A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF FACTORS HINDERING A-LEVEL STUDENTS WITH HIGH PASSES TO ACCESS UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN ZIMBABWE.

BY

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THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN
EDUCATION

TO

ZIMBABWE OPEN UNIVERSITY

SUPERVISOR: PROF L.T. NYARUWATA

NOVEMBER 2017
ABSTRACT

The study sought to investigate factors hindering increased access to higher education in Zimbabwe. The study was prompted by the increased number of A-level graduates who are failing to get the opportunity to university education yet higher education is the driver to knowledge creation, knowledge generation and innovation. The study employed the qualitative methodology informed by the interpretive philosophy. The case study design was employed in this study. Purposive sampling was employed to select information rich cases who in this case are A-level students who were pursuing teacher training in colleges and dean of students of colleges and universities. Open-ended questionnaires, semi-structured interviews focus groups and document analysis were the data generation tools. For data presentation and analysis, the constant comparative method was employed and themes were generated. The major findings of the study were that high achieving students are training as teachers yet they have points that qualify them to go to university. Policy issues, economic challenges, culture, gender and discrimination emerged as issues hindering potential students’ access to university education. The study concluded that there are barriers hindering Advanced-Level high achieving students’ access to university. In view of the conclusions above, the study recommends that educational policy on access to universities, be interpreted and implemented holistically. It is further recommended that the government avail funds and resource materials towards access to university and more information on access be disseminated to schools through, radios, newspapers and workshops. From the findings an emergent model has been crafted to illuminate haze ideas on how to increase access to university education in Zimbabwe.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to give all honour to the Lord Jesus Christ for His grace and mercy for giving me the strength and wisdom to complete this study. I owe exceptional gratitude to my supervisor Professor Nyaruwata who guided me tirelessly to write this thesis. My sincere thanks go to all tertiary institutions that participated in the study.

This study got strong support from the advice provided by many people and special thanks to all the Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU) employees who encouraged and supported me and these were; Professor P Mupa Dr R. F. Gutuza, and Professor M. Kurebwa. Special thanks go to Dr A.Chikasha who communicated throughout my research. Last but not least I thank my dear wife Ruth, for believing in my capability and for the typing services and following the ZOU technical ways religiously. May the Almighty God bless you all abundantly.
DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my dear wife Ruth.
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ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS

A-LEVEL… ADVANCED LEVEL
AIDS… AQUIRED IMMUNO DEFICIENCE SYNDROME
ATR… AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGION
BC… BEFORE CHRIST
EFA… EDUCATION FOR ALL
GCE… GERNERAL CERTIFICATE IN EDUCATION
H.I.V… HUMAN IMMUNO DEFICIENCE VIRUS
MDG… MILLENIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL
NGO… NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION
NUST… NATIONAL UNIVERSITY SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
UNESCO… UNITED NATION SCIENTIFIC CULTURAL ORGANISATION
USA… UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
U Z… UNIVERSITY OF ZIMBABWE
UK… UNITED KINGDOM
W B… WORLD BANK
WW II… WORLD WAR 11
ZANU PF… ZIMBABWE AFRICAN NATIONAL UNION PATRIOTIC FRONT
ZBC… ZIMBABWE BROADCASTING COOPERATION
ZOU… ZIMBABWE OPEN UNIVERSITY
ZBC… ZIMBABWE BROADCASTING COOPERATION
CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

1.1 Background

Advanced-level certificate holders with very high passes are training as teachers in Zimbabwe yet their passes allow them to go to university. The researcher is a lecturer at Nyadire Teachers College and lectures in the Department of History and Social Studies. Apart from lecturing the goes for teaching practice in Mashonaland East Province and Harare District to supervise student teacher trainees. The researcher got an opportunity to interact with these student teacher trainees from different teachers colleges and this is where the researcher discovered that there are Advanced- level certificate holders with 6 to 14 points who are training as teachers to teach at primary school level. It is out of this brief background that motivated the researcher to explore factors hindering increased access to university education in Zimbabwe. The point is not that Advanced -level certificate holders should not train as teachers, but that these students with Advanced levels certificate holders are not being developed to their full potential. This research therefore sought to investigate what is driving these Advanced - level high achieving students to train as teachers rather than going to university. University education is the cornerstone of nations and is a critical component in the development of any nation in this global village. University education gives man critical thinking and a clear conscious view of their own opinions and judgements. Without university education it is difficult to find the truth and to discard what is irrelevant.

Morley (2003), agrees with the above observation by pointing out that a university is without doubt central to the acquisition and production of knowledge that shapes the contemporary
world. It is sad to note that in Zimbabwe, there seems to be many factors hindering access to university education. Advanced level high achieving students are the cream of the crop of any nation and they should go up to university and take up their desirable choices (Banya 2001). Is it by choice or circumstances that A-level high achievers are training as teachers at Nyadire Teachers Colleges? It is a genuine fact that by introduction of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) access to university may be increased in Zimbabwe.

Dyanda (2016:2), points out that:

There is a vicious cycle of the shortage of STEM graduates in the system. The problem of non-availability of science and maths graduates in the economy, universities and secondary education and overall incapacity to support industrialization has been long standing. The continued shortage of these graduates is likely to unscramble the industrialization policy, if it continues to be unabated.

Instead of wasting these Advanced-level high achieving students, massification of STEM in primary and secondary schools should therefore be done to ensure that high Advanced level achieving students will have a strong foundation to go to universities and be involved in STEM for the development of the nation.

Zimbabwe is a developing country that desperately needs an educated workforce not only from High School Students but from university graduates. According to the Zimbabwe School Examination Council of 20 January (2016), a total of 41 653 Advanced-level candidates registered and sat for examinations. Out of the 41 653 candidates, 28 510 passed with grade E or better. These figures do not include the June examinations. This becomes an issue because our universities are not able to accommodate them all.
Table 1.1. A Three year analysis of Advanced- Level examinations outcomes

<table>
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<th>YEAR</th>
<th>A-Level candidates who sat for exams</th>
<th>PASSED</th>
<th>ACCESSESSED UNIVERSITY</th>
<th>ACCESSED TEACHERS COLLEGES</th>
<th>FAILED TO ENROL</th>
<th>TOTAL %AGE OF THOSE WHO ENROLLED AT UNIVERSITY</th>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>39 133</td>
<td>25 291</td>
<td>8 121</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>17 000</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>38 873</td>
<td>28 510</td>
<td>8 000</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>2 000</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>41 655</td>
<td>28 570</td>
<td>10 000</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>18 000</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>109 661</td>
<td>82 551</td>
<td>26 121</td>
<td>1 700</td>
<td>55 000</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVERAGE</td>
<td>36 553</td>
<td>27 517</td>
<td>8 707</td>
<td>566</td>
<td>14 330</td>
<td>29%</td>
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From the above diagram, a total number of 109 553 set for their Advanced-level examinations. This occurred for a period of 3 consecutive years from 2014 to 2016. Those who passed the examinations were 82 551 out of 109 553. Those who enrolled into universities were 26 121 and 1 700 enrolled into teachers colleges respectively. A large number of 55 000 A-level high
achieving students failed to enrol into universities. Conclusively it can be noted that, in a period of three years, 29% of the Advanced-level candidates managed to go to university and 71% of the total number who passed the Advanced level exams did not have access to university education in Zimbabwe. The above statistics did not consider the June Advanced-level examinations.

From the above observation it can be argued that there is too much waste in terms of human and financial resources especially when the majority of Advanced-level high achieving students fail to enrol into universities in Zimbabwe. This study looks at the fundamental issues affecting access to university education and the possible ways of mitigating these challenges to ensure our education system keeps up with international standards, and thus produces well equipped graduates. Access to university is critical for the development of the nations. University education should be open to all people who can meet the requirements of admission. There is need to research on access to university because graduates from universities are the drivers of national development. Access to university education for Advanced-level high achievers can be any issue because minimum entry qualifications in colleges and polytechnics are 5 O levels including English and Maths. This next section will then elaborate the importance of university education globally.

1.1.2 The importance of university education

Throughout history, as nations have developed from medieval traditional societies to the industrialised nations, that they are today, university education has been very instrumental in driving that development (Kariwo 2011). University education adds value to society, serving as both a public and private good because it has potential to benefit the individual (Morley 2009).
The importance of university education on the development of society cannot be underestimated; it really becomes an economic growth to the community while providing individuals with personal benefits. University education is essential to generate and establish productive citizens (Bowen 2009). University education provides paths for individual and communal development; it raises individual awareness of societal issues and often serves as a strong source of research that can be used to address relevant issues of nations.

Furthermore, university education is very important because labour markets demand workers who have strong critical thinking and interpersonal skills (World Bank Report 2007). What is needed is that higher education should be transparent and credible internationally and enable students and labour mobility. In this context there is need for rethinking on quality and improvement in higher education and revisit institutional autonomy, so as to absorb high Advanced- level high achieving certificate holders into universities and avoid wastage of potential nation developers.

Access to university education plays a pivotal role in human development for high advanced skills for national development are acquired at university. Eyiah (2004) commented that university education is an important ingredient for the development of any nation. The Social Affairs Working Group Seminar in Ghent (2007) posits that higher education is a mirror of society in the sense that it reflects the culture, values and identity of a nation. From the above authors’ views it is clear that when a nation widens its access to university education it has preserved its culture, values and more important it can exploit natural resources for the benefit of its citizens. Furthermore, the seminar affirmed the fact that university knowledge is power. The
implication is that without knowledge obtained in university education institutions, a nation cannot have the power to solve its problems and run its affairs well. It has been observed that an educated individual is better positioned than that person who does not have any university experience (Gordon 2003). A university education could play a vital role in the social well-being and success of people in today’s society. Spayed (2000), and Sutton Trust (2008), agree that society stands to derive the following benefits from higher education; equity and social cohesion, democracy, economic growth as well as increased level of health in the society.

The researcher’s opinion is that university education should ensure that the values and ideals of a culture prevail and that the intellectual community should be mobilised to that end. University education can bring a lot of significant changes in society through the enhancement of its quality and relevance, and the solution to the major challenges it faces. This requires strong involvement of all stakeholders not only of governments and university education institutions, but also students and their families, teachers, business community, industry and both public and private sectors of the economy. Therefore it is the desire of every nation to widen access to university education. The next section looks at access to university in a global perspective.

1.1.3 Access to university education: A global perspective

University education in Europe and United States of America (USA) dates back to the 13th century. Larsen (2003) states that these universities are national institutions with skills, equipment and have the mandate to generate new knowledge through research. University institutions house the think-tanks who are capable of solving social, political and economic issues affecting the nation. The above observation is supported by Sweetman (2000), who claims that access to university, is designed for underrepresented groups in university education. The
above research which was carried out in Ireland motivated the researcher to investigate the increased factors hindering access to university education in Zimbabwe.

Berger (2000) concluded that in the United Kingdom fair access to university education is provided. Fair is taken to mean equal rates of making applications to receiving offers of admission into universities from those who are equally qualified to enter them. The situation in Zimbabwe is different because those who qualify for university education are competing to train as teachers at colleges which require Ordinary level passes as minimum entry qualification. Although this is not wrong but both time and resources to go for A-level would have been wasted. In the UK the rate of participation in university education has increased dramatically from 5 percent in the 1960 to around 40 percent to date (World Bank 2002). Important to this research is the work of Moyo (2015), who points out that university graduates with first degree passes is below 7 percent of the entire population in Zimbabwe.

Albatch (2006) also observed that in USA the university access policy gauge the extent to which a child’s merit can be identified. In USA academic performance is separated from poor or wealth background of the student. This is done by identifying capable students and they are given both financial and emotional support. The above scenario is important to this study because most studies on access to university were done in western countries but this study on factors hindering access to university was done in Zimbabwe. The evolution of university education represented profound national changes. Bowen (2009), observes that The USA Government invested a lot of money in science and university education. The mission of universities added the discovery of knowledge to the formerly dominant task of teaching and the curriculum expanded exponentially. New disciplines were added at a very fast pace that reflected
not only growth but a fundamental shift in the epistemological underpinnings of intellectual life. The role that university education played in USA life shifted as well (Amara 2003). Although in 1900 the percentage of Americans with university degrees was still small, the 19th century witnessed struggles for access (at least to nominal levels) by various groups of students (Lihamba 2006). Perhaps the most contested achievements in access were the beginnings of integration and co-education, when African Americans were granted admission (Bowen 2009). Both groups’ experienced modest growth before the Civil War, the number of students grew steadily in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Drewry and Doermann 2001). Solomon (1985), observes that the Morrill Act of 1862, land-grant state colleges like Michigan were hailed as the most democratic institutions in American higher education. With the moniker “democracy’s colleges” (Eddy 1956; Nevins, 1972; Ross 1942), the land-grant and state colleges, perhaps more than any other sector of higher education, social classes in the late 19th century were imbued with the possibility of levelling the social classes. This becomes a point of departure worth analysing in relation to the Zimbabwean situation on access to university.

It is clear that there are many students completing upper secondary (Advanced- Level) education who are eligible for university education, but do not have access to it. Developed countries have high university access while those that are underdeveloped seem to have low access to university education. UNESCO (2010), gives the following statistics on access to university. North America and Western Europe 70%; Central and east Europe 64%; Latin America 38%; Asia 25%; Arab States 20% and Sub-Saharan Africa including Zimbabwe 4%. This indicates that financial resource constrains pose a serious challenge to university education (Smith 2006). It is
very critical to analyse the level of development and this may highlight the importance of access to university education in Africa and Zimbabwe.

University education is meant for first class brains and they are in most cases capable of inventing, generating, creating, innovation and scientific discoveries. According to UNESCO (2012), and UNICEF (2010), the ratio of students studying abroad is interesting with the following statistics: Comoros 100.8%, Sao Tome and Principe 90%, Lesotho 45%, Namibia 42% and South Africa 3.1%, Canada 2.3%, France 20%, Germany 3.8%, Italy 1.5%, United States of America (USA), 14% and United Kingdom (UK) 12.7%. Marawayika (2009), adds on to say that Zimbabwe had 23 606 students studying abroad whereas South Africa had 5 411, Zambia 4.983 and Mozambique 1 788. In fact cross border, education can be viewed as an important option to compensate for limited access and skills at home. In Southern Africa, Zimbabwe has a large number of students studying outside this could indicate that there is need to widen university education in Zimbabwe. The next section will focus on access to university education in Africa.

