary school teacher in a low density area:

“I belong to a community group and while I am not paid for being a member, this group has helped me a lot because when we meet we share idea and our

problems. I actually got a business idea from this group. I now manufacture homemade dish washing liquid of which I got the idea and the formula from this group.”

Jacques, a high school teacher in a low density area, also said that:

“In our cluster we meet very often, we created a WhatsApp group through which we share information on what is happening in our profession and people post adverts for jobs in that group. I was therefore able to get a job for my son and my niece. Now I have other people helping me with taking care of the family.”

The social networks that the teachers have provide them with information that they use to help acquire the required income in order to sustain them. Through community participation the teachers have managed to get the moral support that has enabled them cope with the challenges that they are facing after the dollarization of the economy. In this case the agency of the teachers as social actors at both the individual and household levels, albeit within a set of broader structural constraints look for assistance from relatives and the community. Through social networks people find rational ways to increase what they have in order to sustain their livelihood.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has shown the main socioeconomic challenges that teachers are facing after the adoption of the multicurrency economy in Zimbabwe and the coping strategies that they are using to survive. The next chapter will present a summary of the key findings and will conclude with a section outlining recommendations emanating from the findings.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

The principal aim of this study was to investigate the experiences and survival strategies of teachers in Zimbabwe in the context of low salaries after the adoption of the multicurrency system. The specific objectives were:

1. To examine the main socio-economic challenges that teachers are facing after the dollarization of the economy.
2. To establish how the teachers are coping with the challenges.
3. To illuminate some of the key areas in which in which government may improve conditions and enhance teachers' wellbeing so as to retain them in the education sector.

The livelihood framework was used to provide an understanding of the assets that the teachers have or lack access to, and how this impacts on sustainable livelihoods. In addition the teachers' short-term and long-term coping strategies in the post-crisis period were explored. Gaining an understanding of the resources the teachers have or lack, and how they pool these resources together to reduce risk and to enhance their well-being is vital before any intervention which attempts to make their livelihood productive and efficient can be developed and implemented. The overall key findings are summarised in the next section.

5.2 Summary of Findings

While it can be argued that the dollarization of the economy resuscitated the teaching sector, the overall finding of the study is that a little has changed in terms of the teachers' living and working conditions. Teachers are still faced with a number of challenges which force them to employ short-term and long-term survival strategies in order to sustain their livelihoods. While the challenges that the teachers are facing may not be new, the dollarization of the economy in 2009 has presented the challenges in a different form which required a new set of coping strategies. The findings show that centre to the challenges that the teachers are facing is the issue of access to livelihood assets like money and infrastructure. Following is a summary of the main socio-economic challenges the teachers reported to be facing as well as a summary of their coping strategies.

5.2.1 Main socio-economic challenges

The reintegration of the teaching sector brought about by the adoption of the multi-currency system did not completely address the challenges that the teachers were facing. Rather it reproduced the challenges in a new dimension. The findings reveal that the main socio economic challenges that the teachers are facing include poor salaries, poor living conditions, poor working conditions, demotivation, and restricted career growth paths. It can be noted that these are the same challenges that have been theorised in the teaching sector during the economic crisis. The low salaries, for example, that the teachers are receiving are not sufficient to sustain their livelihoods. Their monthly expenditure exceeds the salaries they get. Low salaries mean that the teachers have limited financial capital to sustain their livelihoods and efforts to confront the government for better wages and working conditions have not paid significant dividends as the treasury insists on bankruptcy (Kapingidza 2014).

Due to the poor remuneration, the teachers are generally living under poor conditions and most have been forced to reduce their expenditure on basic commodities so that they can sustain their livelihoods. It also emerged that the government's struggle to fund the education sector and its continuous reliance on donor funding (Mapolisa and Tshabalala 2012) has seen working conditions in the education sector deteriorating. The underfunding of the sector has also led to the deterioration of the infrastructure in schools as well as the shortage of teaching and learning resources like books. These conditions are making it difficult for teachers to efficiently do their work, and have been described as being physically and emotionally demanding for the teachers. The situation has been worsened by the pulling out of major donors who had been funding the sector (Kapingidza 2014).

The teachers also reported limited career growth as another challenge that they are facing. They seem to be stuck on senior teacher positions as the government has frozen promotions in the field. In cases where one is moved up the hierarchy they only move to occupy the positions on an acting basis. In general the teaching sector has little room for promotions.