1.1.4 Access to university education in Africa.
1.1.4.1. Ghana, Botswana and Malawi as examples

University education in Ghana has recently seen remarkable growth in various frontages, this is a result of widening access, participation, expansion of academic facilities and transformative policy environment that has led to the growth of private sector participation and innovative funding approaches to increase the financial sustainability of universities (Mama 2008). The researcher decided to study the Ghana University System because it was also colonised by
Britain. Universities in Ghana have become attractive to students from other countries, particularly Sub Saharan Africa (Daniel 1997). Public universities in Ghana are internationally recognized in terms of the quality of programmes offered which are, teaching, research, and knowledge transfer. Several public universities have well-developed international programmes and partnerships with leading institutions such as Harvard, Yale, and Princeton, giving more credibility to their academic programmes (Geiger 2006). However, in spite of these overwhelming developments, there remains an inequality in the university education system in Ghana. Access has not been broadened to include all social groups including those from poor socio-economic groups (Bloom 2006). Policy document from the Ministry of Education (MOE), and the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) (2010), in Ghana and academic research reports concluded that the authors provide descriptive and critical analyses of university education disparities in Ghana. The authors provide a brief anatomy of the university education in Ghana, followed by a descriptive examination of the various levels of inequalities that have persisted in the system with particular reference to access and participation disparities based on students’ socio-economic status and gender based disparities. It has been observed that those students from poor economic background do have a difficulty in accessing university education.

Ghana was the first country to become independent in Africa on 6 March 1957. British relinquish its control over Gold coast just like in Zimbabwe in 1980. The above information is relevant to this study because we can draw some similarities and differences. University education in Ghana dates back to the early 1940s when Mr Justice Asquith was appointed by the British government to investigate the principles that would guide the establishment of universities in the Colonies in 1943 (Daniel 1997). This study compared the structures of the first country to be independent in
Africa and that of Zimbabwe. The position of Ghana’s standing on university access and a comparative analysis on access policy to university education was done in this study of factors hindering access to university in Zimbabwe.

University education in Ghana over the past decade has witnessed growth in various fronts such as increased access and participation, relative expansion of academic facilities, a growing private sector, and most importantly, a transformative policy environment. Effah (2011) pointed out that in 2008 Ghana denied all applicants to university education. UNESCO (2012) agrees with the above by saying that the strict selection led to lack of places to access university education. The above situation is costing Ghana a lot of talent as well as money when the Advanced-level high achieving students are leaving the country to study outside Ghana. Mayer (2008) observes that one of the biggest problems in Ghana is the missing link between the needs of the labour market and that of the university sector. A large number of protagonists of this view agree that in order to enrol at university you need to pass entrance tests examination. The Anglophone West African countries like Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone Nigeria and Gambia, developed similar standards among students finishing high schools. Nidiffer (2004) purports that only 5% of the relevant age group goes to university in Ghana. Such a number is very low compared to developed countries. Ghana has large inequalities despite huge wealthy. In Ghana not all Advanced-level high achieving students who fulfil all the requirements may get a place at university but the most determining factor is the ability to pay fees.

Available data suggests unequal participation among women and individuals from low socioeconomic backgrounds, and spatial-based disparities (UNESCO 2003). Enrolment data
from universities, policy document from the Ministry of Education, and the National Council for Tertiary Education in Ghana, and academic research reports, provide descriptive and critical analyses of the structures of inequalities and disparities in university education in Ghana (Morley and Ganawardena 2006). The above scholars argue that in spite of the massive developments over the years, there exist accessibility and participation gap with respect to students’ socioeconomic status, gender, regions of origin, and the type and location of high schools attended (Daniel 1997). It is against this background that the researcher seeks to explore the barriers hindering Advanced –level high achieving students to attain university education in Zimbabwe. The next sentences are going to look at the situation in Malawi.

1.1.4.2. Malawi

Malawi was colonized by Britain. Its educational problems are similar to those of Zimbabwe (Banda 2010). University education in Malawi is ultimately controlled by University of Malawi which was founded in 1964 (World Bank 2009). SADC Protocol (1997), carried out a research in Malawi and commended that with all the challenges facing children, only the very few will ever make it to university. Teffera and Altbach (2004), found out that as of 2000 only 1 % of Malawi’s population was enrolled in university education. Malawi has low access to university and will continue to depend on expatriate skilled labour far into the unforeseeable future that is if it does not widen access to university. Kunere (2002), support the above by stating that high school education in Malawi is provided by the government as well as privately. Education in Malawi is not free to students they pay tuition fees and this is a very big barrier to university education. The following section is going to discuss on access to education in Botswana.
1.1.4.3 Access to University in Botswana

Botswana is different from Zimbabwe because it never introduced mass education. As a result it does not have much pressure from Advanced – level high achieving students. Botswana’s first educational reform was called Education for Kagisano (Zvobgo 2004). This philosophy guided the country’s educational development and administration from 1977 to 1993. The Revised National Policy on education in Botswana (1994), conclude that the country witnessed significant improvement in socio economic through the review access and strategies for Botswana’s educational development. Mullen (2010), points out that, 30,000 students sit for national examinations each year. However, less than one third proceed to university in Botswana. Sekile (2010), says about 9% of 30,000 leave the country to study abroad and their main destinations being Russia and China. Important to this study is that Zimbabwe is also having low access to university education. The government’s call to industrialisation through STEM is one of the holistic and sustainable way of probably breaking the cycle of low access to university education in Zimbabwe. The idea of STEM was introduced as a milestone of access to university education (Dyanda 2016).

1.1.5 Development of University Education in Zimbabwe

The Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education Science and Technology Development (2001), stated that the number of universities increased from one in 1990, to more than eight full-fledged universities. The University of Zimbabwe was the only university in the ten provinces of Zimbabwe (1980 -1990). However, there are now more than twelve universities that include, the National University of Science and Technology, Great Zimbabwe, Chinhoyi University, Africa
University and many others. The Zimbabwean government is credited for achieving a literacy rate of over 90%, however university education access is still very low close to 6% (Moyo 2015). The issue of access to university for Advanced-level achieving students is a thorn in flesh. There is adequate evidence that the majority of Advanced-level high achieving students are not proceeding to universities in Zimbabwe. Therefore the researcher in this study feels there is a very big gap that need to be closed when it comes to access to university education in Zimbabwe. Mahere (2014), acknowledges that very little has been done on access to university education in Zimbabwe. Obviously not all Advanced-level high achieving students can go to university but factors that hinder access to university for higher Advanced-level achievers should be investigated and minimized.

Despite the undoubted importance of the university education personnel, little is known about these graduates from universities. It can be anticipated that few graduates from the universities are seeking greener pastures outside the country, leaving the country with a large number of people without skills that could not revive the economy. Important to this study is that these universities in Zimbabwe should offer programmes that are relevant to Zimbabwe. Ncube (1993), further reveals that students from peasant farming backgrounds were heavily under represented at the universities. The question to be probed in this study is that why are these Advanced-level high achievers not motivated to access university education? Zimbabwe is a unique case because it has widened secondary education yet university education is not fully expanded to absorb all Advanced-level high achieving students. It is very important in this study to interrogate these Advanced-level high achieving students to hear their concerns and interpretation of the present situations they are facing.
Mandaza (1987) supports the above ideas when he states that education is seen as a major weapon for providing a politically conscious nation, aware of and devoted to the promotion of the welfare of citizens. To support the above observations, it is important to have a flash back on the colonial government from the 1930s onwards. European education was superior to that of Blacks. Access was given to White children from primary to university level (Kapungu 2007). The Rhodesian Government viewed its education policy as an important aspect and tool to protect interests. The reason for carrying out this research is to draw lessons from the previous successive colonial governments. This information is important to the nation if we are to make headway in terms of development. The colonial university education supported the white minority students yet the post university education in Zimbabwe, secondary school students out number universities available (Zvogbo 2014).

European schools had talent identification; those gifted in practical subjects were sent to vocational training institutions. Those who were above average would have access to universities. The Blacks were denied access to university education by various structures and factors while the white minority was supported to pursue their studies. The above is explained by Pikari (1989), who says that at this level, facilities for white education were designed to compare favourably with the highest British standards. Ncube (1993), comments that if the government is to gain and develop it must be prepared to lose first by providing grants and scholarship to Advanced-level high achieving students, individual families cannot entirely meet the university expenses. For any country to develop it needs scientists, inventors and innovative workforce. This information can enhance our understanding on the importance of access to university
education in Zimbabwe. Even if the government provides enough structures that increase access to university, the Advanced- levels high achievers need to have positive attitude for university education.

Kariwo (2011) observes that if education is to play a significant role in development universities should be able to train its members who are competent to assume key managerial, administrative, technological and professional responsibilities. These can be in the public and private sector of the economy. The role of university education is to respond to problems and seek solutions through research.

When access to university education is increased from Advanced-level high achieving students to university education chances are it eradicates poverty, unemployment, brain drain, neo-colonialism and dependency from developed countries. Zimbabwe is facing quite a number of challenges and access to university could address some of the societal needs. Moyo (1993), points out that during the industrial revolution; Britain was facing serious problems just like Zimbabwe. The European countries, including Britain, solved their social political and economic problems by investing their money in science and university education, leading to the industrial revolution (Giddens 2004). It can be concluded that Britain, Germany, France and USA developed an integrated economy through increased access to university education. Significant to the above observations is that European countries increased their access to universities and as a result, their pace of development increased fast. It is the hope of this researcher that the stakeholders in education are going to increase access to university education in Zimbabwe. In conclusion Zimbabwean government has adopted a positive stance to widen access to university education by the introduction of STEM. The concept of STEM is relevant in this issue of access
to university because it is encouraging Science Mathematics Technology and Engineering to our A level high achieving students. The government of Zimbabwe is seriously supporting the A-level students doing science and mathematics by paying tuition fees for them. The following section discusses the Zimbabwean situation in relation to access to university education.

1.1.6 The Zimbabwean situation and access to university education

Moyo (2015) observes that on literacy rate, more ground work is needed in Zimbabwe. According to the *Sunday Mail 20 December* (2015), while Zimbabwe has achieved 92.4% national literacy rates, only 7% of the 8 million people who are above the age of 15 years have tertiary education. In support of the above, Moyo (2015), presenting his statement at the ZANU-PF 15th annual conference in Victoria Falls, further added that only 6 per cent of the entire population has undergraduate degrees. Barely half a million people in the country have attained higher qualifications. Dokora in *The Sunday Mail* of 18 October (2015), pointed out that we have a very sound education foundation and it is because of that foundation that Zimbabwe boasts of the 92.4% literacy rate. Related to this study is the fact that literacy rate is high but access to university is still low. Moyo (2015), points out that the breakdown of Zimbabwe’s literacy figures is telling Zimbabwe that there are some access weaknesses which have been over looked by the government of Zimbabwe. Kwaira (2015), supported the above notion by saying that while the 92.4% per cent literacy rate is a good achievement, it represents those who can only read and write. Ability to read and write is good for a nation but the message is that university graduates are capable of developing and inventing new inventions.
Dokora in The Sunday Mail of 29 January (2016), stated that those who attained primary and secondary education stand at 81%, those with university education are only 7%. Those with undergraduate degrees are only 6% while those with master’s degrees are only 2% out of the population. Those with Doctorates (PhDs) are only 5000, that is 0.06 % of the entire population in Zimbabwe. Dokora (2014), declares that the number of primary schools in the country has grown from 578 in 1980 when the country attained independence to the current 10 187. Enrolment in universities has also grown from 1.6 million in 1980 to 4.1 million in 2014 (Zvobgo 2014). Access to university plays a very key role in the development of every nation. The government of Zimbabwe is beginning to respond to the issue of access by developing an academic access policy for massification of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)( Moyo 2015).

Furthermore, Nziramasanga (2014)suggests that Zimbabwe’s education system has a complex history, starting from a colonial system that divided education along racial lines. Zvobgo (2014), states that on attaining independence most African countries found themselves landed with an education system that needed extensive surgery in order to turn it into a tool that served the needs and aspirations of the majority of the people. However, new policies were introduced soon after independence in 1980 to redress the past. The most significant outcome was the unprecedented increase in student enrolments in the first two decades of independence at high school level. This affected access to university because the country had not yet established universities that could absorb as many A- level high achieving students as possible.
This expansion produced other consequences and side effects such as reduced levels of resources at educational institutions and overcrowding. There were a shortage of books and other necessary educational materials. Nonetheless, the quantitative result is that Zimbabwe has the highest literacy rate in Africa. Zvobgo (2004) explains that after 1980, Zimbabwe reformed its education system to meet its goals. The above is supported by the Education Act of Zimbabwe (1996), which declares that every child in Zimbabwe shall have the right to school education. Thus, in their academic journey, students consider reaching university education as their target. University education is almost the panacea to socio-economic development and provides the individual with the mental treasure to generate knowledge. People who are capable of driving the economy and the country’s development are university graduates (David 2009). Too many Advanced-Level graduates with high passes are not going to university (UNESCO 2000a).

If the government does not address this abnormality, it means the government itself, the parents and the students are wasting both time and resources because Zimbabwe will remain underdeveloped. The expansion of primary and secondary education could be in tandem with university access. The above scenario has compelled the researcher to interrogate barriers hindering access to university education in Zimbabwe. In Zimbabwe entry qualifications required to access university education are two Advanced-level passes with grade E or better. Nziramasanga (1999) states that admission to university is based on merit with reference to (GCE) and Ordinary level grades. These students end up taking programmes not of their choice due to factors that hinder access to university education. The Manica Post of 8 April (2010) points out that there are a lot of Advanced-level students certificate holders who are roaming the streets yet they qualify to go to university. When the researcher was interacting with students
teacher trainees on teaching practice and in colleges, he observed that most of the students would have liked to study at universities because they have points that qualify them to enrol at the university.

It appears as if these student teacher trainees are becoming teachers by default rather than choice or qualification. The driving factor of this study is the quest to understand if their presence at colleges is out of their preference, or there are other hidden factors. Some of these teachers college students’ trainees are the ‘cream of the crop with at least nine to fifteen points at Advanced-level in Sciences. The general trend has been an increase in the number of Advanced-Level graduates with high passes who are enrolling in teacher’s colleges and polytechnics instead of universities. This raises questions as to why they do not enrol in universities. It is precisely this question that this study seeks to explore.

The establishment of the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1957 was the first-ever colonial government initiative toward providing university education in Rhodesia. Access to university education was determined more by racism and discrimination rather than the academic abilities of individuals. Very few Africans were admitted to university education. A negligible proportion of about 0.2% of all African students who were academically qualified for university education were rigorously denied access to university education (Mandaza 1987). The Zimbabwe Sunday Mail 5 May (2011), concur with the above statement by saying that before 1980, enrolment at the University of Rhodesia was less than 1000. By 1985 the number rose to 2000, the university population reached 8 000 by 1995 and 10 139 by 2001. It is interesting to note that when Zimbabwe got its independence in 1980 education was widened however; this did
not mean increasing access to university education by all capable A-level high achieving students.

For a period of ten years, 1980-1990 Zimbabwe was operating with only one university showing that access to university was not being addressed satisfactorily by the existing educational policy. It is a paradox to note that Dokora, Zimbabwe minister of Primary and Secondary Education in The Sunday Mail of 1 January (2015) states that Advanced- level results showed that the pass rate for females was 83.78% compared to 80.83% for males. The total number of Advanced- level candidates for November (2014) examination was 39 133 of whom 25 291 obtained a Grade E or better in two or more subjects. Zimbabwe’s universities are capable of absorbing not more than 8000 students per year (Nziramasanga 1999). This research did not even include the June Advanced- level exam statistics. Important to this study, is the work of Mlahleki (1995), who mentions that, massive expansion of high school education did not correspond with access to university education. Research has shown that for the 19 universities in Zimbabwe, their intake is below 1000 per intake each. Therefore, statistically 25 000 Advanced- level achieving students each year is quite a large number. It is through a sound university education access policy that Zimbabwe can pull out the problems facing it. Ho (2007), states that if we are to remedy these mistakes in our education system we must be very realistic.

Banya (2001) concluded that human resources are the most valuable assert of any nation, for they are the primary motivating forces behind all socio- economic and technological development. However, the quality of human resources is a critical element in the ability of any nation, not only to master, harness and utilise the physical environment but also to develop
survive and prosper in the competitive and dynamic world of tomorrow. Without graduates from universities, natural wealth cannot be converted into goods and services that satisfy the needs of the society (Zvobgo 2004). The following section is going to examine Russia on access to university graduates and then link it to the Zimbabwean situation.

1.1.7 A comparison of Russian education and the Zimbabwean education

A case in point is that of Russia, which by 1927 was a very backward country to the extent of using wooden ploughing tools. The researcher used Russia because it managed its affairs by widening access to university education for its high achievers from high schools. Russia has 53.5% of its population with university education which turns to be one of the highest proportions and is also one of the most developed countries globally. Russia’s industry had surpassed that of Britain, France and Germany combined together and was starting to overtake that of USA by 1953 (Grioux 2002). Russia made a remarkable achievement in terms of development. Russia is significant in this research because it reformed its access to university such that Russia’s university graduates were sent to study for further studies abroad on condition that after completion they returned home. Access created quality exchange programmes with other universities. Zimbabwe has done this by sending out students to many universities under the presidential scholarship facility this however was a small number. It is also important to appreciate that in 1952 Russia had reached the moon, it invented the atomic bomb, the biggest hydroelectric power station in the world and a tractor manufacturing company. The above is supported by Pickering (1965), who observed that the Russian government refused American aid. This probably was a sign that Russia did not want to depend on donors from outside.
By 1950, the balance of power between Russia and America was more even. The above statement can add value to the thesis because Russia was able to utilise and develop its human resources and natural resources. Russia did not have colonies abroad to collect raw materials from and it never received western financial aid. However, Russia like Zimbabwe has plenty of natural and human resources. Zimbabwe is gifted with more than 54 key minerals which are critical for world development. Zimbabwe has plenty of water in terms of rivers like Zambezi, Limpopo and Pungwe but lacks university graduates who can put these into functional and profitable services. These natural resources in Zimbabwe could benefit the nation and the global world when there is a sound home grown educational system that could enable students to have access to university education. A nation cannot develop with mere primary and secondary education because they are only capable of memorising and remembering of ideas and facts (Mbani 2005).

The student scores the number of points that qualify him or her for university education and end up training as a teacher at diploma level yet he/she qualifies to train at degree level. Teaching requires’ O’ level candidates as a cut-off point to train as teachers (Nziamasanga 2014). Some of the A-level high achieving candidates are crossing the boarders to work in farms and mines in South Africa while others go to seek for university education, yet when they complete their studies outside they might follow Russian example. However those from Fort Hare University who are under the presidential scholarship and they are bonded are returning home soon after completion of studies abroad (Nziramasaenga1999). The next section discusses on development of university education.
1.1.8 Gender issues and access to university

Justice and Legal Affairs Minister Patrick Chinamasa in Zvogbo, (1998), highlighted that female student enrolment in Zimbabwe universities was nearing 40% compared to the early 1990s when enrolment figures where somewhere in the region of 25%, this is a welcome development. Recently in 2010 they rose to 49%. However; much still need to be done to break both the privileges and the disqualifications brought about by gender and provide both sexes equal opportunities for learning and personal development. Early marriages, negative parental attitudes towards female education, Sexual harassment and abuse as well as lack of funding have been some of the factors that have contributed to the high attrition rates of females in universities.

In the last two decades there has been an increase worry about equity in access to university education. Mandaza (1987) observed that there are very few females who enrol in university education due to low female enrolment at the primary level of education in Zimbabwe. Some can argue that ZOU is enrolling large numbers for university education, ZOU is not enrolling A-level high achieving students coming direct from high schools but it is developing mature students and this is one of its mission statements. Altbach (2009) further confirms the idea by explaining that several studies concluded that the average male enrolment is higher than the female except in Africa. Across the world there has been marked progress in terms of school participation and greater gender equity in education. However access to university education by females continues to pose many challenges.

White (2005) studied on gender equity in Cape Town and found out that there were few females in faculties. Most studies which have been carried out in developing countries have tended to
concentrate on gender inequalities in education at the primary and secondary levels. Very few studies have been carried out on gender in relation to access to university education by A level high achieving students. All this provides a point of departure by analysing factors hindering increased access to university education in Zimbabwe. Ho (2007), points out that most female students are mainly enrolled in sectors such as nursing and teaching, thus there is need to promote female A-level high achieving students into university education.

Lumumba (2004) observes that gender inequality in university education is a reflection of the broader societal structural inequality. In Africa, hindrance to access university education can be attributed to external factors such as colonialists and internal chances made by African policy makers. Thus according to Bloom Canning and Chan (2005), enrolment rates in university education are by far the lowest in Zimbabwe. This is affecting the Zimbabwe A-level female high achievers. However, Morley (2005), tend to differ when he mentions that there are some improvements in the enrolment of female students in some private higher education institutions in Zimbabwe but the representation in public institutions is still low.

Garbarino (1992) pointed out that gender equity is an end product expressed as addressing parity between women and men in the quality of work. Sorhaindo (2006) has it that the structured inequality gives rise to different unequal experiences which in turn affect children and adults in their aspiration, abilities and achievements. Gender differences start from the moment of birth. Therefore, the next section focussed on factors that hinder increased access to university education on a global perspective.
1.1.9 Factors that hinder increased access to university, education a global perspectives

Hadzizi (2006) explains that traditional African religion has been identified as religion. In Ghana and Togo the traditional religious practice (trakos) among the Eves tribes is an obstacle for girls to attend university education. The next section looked at gender and poverty.

1.1.10 Gender and poverty

Mbani (2005) states that women and girls are most affected by negative effects of poverty. Poverty in Sub Saharan Africa contributed to about 70% of the population living between the poverty datum line and most girls are withdrawn from school, due to various reasons. According to Gordon (1994), in the early society women were not exposed to the outside world. They could do chores like housekeeping and care giving which are restricted at home. The next section focused on the statement of the problem.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

A-level students with high passes are witnessing a period of relative neglect and are not being developed to their capability. Dyanda (2016) has it that Zimbabwe is at 92% literacy rate. Such an evaluation could be misleading if taken at face value. Moyo (2016) mentioned that access to university education is less than 6% in Zimbabwe which is significantly very low. This is indeed a profound challenge. The fact that A-level graduates, some of whom are quite astute and gifted fail to enter appropriate institutions for their knowledge acquisition in desired areas troubles the mind. Most A-level graduates are constrained and coerced by the situation prevailing in the country to enter institutions such as teachers colleges which would be a mismatch as these A-level high achievers are capable of performing more mental challenges and tasks than those at
teachers colleges. Zimsec report of (2014 to 2016) provided us with a three year examination for a total number of 109,553 set for their A-level examinations. This occurred for a period of 3 consecutive years from 2014 to 2016. Those who passed the examinations were 82,551 out of 109,553. Those who are enrolled into universities were 26,121 and 1,700 enrolled into teachers colleges respectively. A large number of 55,000 A-level high achieving students failed to enrol into universities. The lower sixth candidates enter A-level institution with the desire to go to University and raring to go, yet at the end of the odious two year course they fail to access places at universities. This is truly a case which may frustrate such valuable resource which is rendered useless after a long academic pursuit for many years. The A-Level examination is a crucial benchmark in our education system and serves as a gate-keeping device for entry into university (Shisha 2011). Over 30,000 students sit for A-Level examination each year and less than 14,000 qualify to enter into university (Kariwo 2007). Based on these figures, it is estimated that Zimbabwe has many A-level high achieving students annually who qualify but fail to attain university education. The next section looks at the purpose of the study.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to interrogate factors hindering Advanced-level high achievers from accessing university education in Zimbabwe.

1.4 Research questions

1.4.1 How do access policy issues influence university education?

1.4.2 To what extent does the socio-economic status of Advanced-level high achievers influence access to university education?
1.4.3 How do gender issues affect access to university education?

1.4.4 In what way do cultural and societal values influence access to university education in the Zimbabwean context?

1.5 Assumptions of the Study

Any student who passes A-level examination is capable of attaining a bachelor’s degree at university. Furthermore, the researcher assumed that the research participants were willing to contribute helpful information that should help in improving the strategies to counter the challenges which hinder Advanced-level students with passes to access university education.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study could contribute to literature on factors hindering increased access to university education in Zimbabwe. Findings could contribute towards crafting education policies that could increase access to university education by Advanced-level high achievers. The researcher hopes that the study will assist deans of students, policymakers and university institution’s administrators. The deans of students would be able to know the barriers that affect students at their institutions. Policymakers would revise their policies when it comes to entry requirements. Other stakeholders could know the importance of university education in Zimbabwe and could increase participation.

Findings of this study could hopefully develop information which could contribute towards reducing factors contributing to low access to university education in Zimbabwe.
The study is of particular significance to academics and researchers as it has some empirical evidence that may be useful to the debate on access to university education. The research attempted to create a new thinking on strategies to alleviate challenges faced by Advanced-level high achieving students. This thesis was important to me because it enlightened me on the importance of access to university education globally.

Furthermore, the study could promote further studies on the topic especially when readers interact with the thesis. The researcher also believes that this study shall bring awareness to administration members and students on the need to participate in university education. In addition, the study could encourage members of administration within university institutions to formulate or implement policies that seek to promote access to university education, especially enhancing the current STEM initiative. The next section looks at the delimitation of the study.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study
This study focused on why Advanced-level high achieving students lack access to university education. On geographical delimitation the researcher limited to studying 6 tertiary institutions 3 institutions were in Mashonaland East Province and other 3 were in Manicaland. Mashonaland East was accessible because the researcher is a lecturer at Nyadire Teacher’s College. Manicaland was conducive because it is the researcher’s home area. The study focused on universities and higher tertiary institutions in Zimbabwe. Both critical theory and citizenship education were employed. The focus of this study was on factors hindering increased access to university education in Zimbabwe. The study employed qualitative research approach and interpretive paradigm. The following section looks at the limitations of the study.
1.8 Limitations of the Study

The study faced some limitations which are as follows:

A) Reluctance by participants to give information on politically related push factors, and

B) Fear of victimization and loss of jobs if they exposed some sensitive matters.

The researcher dealt with the challenges by way of explaining the purpose of the research to the participants. The researcher also produced letters of permission to carry out a study from the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Technology and Development as well as Zimbabwe Open University. The next section shall looks at research methodology.

1.9 Research Methodology

This study used the interpretive paradigm. It mainly focused on the importance of the researcher’s perspective and the interpretative nature of social reality. This research focuses on qualitative methodology. The qualitative methodology tends, to be based on the recognition of the subjective life world of human beings and description of their experiences in depth (Patton 2002). The population for this study consisted of students and members of administration at six tertiary institutions in Zimbabwe, namely, three universities and three teachers colleges. The sample of this study was composed of deans of student and students themselves. The participants were selected through purposive sampling. The data generation instruments were open ended questionnaire, in depth interviews, focus groups and document analysis. The participants in this study are deans of students, Advanced-level high achieving students and students with high points at Advanced-level. The researcher derived the emerging themes from responses of the participants. Details are given in Chapter three. The next section focuses on definition of terms.
1.10 Definition of Key Terms

The words defined below were used contextually in this research.

Access

It is admission or admittance. It is a passage of entrance (Collins Dictionary 1999). Access to university education means that obstacles that prevent anyone from taking advantage of the opportunities should be removed.

Gender

Sifuniso (2000) defines gender as the social meaning given to being either a man or a woman in a given society and the expectations held as to the character, attitude and likely behaviour of men and women. Gender, unlike sex, which is biological, influences the different behaviours, roles, responsibilities, identities and treatment of males and females in the society. Gender depends on the culture and history of a particular society and differs from culture to culture.

Gender Bias

Meyer (2008) defines gender bias as unequal treatment in employment opportunity and expectations due to attitudes based on the sex of an employee or group of employees. Gender bias is a preference or prejudice towards one gender over the other. Therefore, gender bias can be defined as unfair treatment of men and women because of their gender. Liu (2006) says gender bias occurs when people make assumptions regarding behaviours, abilities or preferences of others based upon their gender.
Barriers

Barriers are factors, conditions, situations and circumstances that hinder access to university education (Collins 2008). Barrier is a barricade or a block. It is a blockade or an obstacle. It is a limitation, a hazard, hindrance, restriction or a stumbling block.

A state

Hyden (2006), View a state as a legal entity; it is a territorial unit which claims within its allotted physical area of supremacy over all institutions including universities.

Citizenship

Bhebhe (2001), Points out that citizenship may be defined in terms of residence or birth or based on religion. In this context these citizens need education which is relevant to them. Therefore citizenship education provides norms, values and attitudes that enhance Ubuntu or Unhu.

Government

It can be a spokesperson of the state. A government may be defined as machinery through which the aims of the state are carried out (Collins 2008). Access to university policies are crafted by the government. The government is responsible for infrastructure, planning and manpower that provide skills to the nation.