In light of the above challenges Zimbabwean teachers are generally demotivated. The conditions in the teaching sector have generally reduced the zeal in teachers to do their work. This finding is consistent with other studies on teacher motivation (Chireshe and Mapfumo 2003; Nhundu 1999; Id21 education 2009). Poor teacher motivation has also led to a fall in the academic standards of the education system of the country (Chireshe & Shumba, 2011).

5.2.2 Coping strategies

In light of the challenges that the teachers are facing after the dollarization of the economy, it emerged that teachers, as people who are able to monitor their own thoughts and activities as well as their physical and social contexts, have developed routines enabling them to deal with their social and economic lives efficiently. A salient finding in this regard was that the teachers have generally reduced their expenditure and diversified their sources of income as coping strategies. The teachers also look for assistance from friends and rural-based relatives as a way to increase what they have in order to sustain their livelihood. Through the reduction of expenditure and diversification of the five identified forms of capital—human, physical, natural, financial, and social—the teacher have been able to sustain their livelihoods. It should however be noted that because of the differences in social characteristics between the teachers they have access to different types of capital but overall the livelihood strategies that each teacher is using is shaped by a combination of the assets available to them and contextual factors which determine the availability of these assets.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the overall study findings it can be noted that most, if not all, of the challenges that the teachers are facing since the dollarization of the economy point to one conspicuous causal factor: lack of resources as a result of the collapse of the economy. This lack of resources has also influenced the types of livelihood assets accessible to the teachers. While the adoption of the multicurrency economy may have brought hope in the re-composition of the education sector it has not managed to bring a complete turnaround of things as teachers are still faced with a number of challenges. It is against this backdrop that the following recommendations may be useful in resuscitating the teaching sector in Zimbabwe.

5.3.1 Teacher's remuneration

One of the major challenges that the teaching sector is facing in Zimbabwe is that of poor salaries for the teachers. The study reveals that teachers feel that they are getting a raw deal from the government and are frustrated by a paltry salary. The government should prioritise addressing the remuneration concerns of teachers as the repercussions of this frustration will be felt by the students. Teachers are not content with the value being placed on their profession and service delivery. While the most important form of reward is money because of the goods and services it can buy, and because of how it symbolises an employee's worth, the government can use non-monetary benefits like, housing stands and subsidies on fees for

teachers' children to compensate teachers. Tangible compensation also consists of rewards that carry symbolic value in that they convey to people how much they are valued by their employer (Magaramombe, 2003). This can be useful considering that the government insists on bankruptcy as the reason behind the low salaries.

5.3.2 Working conditions

Evidence from this study clearly reveals that the working conditions in the teaching sector are still poor even after the dollarization of the economy in 2009. Initiatives to improve the working conditions of teachers should thus be put in place. While poor infrastructure in schools mainly affects the students more than the teachers, the same infrastructure is also part of the physical conditions on teachers' workplace. It is thus important that teachers are provided with good working conditions by improving the infrastructure in their workplaces. The government should consider initiatives that seek to improve infrastructure development and reconstruction in educational institutions. Schools should have proper learning and teaching facilities like classrooms, specialist rooms and accommodation for teachers. Partnerships should be formed with international stakeholders to provide the resources for the various structures required by schools. Improving the infrastructure in educational institutions will ensure that the physical conditions and mental demands of the workplace are conducive for teachers to carry out their work effectively.

5.3.3 Teachers motivation

The findings reveal that the challenges that the teachers are facing have resulted in the demotivation of teachers. Education is a fundamental human right and there is no effective learning that can take place without motivated teachers (Mapolisa and Tshabalala, 2014). Teachers' dignity needs to be restored as demotivation can result in low standard of education. It is therefore, important that the government work together from those organizations that promote children's rights so that they can mobilize resources not only for instructional materials for learners, but also for motivating and retaining quality teachers so that children/students, who are their targets have access to education as a basic human right.. With the aid of donors the government could pay teachers an incentive so as to motivate them. This mechanism worked in 2009 when the teachers were given a USD100 allowance to return to work so this could be another solution to the demotivation of teachers after the dollarization of the economy. Accelerated promotions and manpower development can be used to improve teachers' motivation.

5.3.4 Interviews with teachers' unions

As stated in Chapter 3, time and budgetary constraints did not allow the rescuer to interview any teachers' unions in the country. However unions would be an important source of information of the macro perceptions of the teachers' situation in the post hyperinflation Zimbabwe as well as a good source of plausible recommendations. Future research in this field should therefore aim to engage official from the two leading teacher unions in Zimbabwe, namely the Zimbabwe Teachers' Union (ZIMTA) and the Progressive Teachers Union in Zimbabwe (PTUZ) to ascertain their views on teachers experiences post 2008.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter concluded the entire study by re-visiting the research objectives as well as summarising the salient findings. Recommendations from the findings have been presented as a contribution to debates about policy development in the field of study.