Justice

Plato 1992 declares that justice is that equality of rights and rewards which must be maintained. Justice in a state consists of each part performing its proper function well. High achieving A-level students should be given an opportunity to obtain university education. That is if the students desire to enrol in university. The next section focuses on summary.
1.11 Summary

This chapter highlighted the context of the research problem. It examined the background to the study. It then looked the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions that guided this research, assumptions of the study, significance of the study, delimitations, limitations, and definition of key terms. The selected methodology was also highlighted. The next chapter focuses on exploring the review of related literature on access to university education.
CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to highlight and discuss work of other scholars and relates it to this study of factors contributing to low access to university education in Zimbabwe. In this chapter literature is explored. Major issues included conceptual framework, access to university issues and importance of university education. Access to university in States like Japan, China, Denmark, Australia and United Kingdom was examined in this chapter. In Africa access to university in Ghana, South Africa, Malawi and Botswana was examined. Related literature on the hindrances to university education was also examined in the Zimbabwean context. Social-economic issues, gender and discrimination issues that hinder university access by Advanced-Level high achievers were examined. The related literature review serve to position the present study on how it contributes, advances, refines, or revises what is already known on factors that hinder increased access to university education by Advanced-Level high achieving certificate holders.

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How do access policy issues influence university education in Zimbabwe?
2. To what extent does the socio-economic status of A-level high achievers influence access to university education in Zimbabwe?
3. How do gender issues affect access to university education in Zimbabwe?
4. In what way does discrimination influence access to university education in the Zimbabwean context?
The next section discusses the conceptual framework on the concept of access to university education.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

2.2.1 The Concept of Access

Access to university education according to Angell, Heffeman and Megicks (2008), implies making it possible for everyone who is entitled to education to receive it. Thus this study was undertaken to find out the factors hindering increased access to university education in Zimbabwe. The idea behind this research is to eradicate these hindrances in future by exposing these factors to stakeholders in university education. An encompassing definition by UNESCO (2003) is that access to university education ensures equitable access to university education based on merit, capacity, efforts and perseverance. This definition is considered by UNESCO (2009), very central to post-secondary opportunities for underrepresented groups such as indigenous peoples, cultural, ethnic and linguistic minorities, immigrants, refugees, the disabled and women (UNESCO 2009). It considered issues in life-long education learning that can take place at any time with due recognition of previously acquired skills through opportunities for adults retraining for the workforce. Additionally, school dropouts and second-chance learners are also central. Equity on the other hand implies that all segments of the society get their fair share of access to whatever educational opportunities are provided (UNESCO 2009).

According to Altbach (2009), proportion of adults who desire university education is still rising. These people have much to contribute to the development of society. There is no doubt that universities have a vital role to play in promoting skill training and national development and in recent decades the international education community has discussed the implications of
university education and access (Bai 2006). Emphasis of this research is however placed on the Advanced-level high achieving students who are facing various challenges in accessing university education.

2.2.2 The Concept of Gender equity

Gender equity is a process of achieving fairness and justice among men and women. The fairness and justice is in relation to distribution of opportunities, responsibilities and resources as well as in accessing university education and controlling benefits and resources (Mukonyera 2007). Gender equity entails proportional distribution of social resources and services as well as proportional representation. Rathberger (2003), Sawyer (2002), and Mbani (2005), are of the view that gender equity leads to gender equality. Gender equality means there is the same valuation of men and women in society, sameness of enjoyment of rights, power opportunities, treatment and control of resources between males and females in society. Therefore, the next section looks at the concept of higher education.

2.2.3 The Concept of Higher Education

Higher education is a post-secondary education. In Zimbabwe it is a third level education and is an optional stage of formal learning. Higher education occurs after secondary education. Higher education is often delivered at universities, academics seminaries and institutes of technologies and among others. In Zimbabwe higher education is mainly delivered at universities, colleges and polytechnics (Paul 2010). The right of access to higher education is mentioned in a number of international human rights instruments. In Europe Article 2 of the first protocol to the European Convention on human rights adopted in 1950 points out that there is a right to higher
education. Robins (2005), says that the term higher education was used when a few pupils progressed beyond primary education. However, today higher education includes medical schools, dental schools, social work services and research among others. After the Second World War most developed countries increased participation higher education. Developing countries are also increasing. Higher education is very important to the nation’s economics. The next section focuses on the concept of gender.

2.2.4 The Concept of Gender

Gender refers to human traits linked by culture (Haralambos and Holborn 2004). Within a society, males are socialised to be masculine and females are taught to be feminine. To understand the term gender, it is essential to first understand the term sex as these two terms are often confused and sometimes used interchangeably. According to Barrow (2005), sex refers to the division of humanity into biological categories of male and female. As a biological distinction, sex is determined at the moment a child is conceived. Sex is also defined by Dorsey (1989), as the biological difference between men and women, that is, their physical characteristics and external genitalia. According to Haralambos and Holborn (2004), sex is a fact of biology, which is the physiological distinctiveness or ‘state of being male or female.

Sifuniso (2000) defines gender as the social meaning given to being either a man or a woman in a given society and the expectations held as to the character, attitude and likely behaviour of men and women. Gender, unlike sex, which is biological, is socially constructed. It influences the different behaviours, roles, responsibilities, identities and treatment of males and females in
Gender depends on the culture and history of a particular society and differs from culture to culture. According to Meyer (2008), gender bias is the conscious or unconscious preference towards a certain sex.

Meyer (2008) defines gender bias as unequal treatment in university, opportunity and expectations due to attitudes based on the sex of the students. Gender bias is a preference or prejudice towards one gender over the other. Therefore, gender bias can be defined as unfair treatment of men and women because of their gender. Liu (2006), has it that gender bias occurs when people make assumptions regarding behaviours, abilities or preferences of others based upon their gender. The understanding of the gender concept helps us to understand the unequal relations between men and women. It helps us to understand how female oppression is constructed and perpetuated in society.

Since terminology such as gender, gender equity and equality, and women empowerment features frequently, the basic definitions of these concepts are furnished below. Gudhanga (2010) stated that the conceptual distinction between sex and gender was developed by Anne Oakley in 1972. According to Guba (1989), sex is connected with biology, whereas gender identity of men and women in any given society is socially and psychologically determined. The 1995 Commonwealth Plan of Action on Gender and Development defines gender as that socially defined or constructed differences between women and men that result in women’s subordination and inequality in opportunities for a good life. Both definitions simply imply that sex is biological while gender is socially constructed.
As Shinder (2014), explains that there is a significant relationship between the female sex and feminine gender, and the male sex and masculine gender. This is to mean that the biological distinction between female and male also affects the socially accepted roles and responsibilities. For instance, society often attaches caring and nurturance roles to women. Moreover, there are activities only women can perform, such as breastfeeding. Mangella (200) mentions that gender equality means both equality of treatment under the law and equality of opportunity. However she elaborated that such definitions usually do not take structural inequality into account, but rather include substantive equality and equality of agency.

Mbani (2005) describes substantive equality by suggesting that the different circumstances and characteristics of men and women have to be considered to avoid unfair gender-related outcomes, while equality of agency means ensuring that both women and men can make strategic life choices for themselves and help determine the conditions under which these choices are made. In particular, oral communications, gender equality and equity are often used interchangeably. Some authors have attempted to accord distinct meanings to these terms. According to Gwirai (2010), gender equality refers to sameness or uniformity in quantity, amount, value and intensity of provisions made and measures implemented for women and men. On the other hand, gender equity is doing whatever is necessary to ensure equality of outcomes in the life experiences of women and men. David (2009) is of the view that gender equity is an end product expressed as attaining parity between women and men in the quality of life, academic, and work outcomes valued by our society without limitations associated with gender stereotypes, gender roles, or prejudices. UNICEF (2008), views gender equity as an approach
that aims to redress severe gender gaps and disadvantages by taking specific affirmative measurements through programmes, policies and projects.

Muller (2000), points out that on the occasion of 2005 Women’s Day, the former UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, was quoted as saying that sixty years had passed since the founders of the United Nations inscribed, on the first page of the UN Charter, the equal rights of women and men. Since then, study after study has taught us that there is no tool for development more effective than the empowerment of women. Thus this study aims at exposing the challenges faced by A-level high achieving students with high points. Therefore the next section seeks to explore the origins of gender inequalities.

2.2.5 Origins of Gender Inequalities

Men seem to dominate women in accessing university education, job places as well as in business and this could be a result of men having more access to university education than women. In the earliest phase of societal development, which Engels (1971) called “savagery and barbarism,” gender and inequalities favoured women rather than men. There was division of labour by sex and men produced food. Private properties in the olden days were simple tools like utensils and traditional weapons. Private property was passed down to children through the female linage not the male.

A good example is Malawi today women in Malawian culture are the head of the families. Since women gave birth there was no doubt about the offspring they belong to women and so women passed on property to children. According to Angell (2014), and Bloom (2005), it was during the
period of barbarism that women suffered a historical defeat. Men gained the upper hand when
animals were domesticated and it became an important form of private property. Meat and
animal products became crucial parts of the economy of early societies. Men gained
responsibility for controlling livestock and were unwilling to pass this important property passed
down to the female lineage (Garborino1992). Through domestication men overthrew the
dominance of women in the household. In order to ensure they could identify their own children,
men increasingly put restrictions on women’s choice on sexual partners. The above is related to
this study because those with property and power and education tend to control those without.

Engels (1971) calls this phase a period of civilisation. Polygamy was established because men
had gained control over what was now the patriarchal family. Education is power and men seem
to have been vested with this power by exposing themselves to university education more than
women. Important to this study is that women are more than men yet less powerful the gap
between access to university education can be the source of power for men. Men and women
were equal but at earliest times there was division of labour by sex, in most societies some
women were excluded from hunting and risky tasks, such as raiding and warfare. However, only
pregnant women had these restrictions placed on them. It was social convenience rather than
biological necessity. The significance of this research is that in most societies in Africa men had
more chances of going to school and because of that they got jobs and they had means to survive.
In the last two decades there has been an increased worry about equality in access to university
education. Mukonyera ( 2007), observed that there are very few females who enrol to university
education due to low female participating in high school Muijis (2011), further confirm the idea
by explaining that several studies conducted showed that the average male enrolment is higher than the female.

Access to university has made a remarkable progress in terms of participation and greater gender equality in university education (Shinder 2014). However access to university education by females continues to pose many challenges. White (1998), studied gender equity in Cape Town and he found out that there were few females in faculties. Most studies which have been carried in developing countries have tended to concentrate on gender inequalities in education at secondary levels. Very few studies have been carried out on gender in relation to university education by Advanced-level high achieving students. According Nyandiya (2002), most female students are mainly enrolled in sectors such as nursing and teaching thus there is need to promote females Advanced-level high achievers into university education.

According to Lumumba (2008), gender inequality in higher education is a reflection of the broader societal structural inequality in Africa. Hindrance to access to university education can be attributed to external factors such as colonialists and also internal chances made by African policy makers. According to Bloom Canning and Chan (2005), enrolment rates in university education Africa are by far the lowest in the world. This is also affecting the Zimbabwe A-level female high achieving students. However, Kweiga (2006), differ when he mentions that, there are efforts to address gender inequity in accessing university education. The following section discusses the Theoretical Frame Work of the study.
2.3 Theoretical Framework

The research was informed by Critical Theory. This Theory was first developed by Maxhor-Kheimer of Frankfurt School of Sociology, Germany, in 1937. It is a social theory oriented towards critiquing the changing society and it seeks to understand and explain phenomena (Plato 1992). Maxhor-Kheimer observed that, the theory seeks to liberate human beings from circumstances that enslave them. The use of epistemological distinction which was introduced by Herbermas (1971) sheds light to the significance of university education in Zimbabwe. Herbermas’ critical theory is a theory of society with practical intention. The self-emancipation of people from oppression enables the people to make history in a more self-awareness manner (Gintis 1976). Thus, the interest is in creating knowledge which allows one to control natural processes and maintain communication.

Herbermas (1997), Horkheimer (1989), and Adu (2006), concur that Critical Theory is a form of hermeneutics knowledge, via interpretation in order to understand why Advanced-level high achieving students are facing access challenges to university education. The above theory is in agreement with Alex Honneth (1976), who says that human development can be achieved by free communication, recognition and respect. The aspect raised by Honneth (1976), is critical. Animals do not engage in dialogue and discourse since they do not recognise and respect each other and as a result they do not develop since time immemorial. University education promotes communication, recognition and respect and these features distinguish man from animals. According to Honneth (1976), there is a struggle for recognition based on the need for self-esteem. There is self-confidence, which brings in love and friendship. Honneth (1976), claims that security, freedom and respect these are ingredients of development that cannot be absent in life. The above theory relates well with accessibility to university education because increased
access to university education enhances freedom, recognition, respect, confidence, love and friendship.

Herbamas (1997), Horkheimer (2004), and Smith (2010), agree that critical theory is rooted in the theory of cognitive and social psychology. Advanced-level high achieving students desire to enter university not for security and economic reasons, but also for recognition, respect and freedom in the society (UNESCO 2009). The community produces students and universities process these students and bring out skilled graduates. These graduates in return come back to the community and develop economically. Education, according to this theory is not only for economic gains but can be for self-esteem and self-actualisation. Critical theory has developed through a number of distinguishable phases. As a result of this concern on student access to university education, it becomes a central issue and subject to study. This theory underpins this study because university education involves critical thinking which brings respect and recognition in the society. Having looked at the above the following passage focuses on citizenship education.

Critical Theory is in agreement with citizenship education theory because both theories emphasise emancipation of human beings through access to university education. In the classical Greek definition of citizenship education, it is a model of rationality that guides the society (Adelman 2009). Education was designed to educate the citizen for intelligent and active participation in the civic community (Giroux 2004). Therefore, universities were seen as training grounds for character development and emancipation, economically and socially (Kariwo 2008). Citizenship education is very essential for preparing the young people for challenges and opportunities of a
changing world especially for the Advanced- level high achieving students. It is about enabling people to make their own decisions and to take responsibility for their own lives in their communities. It is more than a subject if taught very well, its skills and values will enhance democratic life for all of us. It begins at university and radiate out.

Through citizenship education the young develop confidence and they successfully deal with significant life challenges. It gives them a voice in the life of their school, in their community and society at large (UNESCO 2008). They make positive contribution by developing expertise and experience needed to claim their rights and to understand their responsibility and preparing for challenges and opportunities of adult working life. This theory is linked to this study of increased access to university education for Advanced- level high achieving students because citizenship education promotes good and responsible citizens

Citizenship education in Zimbabwe is very critical because universities are the providers of values, norms and culture. Through such education the student’s behaviour is shaped and moulded as they grow. Issues like patriotism, unity, co-operation and hard work are enhanced by citizenship education (Bordo 1997). This study links well with citizenship education because universities transmit norms and values. Plato (1992), sums it by saying that the common good is understood by those who are educated. Hence the critical theory and citizenship education are relevant to this study because universities provide knowledge and skills for Advanced- level high achieving students in Zimbabwe. The next section therefore discusses the importance of university education.
2.4 The Importance of University Education

University education plays a very important role to individuals, communities, nations as well as the global perspective. The importance of university education can be judged from the way it benefits a person financially, emotionally, socially, as well as intellectually. Giroux (2002) declares that university education represents an aid for the growth and development of the students and a key for a better life. University education can contribute to the creation of ideal citizens, who help in keeping a peaceful society (Bai 2006). Therefore, in this study it is imperative to understand how the government of Zimbabwe crafts and implement university policies that widen access to Advanced-level high achieving students. University education is very important because the students when they are enrolled in universities, they are away from their families, this makes them independent, and thus, they learn how to be on their own. During the university years, the students have the right attitudes they learn and study, the scope is unlimited. They can increase their knowledge by reading lots of books or by attending the lectures given by the experts in the fields Povel (2012). Another significant aspect of university education is that with globalisation taking place, the job market has become even more competitive. Giddens (2004), points out that a person not only has to compete for a job with the people from his own community or country but also with the people who migrate from other countries. Graduates from universities are able to fit and adapt to any situation. Thus a university degree is the key to a better life.

Mbami (2005), observes that people who are well educated and well paid are more likely to live fulfilled lives. They make better partners, parents and employees. They believe in following the societal norms and seldom indulge in anti-social behaviour. Educated people are more tolerant of
other people and thus help in keeping the society peaceful. Higher standards of living, peace, and
good family life all these things help in strengthening the country as a whole.

University education contributes to social and economic development through major missions
which are A, The formation of human capital and B. The building of a knowledgebase.
University education plays a critical role in societies because it can enhance better life and can
reduce crime rate. University education is important in the sense that it produces frontier
thinkers capable of solving societal problems. It is therefore, critical that access to university be
widened and quality be enhanced. The next section therefore seeks to explore quality in
university education.

2.4.1 Quality in university education
University programmes must produce quality graduates for marketability and must be hinged
on quality through a good policy access to university. It is the duty of the government to craft
access policies which are competitive favourable and of high quality in order to produce
marketable university graduates (Cross 2008). Furthermore, Campbell (2008) notes that at the
Bergen meeting of May 2005, ministers adopted the Standards and Guidelines for Quality
Assurance in the European University Education. These standards and guide lines were designed
to be applicable to all university education institutions and quality assurance agencies in Europe.
Significant to this study is the issue of quality university access that widens access to university
as well as providing quality graduates who are marketable in the knowledge economy of today.
Access to university promotes mutual trust while respecting diverse national and institutional
contexts and subject areas (Geiger 2000). Over the years, various developments have taken place
relative to the assessment, monitoring, and improvement of the quality of different components of university education its governance, its contents, its forms of pedagogy and the services offered (UNESCO 2008).

Morley (2004), observed that quality assurance as a concept which was introduced in Romanian university education with Government Emergency Ordinance no. 75/2005 and subsequently regulated under Law no.87/2006. The existing legislative framework refers to two major objectives of quality assurance: quality control and quality enhancement. The literature is relevant in this study for flashing out factors hindering access to university education because quality control and access enhancement are significant to both graduates and institutions of higher learning. Geiger (2006), agree with the above by declaring that the law on quality assurance No. 87/2006 introduced a series of legislative changes by means of which the concept of quality was rendered endogenous, that is, assumed by university education organizations rather than imposed from the outside including Zimbabwe.

In this context Zimbabwe can also enhance such laws in access and quality to university education. David (2009) concurs that the introduction of the institution of internal quality assurance, which materialised in the establishment of quality evaluation and assurance commissions (CEACs), was a fundamental initiative. Consequently, two basic principles were instituted: internal quality assurance and assuming the latter at the level of educational organizations and peer-review-based processes for purposes of external evaluation (Smith 2006). It is, therefore, relevant in this research that access to university education need to consider quality and access to universities in Zimbabwe. Quality in university education is a
multidimensional concept which should embrace all quality functions and university activities; teaching and academic programmes, research and scholarship, staffing, students, buildings, facilities, equipment, services to the community, and academic environment (vanGinkel and Rodrigues Dias 2007). In this research study it also important for our universities in Zimbabwe to aspire to have quality universities. The next section looks at the role of access to university education.

2.4.2 Access towards University Education in Zimbabwe

Zvobgo (2014) observes that most governments adopted a segmented approach on pre-defined stages and levels without viewing the education system as a whole. From the above observation, Advanced-level certificate holders with high passes are facing a lot of challenges to be enrolled into universities in Zimbabwe. There is no connectedness from Grade One up to university level. There is a big gap between high school system and university access. This can indicate that our access to university education is weak. Education according to Plato (1971) is a light that must be exposed to everyone capable. Relevant to this research is the work of Altbacht (2007), who says that access to university education implies good secondary and university education which is capable of preparing qualified teachers and other specialists required to make development a reality. Important to this study is the lack of interest and resources that has deepened the crises in university education and access to university. Indeed access to university education should be inclusive. University education should provide equal opportunity to all human kind who are capable.
Amaral (2003) substantiates the above by declaring that access to university education refers to equity in education. This may mean provision of equal education opportunities regardless of abilities aptitudes, age, gender, skin, colour, sexual background, religious or ethnic background, and place of residence, family, education or family finances. Everyone should have an opportunity especially when it comes to buildings, teaching materials, methodologies, structure and content. A good learning environment should be produced for all (Gunawardena 2006). In order to achieve this concept there must be commitment and participation from pupils, parents, teachers, school administrators, agencies, politicians and the government in Zimbabwe (Zvobgo 2004).

The issue of access to university education has tremendously gained currency globally and has inspired numerous resolutions leading to policy statements as well as legislation and educational planning. Gray (2004), states that the expanded vision of access to university was a result of a complex discussion and negotiation process. Evans (2000) concludes that the problem of access may deal with issues of great complexity. Plato, Comenius, Rousseau or Dewey (1992), state that university access should pass through a series of stages, which in this case Zimbabwe adopted mass education policy hurriedly without passing through a number of stages. This affected access to university education. Important to this study is to reveal that there is a gap between the Zimbabwe Education Act Policy and access to university education. It appears as if education system in Zimbabwe ignores the A-level certificate holders who have high points such that they are facing challenges to be enrolled into universities.
Giroux (2002) revealed that the oldest universities in the UK are Oxford and Cambridge, both founded in the thirteenth century. Scotland followed Cambridge in the fifteenth century with Aberdeen and Glasgow. In 1832 Durham was the first revived university to be built in the 19th century. The University of London was established in 1836 as a degree awarding body to affiliated colleges in various parts of the kingdom. Manchester was opened in 1851. Between 1874 and 1902 more universities were established. It is amazing to note that after 1945 there was a dramatic expansion of university provision in Europe. Zimbabwe’s first university was opened 1957, yet Europe opened the doors of university in the 13th century. It is the duty of scholars and academics to reveal the importance of a comprehensive education system that provides access from early childhood to university education and such systems should be free from barriers that hinder access to university education.

Nziramasanga (1999), states that, the largest and oldest University in Zimbabwe was established during the colonial period. It was instituted through the 1955 Royal Charter. The University began its full time programme of operation in 1957. The University of Rhodesia gained university status as University of Rhodesia in 1971. Soon after independence the University of Rhodesia became the University of Zimbabwe. The Royal Charter was replaced by an act of the Parliament 1982. In 1990 the University of Zimbabwe has more than 10 000 students (Kariwo 2011). Ten years after independence Zimbabwe had only one university, this can indicate to us that university education was for the chosen few it was not a right to go to the university. At this point it can be fair to say that the Zimbabwean education system is putting effort to provide access to university education. After having looked at access to university the following section focuses on Plato’s views on access to university education.
2.4.3 Plato’s view on access to university education

Important to this study is Plato’s observation on education and its universalistic nature. Battle (2000), points out that Plato claims that the life of inquiry is life dedicated to learning. Inquiry is life worth living through knowledge acquisition up to university level (Sheely 2013). Therefore education is life of inquiry into the truth and reality. In this research it is important to point out that A-level high achieving students must be subjected and exposed to the life of inquiry. University education seeks to find the truth and reality. In this study access to university education should be open to all so that they can have light. Plato’s moral theory further states that inquiry is the only action that cannot bring harm to others. If knowledge is present then there is light (Makhoul 2005). People seek education in order to acquire knowledge. According to Plato, knowledge is the highest common good and it is a light in people’s lives. In this context, researchers, inventors and innovators are enhanced by universities world over. University education provides light to the entire nation. Plato’s observation is relevant to this study because if the majority of Advanced-level high achievers are given the opportunity to university education then the society can enjoy the common good with very little harm to themselves and other people as well. The next section therefore discusses access to university education globally.

2.5 The global situation on access

2.5.1. Access to higher education in Japan

The researcher has decided to use Japan as an example in this study due to its strength in its industry and high access to university education. In 2010 there were 86 national universities, 95
public universities and 595 private universities in Japan 95% of students graduate successfully from all these universities in Japan (Geiger 2006). For a student to be enrolled in Japanese university one should pass an entrance examination. Students in Japan are closely guided in lower secondary so that they are relatively assured of a place in the faculty to which they apply (World Bank 2011). This study begins with an overview of the development of access to university education in Japan since the 1970s and its influence on the planning of higher education. This is followed by a review of the various measures that have been taken to increase the participation of high achieving students in Japanese university education and an analysis of statistical data on enrolment (Murphy 2002). Finally, the author recommends ways of boosting participation and improving support mechanisms for high achieving students in university education. Universal Access to universities is likely to be realized and enhanced by the prevalence of innovations such as Massive Open On-line Courses (MOOCs) (Osborne 2003). The Japanese policy on access to university is significant to this study because it becomes a benchmark or a model to reach such levels of development in Zimbabwe. The following section looks at access to university in China.

2.5.2 Access to university education in China

Today, China produces eight times more science graduates than America, and the results are there for everyone to see. China is now the second largest economy in the world and is now a bastion of technological innovation. If students are good in Maths and Science, they should be encouraged, and in the same manner opportunities must be availed for those less gifted in sciences and other technical courses (Zhu and Lou 2011).
The researcher used Chinese access to university as an example because China has developed and access policy to university has widened. Bai Liming (2006), points out that the experiences of Shanghai and Shanghai Normal University show how university education can help to meet the learning needs of citizens. Zimbabwe can draw lessons that can be applied far beyond China. Zhu Hongzhemin and Lou Shiyan (2011), state that Shanghai University has been a pioneer of access to university education. It has grown rapidly and now caters for nearly 7000 Advanced-high achieving students each year. It also provides higher learning opportunities to seniors and has become a leader in research and policy development in this field. Alsatian (2001) adds that while examining the factors upon which the access to university education in Shanghai has been built, it is important to point out that government support, together with commitment from the university sector, is crucial in making lifelong learning for citizens a reality. Therefore such an education system underwent a process which this study sought to unveil. Zimbabwe may draw lessons from China and by so doing it would widen access to Advanced-level high achieving students to have access to university education. The following section looks at access to university education in Australia.

2.5.3. Access to university education in Australia

Australia has opened access to university education for the gifted citizens of its country. The greatest mission for Australian university is to increase high achievers engagement and application of knowledge within a variety of contexts. Bogdan (1992) points out that high achievers come to see the value of a lifelong learning approach and are able to acknowledge multiple forms of knowledge, and make more immediate connections between what they come to know and what they do in response. The Ministry of Secondary education is closely linked to the
university education system. This was done to remove barriers that might hinder access to university for high achieving students in Australia (Sheely 2013).

Wainjiru (2007) identifies key factors in delivering a successful learning experience in Australia which are; the expertise and approach of the educator, collaborative learning and a safe learning space. By collating various life-wide and lifelong learning experiences and putting them into practice, learners recognise the value of access to university education. Wanyoike (2003) demonstrates that lifelong learning may extend its reach into university education, transforming practices within it and positioning learners to engage more fully with a wide range of formal, non-formal, community and workplace learning. Such an education system could be copied by Zimbabwe that is if it is to develop that far. In Australia Advanced -level high achievers are trained in areas which they are capable. The government, the private sector, politicians and other stakeholders in Australia provide support to high achieving students from their high schools(Drewry 2001). The following section focuses on university education in Denmark.

2.5.4. Access to university education in Denmark

It is important to understand how Danish principles of university education have been implemented in Denmark’s universities, particularly through practice- and skills-based master’s programmes. Denmark’s dual approach to academic qualification established in 2001, allow university programmes to be organised (Goulding 2010). The systematic acquisition of research-based knowledge which increases complexity or knowledge acquisition based on the student’s social and vocational competences. UNESCO (2010), observes that the Danish master’s programme which builds a relationship between the professional competence which the students enter university and the research-based knowledge which the university can provide. In Denmark
there is a clear university access policy that allows all advanced –level high achievers to enter university education.

Davies (2009) supports the rationale that Advanced-level high achievers must have access to university education and skills development throughout life. Access policy describes the procedures followed to evaluate skills in such a way that these can be said to equate to a formal competence and considers the challenges inherent in blending practical and theoretical knowledge, including development of curricula. It is also relevant in this study to examine the results of having access to university education especially on research and skills which are needed in Zimbabwe. The following section looks at enrolment rates in Sub Sahara Africa (SSA).

2.6 Access to university education in Africa

2.6.1. Enrolment rates in university education in Sub Saharan Africa

US Factsheet, December (2010 no 10), reveals that there is significant variation among countries within the region. For example, in 2009 university enrolment for Advanced -level exceeds the regional average in the following countries: Cameroon (9.0%), Cape Verde (14.9%), Côte d'Ivoire (8.4%), Ghana (6.2%), Guinea (9.2%), Mauritius (25.9%), Namibia (8.9%) , Senegal (8.0%) and Zimbabwe is less than 6%. However, the ratio remains quite low in countries such as; Burkina Faso (3.4%), Burundi (2.7%), Central African Republic (2.5%), Chad (2.0%), and Eritrea (2.0%), Ethiopia (3.6%), Madagascar (3.6%), Malawi (0.5%), Niger (1.4%) and Uganda (3.7%). The above figures are relevant to the research study because the above figures reflect access to universities in different countries.
Growing pressure for further expansion

Kariwo (2007) explains that despite rapid expansion over the past several decades, university education systems in sub-Saharan Africa are not equipped to absorb the growing demand that has resulted from broader access to secondary education. There is growing pressure for university access in Sub-Saharan Africa because the number of high schools for Advanced -level out number universities available (Zvogbo 2014). For instance, in 1999, the region’s GER for the upper secondary level was 19% of high school A-level candidates which was nearly five times as high as the ratio for tertiary education (4%). In 2008, the tertiary GER reached 6% of secondary school candidates compared to 27% for upper secondary education. Globally, the GER for upper secondary education is just twice that of the tertiary level. The large gaps between the two ratios – GERs for upper secondary and universities education indicate that there will be many students completing upper secondary education who are eligible for higher education but do not have access to it. So policymakers across the region can expect further pressure to expand the tertiary education system in order to meet the rising demand. It is interesting to note that access environment of university education varies across countries of Africa. World Bank (2007), claims that enrolment rates in university education in Sub-Saharan Africa are by far the lowest in the world. In 1965 it was just 1% university enrolment but now it stands at 5% access to university education. The absolute gap by which it lags behind other regions has increased rapidly; moreover, gender disparities have traditionally been wide and remained so.