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Appendix 1: Interview guide

An exploration of the livelihoods and coping strategies of urban teacher post-economic crisis Zimbabwe 2009 -2015

Interview guide for teachers

Background characteristics

- a. Type of school**
 - 1) Primary
 - 2) Secondary
- b. Location of school**
 1. Low density
 2. High density
- c. Sex**
 1. Male
 2. Female
- d. Age in years -----**
- e. Marital status**
 1. Married
 2. Never married
 3. Widowed
 4. Divorced
 5. Co habiting
- f. Highest teaching qualification**
 1. Certificate
 2. Diploma
 3. Degree
- g. Number of years living in Harare-----**
- h. Number of people in household -----**
- i. Income bracket (monthly)**
 1. (\$350- \$400)
 2. (\$400-\$450)
 3. (\$450-\$500)
 4. (\$500- \$550)
 5. Other

Teaching career

1. How many years have you been in the teaching profession?
2. What is your current teaching post or position?
3. Overall what would you say attracted you to the teaching profession?
4. In general what can you say have been the major benefits and challenges of your teaching career? Why do you say so?

Probes: working conditions, salary etc.

Expenditure and purchasing patterns

5. Can you please describe the general monthly expenditure for your household?
6. What proportion of your income would you say you spend on food, transport and accommodation?

Income

7. Apart from your own salary, are there any other means of income for your household? Kindly explain more.

Probes: partners' salary; remittance from the diaspora; moonlighting activities, rental income etc.

8. Would you say your total household income is sufficient to cover your household's main monthly needs? Why/why not?

Probe: what would you say are your major shortfalls?

Livelihood challenges before and after the economic crisis.

9. In your opinion what are the major differences in your income and livelihood experiences now compared to before the 2008 economic crisis.

Probe: what were the major challenges before the crisis? What are the major challenges now? Was it better before the crises or after? Why?

10. Explain how you sustain your livelihood as teacher amidst the challenges that you have mentioned?

Rural-urban ties

11. Do you receive any form of support from your family or relatives in the rural areas or elsewhere in the country? Please explain.

Probes: what type of support? How often?

12. How, would you say this support is important for your livelihood?

Community participation

13. Do you participate in, or belong to, any community organization? (Like church, women's or men's group).

Probes: What would you say are the main benefits from your participation in the organization?

14. Is there any kind support that you receive in the community participation that help you sustain your livelihood? Please elaborate.

General questions

15. What do you think can be done to address the challenges that teachers are facing after the economic crisis?

Thank you for your time

Appendix 2: Consent form

Consent form

My name is Everisto Bakasa, (student number 14285054) I am a student in the department of sociology at the University of Pretoria. As a partial requirement of my studies I am undertaking a study on the livelihood experiences of Zimbabwean teachers after the dollarization of the economy. The objective of the study is to investigate the experiences and survival strategies of teachers in Zimbabwe in the context of low salaries that were brought by the adoption of the multicurrency system. The study will examine the main socio economic challenges that teachers are facing after the dollarization of the economy and establish how the teachers are coping with the challenges.

As part of the study I am requesting your written permission to conduct an interview that should last no longer than an hour, to assist me in gathering the information described above. In addition we would be grateful for your permission to audio tape the interview. However any information you provide in this interview is going to be kept strictly confidential. The gathered information is going to be used only for the purposes of writing the dissertation. The research will not link any data or discussion to research participants.

Please understand that you not being forced to take part in this study and the choice whether to participate or not is yours alone. However I would really appreciate if you share your thoughts. You may withdraw your participation at any time you so wish there are no negative consequences.

There are no anticipated personal risks attached to participating in this study. There will be no compensation for participation.

Consent

I hereby consent to participant in the research on the livelihood experiences of Zimbabwean teachers after the dollarization of the economy. I understand that I am participating freely and without being forced in any way to do so. I also understand that I can stop this interview at any time should I not want to continue and this decision will not in any way affect me negatively.

I understand that this is an academic research project.

I understand that my answers will remain confidential.

.....

Signature of participant

.....

Date

I am willing for the interview to be audio taped.

.....

Signature of participant

.....

Date

Interviewer's signature:

Date:.....