UNESCO (2008), observed that the output of academic in Sub-Saharan Africa remains very weak. UNICEF (2000), UNESCO (2009), and EFA Global Monitoring Report (2008), support
the above by pointing out that in 1995 the Sub Saharan region has only 5,839 published academic papers, South Asia produced 15,995 Latin America 14,426. The statistics above are relevant to reveal the degree of access to university education. Sub Saharan region has the least published academic papers this may be due to lower access to university education and Zimbabwe is also affected by low access to university education. This research is relevant since it attempts to explore barriers affecting Advanced-level high achievers. University graduates are capable of producing academic research papers, scientific discovery and innovations.

UNESCO (2005) observes that in countries like Malawi and Tanzania highly centralised policy making on university education, restricts the autonomy of universities and politicises them. Smith (2001) observes that Madagascar and Tanzania are good examples of countries where government supervises many aspects of university operations. In Tanzania, government appoint senior university managers to run universities. The Ministry of Education in Madagascar appoints all faculties’ members, set salaries and determines working conditions. It also establishes links with faculty members (Lersen 2003). Closely related to political systems, not all countries have stifling laws. Angolan laws allow universities full autonomy in decision making and the state encourages the establishment of private higher education institutions (Altback 2004). The question that remains is whether the Zimbabwean government controls Advanced-level graduate’s access to universities. If the government does not have a clear access policy on university education, then the problem of access remains a critical issue (Zvobgo 2004). It is on the basis of the aforesaid missing links that the research study sought to unearth the challenges which are facing Advanced-level high achieving students. The next segment views access to higher education in South Africa.
2.6.2 Access to education in South Africa

Roberts (1999), studied access to university education in South Africa and argues that university education should be open for all classes. Access to university education needs to redress the failures of the university system, particularly for the poorest citizens not to access university education access. A case study of one historically black university, University of Western Cape, describes the competing social, economic and political currents that influence access to university education. It describes in some detail the work of university education especially on skill development, peace keeping and the promotion of economic growth (Bergain 2012). The author concludes with a critical look at the shortcomings of the University Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQF), and some recommendations for the successful implementation of access to university approach in the South African higher education sector Mangella (2000). The above observation is relevant to this study because it explains access to university in South Africa and its contribution. The next section looks at Zimbabwean situation on access to university education in Zimbabwe.

2.7 The Zimbabwean situation on access

Maravanyika (2012), says The Education Act of Zimbabwe (1987), does not mention anything about university education and access to university. It is believed and expected that for any government to succeed in both social and economic growth, it must have clearly defined access procedures to university education. Thus, the issue of access remains a thorny in the flesh for most African governments, including Zimbabwe. To underestimate the role of access to university education in any country can lead to self-denial and stagnation. This is the reason why
C. J. Rhodes, the founder of the colony Rhodesia, in less than five years had crafted the first education ordinance in order to enlighten the minority whites (Mandaza 1987). Zvobgo (2014), agrees with Mandaza (1987), that this ordinance reveals the importance of access to education. Rhodes crafted this education access ordinance to enabled the government to survive for more than 100 years. Kariwo (2011), claims that although Rhodes was a capitalist, he established the University college of Rhodesia as an affiliate University of London so as to develop the minority white population in Rhodesia. Relevant to this study is that Rhodes observed that a state that does not have access to university education cannot be expected to meet the basic needs of its citizens (Mhlahleki 1995).

Gaidzanwa (1992), observes that the few people who had access to formal education were better placed for access to job opportunities and general social mobility in the colonial societies. Education was therefore, a very important resource for those members of the colonised countries who were ambitious. It is interesting to note the contribution of the unfair system of education of the Rhodesian government results in the following. By 1904 public revenue by Africans alone in Rhodesia was 41, 4% in 1912 and about 1/3 of the revenue came from forced labour due to inequalities of education access between blacks and whites (Mandaza1987). If the education system was fair, it means the majority of the school going age was supposed to be in schools not in farms and in mines as cheap labour. The 1912 ordinance empowered chief native commissioners to control missionary schools and African education without financial support. When a group of people are denied access to education then that group is largely affected very negatively. Mhlahleki (1995), reports that the issue of access is a difficult question faced by African governments. The pre-colonial education policies which denied Africans access to
schooling is affecting university education. The number of Advanced-level high achieving students graduating from high school does not correspond with the number of students being enrolled into universities.

UNESCO (2015), states that access to university is a global commitment to provide quality education for all children, youth and adults. Access to university education can be viewed as those skills of reading and writing and enables people to solve life problems. Relevant to this study is that access to university education is linked to the world conference on access university education for all citizens. Those who are capable up to university level must not be denied access.

It is interesting to note that previous international commitments and calls for action contributed immensely towards access. Bennett (2008) explains that access helped to revitalise an education reform that started well before 1990 especially in several developing countries. Banya (2001), states that developments towards university education are neither uniform nor leaner because of poor policy interpretation and implementation. However, some major developments have been made on some fronts whereas stagnation or even deterioration is manifest on others. Of course, regions and countries do have significant differences. The researcher argues that the guiding principle and budgets on access to university education have shrunk especially for poor countries. It can be argued beyond doubt that Zimbabwe and other Sub Saharan countries are having a complexity in widening access to university education (Angula 1997). Meaningful education should provide citizens with relevant skills. Therefore the following section focuses on Post-colonial influence on access to university.
2.7.1 Post-colonial influence on access to university education

Banya (2001) posits that the educational policy in Zimbabwe has made remarkable achievement, especially in providing secondary education. However more should be researched and investigated on factors contributing to low access to university education in Zimbabwe. Chikoko (2008), observes that there are many factors that influenced low access to university education in Zimbabwe. These factors may include historical factors, political factors, sociological factors and economic aspects. It must be highlighted again in this study that one of the Second Chimurenga’s causes was unfair access to university education (Zvobgo 2014). This unfairness led young men and women to take up arms to fight against the oppressive systems. The above is supported by Zvobgo (1996), who says that the Zimbabwean educational policy was crafted and forged in the heart of the liberation struggle and one of the aims and objectives of the struggle was to remove barriers so as to access university education in Zimbabwe. Relevant to my study is that Zimbabwe’s education systems is a result of colonisation therefore having our home grown access policy of education like STEM may move the country a step forward.

In an attempt to analyse the factors that were at play in the policy making process in Zimbabwe, there are colonial and post-colonial influences that must be taken into consideration Zvobgo, (1996). Of course the government’s education policy was shaped by scientific socialism which was a choice. The new government was seeking equity and redistribution of resources to achieve its goals. This present government had great challenges to redress the past (Daniel 1997). The major policies adopted in Zimbabwe were to widen access through mass education. In this research it is critical to point out that there is a glass ceiling which needs to be broken by
academics and scholars on factors hindering increased access to university education in Zimbabwe. The first challenge of the new government was to fill the skill gap caused by the exodus of skilled whites (Gaidzanwa 1992). Many skilled whites left the country before and after the independence leaving Zimbabwe with human resources who did not have craft literacy and craft competence to provide services. Due to these challenges in Zimbabwe there was need to quickly train indigenous people to improve the local labour market (Zvobgo 2000). Relevant to my study is the fact that Zimbabwe needs skilled manpower from universities to fill the positions left by the skilled whites. The major issue in this research is that the commitment by the Zimbabwean government to provide high school education should be the same commitment to provide access to university education. The Advanced-level high achievers are facing financial challenges in order to access university education. Because of these huddles many Advanced-levels high achievers are having very little choice as a result they are enrolling in institutions of teaching and polytechnics.

Nyakudyara (2011) claims that it was not until 1987 that the then Vice Chancellor of the University of Zimbabwe, Walter Kamba who discussed with his friends the necessity of approaching government about setting up a feasibility study on establishing a second university campus. Kanyongo (2005), maintains that a recommendation was made to the then Minister of Education on the basis of manpower requirements for economic growth and of the increasing number of well qualified A-level school leavers. University expansion was not only justified but was also a necessity; hence, National University of Science and Technology opened its doors in May 1991. Mutumbuka (1984), commented by saying the day to day lives of the people of Zimbabwe like any other formerly colonised society, are defined by their past history as
colonised people often in ways that are subtle. These countries which got their independence from colonial masters do have a long way to go in terms of access to university. This research sought to explore the barriers hindering access to university education in Zimbabwe.

The Zimbabwe’s education system is a result of internal and external influences. Therefore, to fully comprehend and appreciate issues of access to university education and challenges there is need to critically explore the history of education and how it shapes much of the post-colonial education system in Zimbabwe. Zvobgo (1996) claims that the Zimbabwe’s experiences in restructuring education reforms are partly embedded in the colonial legacy. Zimbabwe was under the colonial rule for over 100 years and this is still affecting the nation, especially on access to university because there was discrimination in education in terms of infrastructure and funding.

It is imperative that A level graduates get access to such institutions to open up for national development agendas. In this research, university education access is pivotal in the sense that it is multi-disciplinary where faculties offer degrees and non-degree courses to A-level high achieving students and mature students. Universities are the guiding beacon in the philosophy of long life learning for A-level high achievers. Kurasha (2003), comments on the above by saying graduates from universities produce knowledge competences and dispositions that are necessary for the development of competitive human resources. According to UNESCO (2012), university education is the ultimate aim of every parent who has a child in secondary school today in Zimbabwe. It is relevant in this study to point out that Advanced- level high achieving students to proceed to university so that they can be trained to tackle challenges facing the nation.
Important to this study, is work of Zvobgo (1998), who analysed the foundations of access to university education in Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwean approach to the educational reform was more radical and ambitious than Zambia and Botswana (Kariwo 2011). Zimbabwe took a different dimension in terms of access and implementation and its goal was to universalise education. According to Mandaza (1987), Zimbabwe spent more resources on mass education. This widened the educational base although the government responded positively by establishing at least one university in each province, access to these universities seem not to correspond with the number of A-level students who qualify to enter universities. Mhlahleki (1995), pointed out that there is very little discourse and literature that deals with access to university education in Zimbabwe.

This thesis aims to add to literature on university access in Zimbabwe. The government and access to university education access appears silent on conditions and access of A-level high achieving students (Giroux 2002). Zimbabwe’s efforts to provide high access to university education were thwarted by financial challenges (UNESCO 2010).

Kweiga (2006) declared that the entry points for access to university are now an issue of the past due to excess competition of access to university education in Zimbabwe. There is no national policy on access that pushes our A-level high achieving students to university education. The minimum entry points now differ from one university to another because most of universities are considering those who are capable to pay tuition fees. Africa University is enrolling some students with 6 points or more at A-level (Nziramasanga 2014). Significant to this study is that the access to education in Zimbabwe has become too philosophical such that scholars and academics should provide better lenses and more information. UNESCO (1995), observed that
the provision of university education depends on political commitment and political will, backed by fiscal measures and reinforced by educational reforms. UNESCO (2000), declares that Universal Declaration of Human Rights asserted that everyone has a right to education. The purpose of the declaration was that every person, child, youth and adult shall be able to benefit from access to university education and opportunity. The satisfaction of these needs empowers individuals in any society and confers upon them responsibly to respect and promote education to others and further the case of social justice, tolerance and to ensure accepted humanistic values. Goulding (2010) posits that university education requires a commitment by the state and stakeholders in education. Zvobgo (2014) pointed out that the most urgent priority is to ensure access to and improve the quality of education and to remove obstacles that hamper their active participation. The next section focussed access and its influence to university education.

2.8 Access and its Influence to University education

The quality and quantity of university graduates are determined by the decision making body of that university. This section, however, focuses on access to university education and its influence to university education. Angell (2014), and Megick (2008), also observed that the University of Michigan is a poignant illustration because of its inclusivity. This was viable through its early admission of women and African American students through its recent defence of affirmative action. The doors of access to university creaked open for new groups of people among students. The aim of Michigan university access was to bring university education within the reach of the poor. Michigan University put a lot of emphasis on students from poor socio-economic status and those who are physically challenged.
Michigan University was to make life simple and inexpensive and so a large proportion of students have always supported themselves in whole or in a large part on their owned earnings. Students flocked in great numbers because they believed that an excellent education could be obtained by students of very limited means. Nidiffer and Bouman (2014), observe that universities steadily shifted their efforts from admitting poor students to prominent yet nevertheless public universities in American mind-set university education became increasingly unavailable and uninviting to the poor. UNESCO (2008), observed that the University of Michigan is a case in point. It illustrates the particulars of how class became such a determining factor in university enrolment. Sadly even in the 21st century access influence university education in Zimbabwe for Advanced-level high achieving students. Upper class remains a strong predator of who will enrol in institutions of higher education (UNICEF 2000). The importance of these observations to this research is to appreciate how access to university education affect the society and the nation at large.
The World Bank (2011) agrees by saying that the major function of university access is to provide access to under-represented Advanced-level high achievers into universities. The mature students and students with special disability are represented also. Important to this study is the Irish university because it has a statutory funding authority which caters for high achieving students. The future of the Irish higher education is set out in the organisations, Strategic Plan of 2012 -2016, which provides a roadmap for its implementation (David 2009). In this case university education is viewed as the bedrock for social and economic renewal and development. By looking at the situation in Zimbabwe, this becomes a gap which needs to be filled by removing barriers hindering access to university education for Advanced-level high achieving students in Zimbabwe. The present study seeks to unveil factors that hinder access to university by A-level high achieving graduates in Zimbabwe.

Access issues influence university education in Zimbabwe. David (2009) notes that access determines the quality of the air we breathe and the water we drink. Access to university education can affect the type of education we learn, the food we eat, how it is harvested and processed, where it is distributed and sold and how much we pay. In this study it appears as if the A-level high achieving students are struggling to have access to university. This study wants to analyse the barriers hindering access to university education. The above is in agreement with Chimanikire (2009), who observed that the government needs to reflect theoretical or experimental assumptions about what is required to solve a particular issue or problem. The majority high achievers room the streets while others are flooding the teachers colleges yet they qualify to go to universities. Related to this study is Gordon (1994), who shares these remarks and saying that the role of access to university education is related to development especially on
economic and political matters. The next section discussed the development of access to university education.

2.9 Development of access to university education.

Rousseau (1712-1778), in his book “Social Contract”, observed that the history of man’s life on earth has been the history of decay due to low access to university education in societies. Man in his view is good by nature but has been corrupted by access to university. In his discourse on the origin of inequality he tried to discover the causes of inequality and one of them is access to university education. However, Rousseau traced the origins of artificial inequality to the earliest period of man’s existence on earth. In Rousseau’s view the evils or vices of man began from the time when they formed societies. Gordon (1994) adds on to say that if access to university education policies are not well crafted, they bring a lot of inequality in society because university education may be accessed by the rich only. Inequality started when a man built his first hut (Agarwal 2008). The construction of huts led to co-habitation of men and women. Co-habitation encouraged the emergence of the institution of marriage, leading to the habit of living together as family and associating with neighbours (Haralambos and Holborn 2004). This nascent society as Rousseau calls it was in his view, the golden age of human history. However, the golden age did not last long. Neighbours began to compare their abilities and achievements with one another. This can explain to us that those who have power and means are more likely to enter into universities without difficulty.

Altback (2009) points out that man began to demand respect and recognition from others. Natural innocence turned into wickedness and pride as they competed with one another. From this competition, men began to own property. It became necessary to make laws and establish
government in order to protect their property. With the introduction of the government men lost their liberty and freedom. The equality which nature established among men was replaced by the inequality which men instilled among themselves. Society has to fight against the decadence or decay of the mind through widening access to university education. When university education is accessed by a few it may mean that those who are not educated are denied freedom, respect, recognition and opportunity in life.

Rousseau (1778), goes on to say that sovereignty of the people is attained through university education. Man is born free but everywhere is in chains because of poor university access. He attacked all governments by not widening access to university education. The above is supported by John Locke (1632-1704), who notes that a government is a trust or a mandate which is given the responsibility to widen access to university. This study will close the gap by examining whether Zimbabwe has a clear constitution that promotes access to university education. Significant to my study is the fact that the government of Zimbabwe has the mandate to widen access to university that enable high A-level achievers to have access to university education.

The works of Aristotle (384-323 BC), trace the origin of university access. Access to university come into existence because of the bare needs of life and continues to exist for the sake of good life. Meek (2001), pointed out that Aristotle describes the good life brought by the access to university education as (eudemonia), a Greek word meaning happiness or social well-being. In this study access to university education is relevant because it brings good life to the individual, society and the entire world. From the above observation Aristotle is pointing out that access to
university education is very necessary. God and beasts do not need university education but human beings cannot do without education (Meek 2003). This study sought to provide lenses on the significance of university education and development.

2.10 Factors that Influence Access to University Education

2.10.1 Socio-economic factors

One of the major factors that militate against students’ access to university education is socio-economic background (Banya 2001). The socio-economic status of parents is a crucial factor in deciding whether a student progresses to the next higher level of education and the opportunity to attend university.

Zvobgo (2014), states that the persistent drought and the poor performing manufacturing mining and tourism sectors have resulted in little economic growth and this has caused serious problems to access university education in Zimbabwe. The net result of the above scenario is that many students drop out of universities as their parents or guardians fail to raise tuition fees. Therefore, the two scholars are in agreement that socio-economic status of parents and guardians affect students in accessing university education.

Chombo (2000) points out that higher education in Zimbabwe faces challenges which include dropouts, high tuition, accommodation fees, staff shortages and economic decline, foreign currency shortages, hyperinflation, and large public debt. The government's budgetary allocation to the higher education has been in drastic decline (Chetsanga 2000). In developing country like Zimbabwe the challenges include reduced state funding, brain drain and lack of quality
assurance. The challenges highlighted above have impacted on the functions and operations of universities in Zimbabwe. This study sought to explore how socio-economic status is affecting A-level high achieving students in Zimbabwe. Significant to this study is that those students who come from poor backgrounds can find it difficult to access university education even if they have the required points.

Kariwo (2007) agrees by saying that socio-economic status influences access to university education in Zimbabwe and it is a form of a structural barrier it hinder access to university education. It is by far the single biggest barrier to access university education by high achieving A-level students (Mullen 2010). The above observation concluded that students who come from poor socio-economic background have acute challenges of proceeding to university education. What seem to determine access to university for A-level high achievers in Zimbabwe could be tuition fees. Muzawazi (2010) argues that low income families are less likely or less able to save for post-secondary education which puts potential students in these families at a disadvantage with respect to financial resources for university education. The above research was carried out in Europe therefore this study seeks to uncover how socio-economic affects access to university education for high A-level achievers in Zimbabwe.

Dzvimbo (2000) supports by pointing out that these youth from disadvantaged families are exposed to different barriers due to the socio-economic status of their parents of which their access to university education is limited. Relevant to this study is that participation in university education can be affected by situations surrounding the economic life of the student, such as where they live or the communication network around that geographical area. Access to
university education can be a real issue for some, particularly those who live in remote or rural areas (Mullen 2010). Ho (2007), confirms that the background of the Advanced-level high achieving students can have a huge bearing upon the decision to participate in higher education. Makhurane (2007) acknowledges that factors such as parent’s occupations, incomes and the socio-economic environment of the society in which a child is raised, have a big impact on university access. Evidence from related literature suggests that there is distinct underrepresentation of certain social groups in higher education. For example, individuals from areas of deprivation, certain ethnic groups, occupational backgrounds, or those on lower incomes are less likely to participate in higher education (Chatsenga 2000). The above indicates that poor social economic background affect negatively to access university education.

Chombo (2000) raised a very important point by claiming that approximately 30 000 students graduating from high schools only 18% of graduates get admitted into higher education institutions. This means over 80% of potentially productive persons are left with no opportunity for training and acquiring employable skills. Chombo (2000), and Chatsenga (2000), concur that the number of Advanced- level high achieving students failing to access university education in Zimbabwe is too high. Challenges facing Advanced- level high achieving students is likely to be associated to poor socio-economic status and poverty. Relevant to this study is that university education is no longer for free, those from poor socio-economic even if they are capable their chances to university education remain an issue.

Kariwo (2007), observes another significant point by saying that educated parents can better understand the educational needs and their children’s aptitude. Chikoko (2008), further explained that these parents can help their children in their early education which affects their proficiency
in their relative area of knowledge. It is therefore relevant to point out that financial background of parents can provide latest technologies and facilities in a best possible way to enhance university education for their children.

Parental education and socio-economic factors are of vital importance in effecting students’ educational achievements. They are the backbone in providing financial and mental confidence to students. Explicit differences can be observed between those students who belong to different financial status and different parental educational level (Chimanikire 2009).

The United Nation Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (2008), conclude that this era of globalization and technological revolution, university education is considered as a first step for human activity. It plays a vital role in the development of human capital and is linked with an individual’s well-being and opportunities for better living. The world is making technological progress day by day and university education is the only key to match the pace of its progress. People are giving preference to higher education. Researchers and scholars seem to prove that only 10% of the world knowledge has been discovered by human brains, 90% of world knowledge remains undiscovered (Gordon 1994). Gordon demonstrates how critical university education plays in world development. Without university education the world education can be discovered at a very slow pace. It is interesting to point out that in this knowledge economy university education plays a major role. Financial factor is very important for any A-level high achieving students to access university education. Closely associated with finances and economic factors is the fear of debt. Scholars such as Ho (2007), Kapungu (2007), and Mullen (2010), cite the level of debt associated with studying at university as a hindrance to
accessing university education. For example, those who have been brought up in a culture where
debt is not regarded as socially acceptable may decide that the longer term financial rewards
associated with achieving university education qualifications will be insufficient to offset the
shorter term costs of studying at higher education.

Landman (2006) adds his voice to socio economic issues by positing that borrowing from
government or elsewhere to finance one’s university education can be a huge step backwards for
students from poor families. Some of the debts can lead to financial problems, and when industry
is not opening up the consequences can be disastrous. Dzvimbo (2000) commends that fees are
too high and most students cannot afford to study with universities especially from a poor
background. University education has become a preserve of the elite. A fear of debt could exert
much greater deterrent effect on disadvantaged student’s participation in accessing higher
education. This is characterised by chances of academic success and chances of finding a job at
the end to pay off the debt. The conditions for paying back the money do not attract students to
access university education, instead they opt for other alternatives which are not expensive, like
being enrolled at teachers colleges and yet they qualify for university entrance (Kariwo 2011). In
this study the issue of borrowing tuition fees by A-level high achieving students is not common.
Most of these banks need collateral security which students do not have as a result poor socio-
economic status of students can affect access to university education. Midlands State University
is charging tuition fees at 900 dollars per semester for a period of four years. In fact total amount
needed by a student per semester is 1800 dollars. A tuition fee for teachers college is close to 500
dollars and this includes food and accommodation. In teachers colleges in Zimbabwe any student
must go for teaching practice for 15 months and an allowances is given, as a result A-level high
achieving students may prefer teaching rather than going to university due to economic challenges.

Mullen (2010) highlights labour market and graduate prospects/earnings potential as structural barriers. Employment prospects for graduates and the financial rewards expected from university education qualifications affect participation particularly for those from disadvantaged groups. The fear of debt impacts on these groups disproportionately and it is therefore important that they understand fully how university education qualifications can improve their future employment prospects and earnings potential (Mullen 2010).

Bwanya (2001), points out that income and access to student support in the form of grants scholarships and pocket money during studying is seen by some as a very important factor in the decision to participate in higher education. Shizha (2011) suggests that the financial concerns of students are two-fold. First the financial cost of day to day living as a student can act as a barrier to potential entrants particularly if they have no income stream other than any student support for which they are eligible. Economic factors do not only act as a disincentive to entering university education for some, but may also influence the choice of course or institution among those who participate. Pikari (1989), adds on to say that economic factors do not only include tuition fees. Affordability can affect an individual’s choice to enter into university education but can also have an effect upon whether that individual is able to complete their education. Over and above countries that invest in university education are developing faster (Kapungu 2007).
Korea invested heavily in university education. This country has become a knowledge based economy. Bloom, Canning and Pikari (1989) seem to agree that other countries have suffered from brain drain but Korea encouraged students to study abroad and return home after completion. Barrow and Lee (2000) also claim that most universities in Korea have exchange programmes with universities elsewhere. Evans (2000) observes an important point by saying that in Brazil, given the impressive expansion of higher education enrolment since the 1990s, the topic of access and social inclusion has become part of the federal government’s priorities agenda. The official policy now focuses on improving the participation in university education of students from low-income groups. Important to this study is the fact that some of the countries are putting more emphasis on merit rather than the ability to pay tuition fees and Zimbabwe can be one of them.

Mullen (2010) observes that in England, a major reform in funding university education occurred in 2006. Along with the introduction of variable tuition fees and government-funded grants and loans for students, universities were encouraged to provide students with additional discretionary financial support to promote widening participation and greater access to university. High achieving Advanced-level students appear to be given adequate financial support in Korea, India and UK, whereas in Zimbabwe parents are actively involved in financial contribution. Altback (2009), declares that the Zimbabwe economy has been on the brink of collapse with formal employment estimated between 5 to 10 percent The World Bank (2003), also reported that 81.68 percent of secondary school leavers were unemployed in Zimbabwe. When the economy is not functioning it is not easy for the government to provide a wide range of loans and grants that would cover tuition fees and other living costs for A-level high achieving students to
access university education. Having looked at socio-economic factors that affect access in general, the next section looks at early childhood and secondary education and how they affect access to university education.

2.10.2 Early childhood and secondary education

It is widely accepted that in order to improve participation in higher education, resources and policies should be targeted at school going age pupils at an early age to develop aspirations and improve attainment (Giroax and Jones 2002). Furthermore, Landman (2006), cite that more often than not the school that an individual went to before choosing a university plays a big role in the accreditation of diplomas than what he has learned. In other words, sometimes the grades a person obtains at A-level have no influence on their choice of tertiary education institutions. Angell (2008) also purports that if they went to a primary and secondary school in a poor backward rural area, chances are that they would choose a vocational technical institution in a village or small town, rather than say, go to the University of Zimbabwe, National University of Science and Technology or Africa University. Landman (2006), further points out that it is not the student that is to blame for this choice, but society for the structural violence of deprivation and lack of access to the wider world which influences ones choice.

Exposure is closely linked to educational background. Rukuni (2007), suggests that student lack of information and knowledge about college opportunities, college admissions, course placements policies, and financial aid application process has led to perceived or imagined barriers to higher education. Kapungu (2007) states that some students may make assumptions that they or their parents cannot afford university education or that they will not be able to
succeed academically in college. Giroax (2004), and Jones (2004), also highlighted that due to this factor many students do not enrol in universities that match their capabilities and potential because they might have less information. Furthermore, many high achieving students enrol in mediocre institutions for university education because they lack information. The large numbers of young people especially in low income countries Malawi, Zambia including Zimbabwe continues to have limited access not only to new sources of information but even to traditional sources such as radios and televisions as compared to those living in middle income countries (World Bank Report 2007). Lack of information and knowledge about universities and financial aid plays an important part in limiting access to university education for high achieving students. Relevant to this study is the fact that A-level graduates should have information and be exposed to knowledge on how to access university courses and programmes.

Mbani (2005) pointed out that the growth rate of university education in a country at a certain period can depend on the political climate in that country. In Zimbabwe for instance, there was massive expansion of the education sector soon after independence, because the government had a deliberate policy to expand education (Kanyongo 2005). Thereafter, in the late 1990s there arose problems of governance and access to university education suffered in Zimbabwe. Government policies such as the withdrawal of scholarships, loans and grants amount to political barriers or incentives to university education (Chimanikire 2009) and (Kanyongo 2005). Roberts (1999), says that in Africa because there is constant insecurity and fears of coups, a government may allocate resources meant for education to defence or the military. Having discussed about how early childhood and secondary education affect access to university education, the following section is to assess how funding is done in Zimbabwe’s universities.
2.10.3 Funding University Education in Zimbabwe

Most universities rely on Government funding but funding of these universities by the state has reflected a negative trend, tuition fees has been left to individuals to pay for their university education (kapungu 2007). University education is underfunded the amount of money that is allocated to universities is very inadequate. This, however, affects access to university because the tuition fees become inhibitive. Very few students are able to pay for their education especially those from poor socio-economic background who hardly go to university (Kariwo 2011). Zimbabwe is suffering from economic hard ships as a result it affects high A- level high achieving students. Loans for students are not being availed. Academics cannot go for contact leave as well as being sponsored for external study programs.

Government is unable to provide sponsorship and bursaries for university education in Zimbabwe yet the cadetship scheme is not accessible to all students (Zvobgo 2014). Zimbabwean universities are trying to generate income so as to realise profit where possible, so that they rely less on government funding. This means that Zimbabwe universities need to generate income and become self-sufficient. (Dzvimbo 2000). Fees are high and most students cannot afford to study in universities especially those from a poor background (Chatsenga 2000). Zimbabwe is having a small number of university graduates, when access to university is limited it means both the parents and the government are losing financial as well as human capital. University graduates are capable of generating new knowledge and innovations they can invent new things. It is unfortunate when A- level high achieving students are found in fields that call for lower interpersonal skills. Student's accommodation and fees are also high and students are
deferred. The above has explained how funding is being done in Zimbabwe’s universities, however the following section focuses on gender issues and access to university education.

2.10.4 Socialisation and its effects on access to university education

Nzvimbo (2000), noted that socio-cultural factors of girls and the priority given to their future roles as mothers had a strong bearing on the formal educational opportunities. He points out that socio-cultural customs and beliefs influenced decisions to enrolling girls in schools. Some of the socio-cultural decisions made included guardians withdrawing them from school others dropping out of school due to their academic performance and their grade level attainment getting worse or better.

Writers, like Sweetman (2000), laid great emphasis on the gender differences in Mathematics’ ability and propounded inherent personality or biological causes of the under achievement of girls in Mathematics. However, in a survey of relevant literature, David (2009)), suggested that no inherent reasons existed for the under achievement of females in Mathematics and Science. The cause lay within certain emotional, social and attitudinal factors, for example, the far reaching decision to discontinue Mathematics was often made in early adolescence when girls were greatly influenced by social and attitudinal factors. In agreement with this notion, the University of Zimbabwe Module (2010), said that under the right conditions and attitudes, girls could do just as well and better than boys in any subject. UNICEF (1999), said that it was gender stereotypes that discouraged females from taking such challenging subjects like Mathematics and Science. Entry into universities was another major area where women were underrepresented.
Within higher education, sex segregation by field of study was the norm worldwide regardless of the number of enrolments. Women tended to study in the fields where there were a lot of women studying. According to Mayer (2000), women were over enrolled in the Faculty of Education and were heavily concentrated in Arts and Humanities, with relatively few in Mathematics and Computer Courses, and even fewer in Engineering. This may justified why women might be reluctant to enrol into university.

In Zimbabwe there seemed to be reason to take a different view of the position of women in university education and ultimately in life. According to UNESCO (2003), at primary school level the figures were reasonably and well balanced at this early stage. By the time the two groups reached the senior school there was greater disparity of girls (Gaidzanwa 2009). The enrolments of women decreased in each succeeding level of education. Stewart and Armstrong (1990) suggested that pregnancy was one of the reasons why women were not advancing into university education. Pregnancy and early marriage might contribute to the few females advancing into university education. Women’s advancement into university education might also be hampered by a lack of motivation. Robbins (1984) pointed out that, motivation was the willingness to do something which was conditioned by this ability to satisfy some need of the individual. Maslow’s theory for example took motivation to be rooted in human needs. The individual responded to need by reacting to it. Thus, if motivation was taken to be cause and affect process, then it was an intervening variable. Behaviour was the means by which the individual sought to satisfy their need, Abraham Maslow, as in Owens (1991), suggested that the driving force that caused people to join an organisation stood in it and worked towards its goals was actually a hierarchy of needs. It was considered that when the lowest order needed in the
hierarchy was satisfied. It appeared most women failed to reach the final pinnacle of personal growth, self – actualisation. According to (UNESCO 2012), the person who achieved this self – actualisation was free of prejudice, jealous and fear.

It remained to be established whether or not the hierarchy of needs had a bearing on women’s advancement into university education. Rewards and punishments meted out within the classroom differed for boys and girls, and thus, also enforced gender role expectation. They stated that boys were regarded as aggressive and unruly, but essentially intelligent and were given more attention in the form of rewards and punishment. Boys’ failure was seen as the result of lack of skills. Girls were often rewarded for good behaviour and were encouraged to complain but not become autonomous (Bordo1997). Data concerning career attitude and aspirations was supported by the literature. According to Measor and Sikes (1992), school girls did not engage in realistic career planning. Girls were left to make their own decisions and no conscious efforts were made by educators to raise poor aspirations. Career choices still reflected occupational stratification with the result that engineering and related fields were virtually disregarded by girls as career options (UNICEF 0002). Warburton (2004), girls believe that careers are closed to them at a very early stage, between three and six years and by the time they reached the senior phase of secondary school, expectations and aspirations had become aligned to their roles. According to Dropsy (1996), an Affirmative Action Programme for advancement of women in the civil service was introduced by the Public Service Commission.

The emancipation of women in the civil service was introduced by the Public Service Commission of Zimbabwe. The Commission set an initial target of thirty per cent female
representation at all levels in the Public Service. As a result, some women were upgraded into positions of power, although they had lower qualifications than most of their male counterparts. This might have resulted in the reluctance in some women to advance into university education. The quota system was that for every three administrative positions, one must be occupied by a female (ZANU PF Manifesto 2000). The following section therefore discusses the effects of gender related issues in relation to access to university education.

### 2.10.5 Effects of Gender Related Issues in Accessing University Education

Scanning through the rich literature on gender and access to university education, it is apparent that the bulk of the existing literature pertains to primary or basic education and to a lesser extent secondary and university education. There is also a lack of national level sex disaggregated policy or indicators in university education. There are few research-based studies on gender issues in university education (UNESCO 2010). The situation is particularly significant in the Asia-Pacific region a region rich in the diversity of its cultures, economic and human development, and gender relations. Davies (1990), conducted a research study on the effects of gender issues on university education. The study found out that women were under-represented in university education and higher posts. The above research was carried out in a different setting. However, this study seeks to establish how gender issues affect access to university education and how it applies to the Zimbabwean context. Gender is socially constructed.

It refers to a social cultural stratification of male and female individuals. This stratification also follows societal norms and values consideration that define the role males and females should play in society. Gender inequality means difference in treatment, or uneven access to provision
or possession of materials or other resources (political, educational means and power). Gender inequality is, therefore, a situation of the uneven distribution of income, lack of access to productive inputs, such as credit and education, lack of command over property or control over earned income as well as gender bias in labour market and social exclusion between men and women (Balogun 2004). Gender inequality is also a situation where women do not have the same rights and enlightenments. Women also do not have equal voice in civil and political life (Evans 2001). This study will therefore fill in this gap in relation to access to university education in Zimbabwe. Inequality is often referred to as lack of equality being unequal in amount, size, value or rank; lack of evenness, regularity or uniformity lack of due proportion or uneven distribution of resources (World Bank 2002).

According to UNESCO (2010), there are quite a number of factors militating against female access to university education. Some of these factors relate to the students themselves and their families, which includes academic performance in primary and secondary education, and also parents’ economic situation and the value they place on education. Second, the government policy for higher education, including affirmative action, fee structure and scholarship or incentive programmes for female students and other socially disadvantaged groups are other factors. Third is the student’s environment, such as the physical distance to education institutions and the quality of education which encourages or discourages young people to advance to university education. Moreover, these influencing factors are further reinforced by elements such as sex, ethnicity, caste and race (UNESCO 2010).
According to UNICEF (2010), and UNESCO (2010), the percentage of girls who complete secondary education determines or influences the proportion of girls accessing university education. The location of institutions affects girls more than boys, in particular in countries where roads and public transport have not penetrated rural and remote areas. Availability of institutions/universities within reach is an important determinant.

Travelling long distances by public transport is an important security issue to females and this is particularly significant in societies where girls are not permitted to travel alone or have to be escorted. Class, caste, race and occupation-related identity issues exert a huge but differing influence on the abilities of young boys and girls. Cultural and religious norms governing gender relations exert a strong influence on access to higher education (UNESCO 2010). Youth with disability face even more challenges. Alcoholism, drug abuse and related problems push boys and girls out of school and into the world of the informal economy, crime and gangs. The impact of trafficking, sexual abuse and violence on girls and boys influences their ability to complete schooling and proceed to higher education. Early marriage, household responsibilities, pressure of work, family honour and related issues inhibit girls and women from access and completing school (Gaidzanwa 1992).

Zimbabwe, as a nation could only develop if it had well educated labour force and women were no exception. According Warburton (2004), women constituted fifty-two per cent of population in Zimbabwe. A nation that ignored fifty-two per cent of its human resources’ capacity could not realise its development potential to the fullest. The education of females was one of the critical factors which contributed positively to the national development. University education is one of the agents of development, and alongside other strategies, the central role of women in
development is gaining greater recognition and momentum worldwide, particularly in the third world due to increased access to university education.

Females have the potential to play bigger and more than other male counterparts in national development, which in turn would facilitate and accelerate development on a global scale. This notion was also supported by Giddens (2004), who pointed out that under the right conditions and attitudes, girls could do just as well or even better than boys in any sphere of learning. The education of women in particular had immense economic and social advantages. According to Gughlanga (2010), an educated woman was more likely, compared to her counterpart, to:

- Bring up healthier children
- Make a greater economic contribution to the family
- Be more financially independent (and hence less likely to endure on abusive marriage situation for example),
- Have few children (and hence, be in a better position to provide for their needs)
- Have a more positive influence on her children’s upbringing, especially bearing in mind that she tended to spend more time with them than the father.

UNESCO (2003), agreed with this idea when it says that the benefits of educating females were evident in health, maintenance, family planning and agriculture. It was the women who were mainly responsible for the family, unlike the man. The females do have multiplicity of duties and this may affect their access to university education. The next section examined gender particularly in Zimbabwe.
Some observations were made in Zimbabwe concerning gender issues at independence. According to the Public Service Commission (1997), with the advent of independence in Zimbabwe in 1980 came high expectations, especially from women concerning what a majority rule government would do to reform promotion and upgrading regulation which had previously relegated them to low level citizens. At independence, people felt that the effectiveness of the government’s development and its ability to sustain these developments depended on the full utilisation of human resource. Government therefore, put in place mechanisms at all levels to support the advancement of women (Moyo 2003).

In 1981 the Government of Zimbabwe set up a Ministry of Community Development and Women’s Affairs to facilitate the integration of women in developing initiatives to mobilise, organise, co-ordinate and monitor women’s advancement programmes and projects in the public and private sectors and NGOs. The Equal Rights Regulations (1980), allowed women to be paid the same wage as men and doing the same work. Maternity Leave Regulations (1980), allowed women to go on paid maternity leave, without loss of seniority. In 1990 an affirmative action programme for the advancement of women in the civil service was introduced by the Public Service Commission. The Commission set an initial target of 30 percent female representation at all levels in the Public Service. In 1994, The Gender Issues Department was set up in the office of the President and Cabinet to maintain the implementation of the national gender policy and the platform of action from the Beijing Women’s Conference. In 2000, the Quota System Policy was announced, which provided every three administrative positions, at least one was to be occupied by a female.
The implementation of this policy saw Mrs Joyce Mujuru rising to Vice President (Nziramasanga 2014). Landmark legislation has been enacted over the past decades to empower women under the law. These legislations included the Matrimonial Clauses Act, which allowed for equitable distribution of matrimonial property between spouses upon divorce. The Electoral Act, enabled women to vote and stand in general, Presidential and by-elections on equal terms with men. The Labour Relations Act that prohibited discrimination against women on the basis of sex and maternity leave regulations allowed women to take up to three months leave with full pay. Meek (2003), observed that at regional level the Zimbabwean Government signed a number of declarations, conventions and protocols under SADC for example, the convention on the elimination of all forms of problems on discrimination against women (UNICEF 1999). The next passages looks at factors militating access at university.

2.10.6 Factors militating against women’s advancement into university education

Despite all the government’s efforts to minimise gender biases, women still remained disadvantaged in a number of spheres. According to Stewart and Armstrong (1990), the University Act Number 27 of 1982 Section 1, provided that no test of religion or political belief, race, ethnic origin, nationality or sex shall be imposed upon or required of any person in order to entitle him/her to be admitted as a member of academic or administrative staff, employee or student of a university. The law did not discriminate against females from enrolling into universities but the reality was that women were few in universities because of some of the following reasons identified by Davis (1987), religion, early marriage, culture, financial constraints and socialisation. Chiwore (1980) also affirmed that at university level intakes tended
to attract more male than female students. The following section is going to discuss on religion and access to university education.

2.10.7 Religion and access to university education

In Zimbabwe there are a lot of different religions. It is a multi-faith society such that these religions can be a hindrance to university education, if they are left unchecked. Religion is a factor which might militate against women’s advancement into university education. According to Clocough and Lewin (1993), religion was usually associated with low female participation in education. Haralambos and Holbon (1996) stated that religion referred to the existence of a supernatural being which had a governing effect in life. Some of the common religions in Zimbabwe are Christianity, Hinduism, African traditional religion, Islam and Judaism. According to Drew (1994), the primary source of authority for Christians had always been the Bible. It was on Biblical texts, according to Drew (1985), points out that Christians’ attitudes to women were biased, but this did not mean that there was a straight forward biblical teaching about women which everyone accepted. According to Drury (1994), the story of creation in Genesis 1 – 3 was perhaps the most influential text affecting women’s place in the society (Eva’s relationship with her husband and with God). The creation story said Adam was sent into deep sleep and God created the woman out of Adam’s rib. Christian writers, like Paul, used this story to show that women were subordinate to men because they were created from men, and for men (Drewry 2001). Galatians Chapter 5 instructed women to submit themselves to their husbands. This also influenced females to believe themselves as second class citizens in society. They could even sacrifice their opportunities for educational advancement because of Christian
values. It remained to be established whether women who adhered to these teachings were affected in advancing their education.

In African traditional religion, women took second position as they were expected to be submissive to their husbands (Meena 1992). Their main duties, according to Meena, were that of bearing and looking after children and the home. When it came to education, boys were given preferences. Therefore, religion could negatively impact on the women’s advancement into university education. Mbiti (1986) declares that religion is the opium of the mind. In such conditions believers may consider not to go to university education because they assume that learning is a human activity which is not a passport to heaven. The next section is to focuses on early marriage as a barrier to university education.

2.10.8 Early marriage and access to university education

The Practice of early marriage was one of the major factors militating against women’s advancement into university education (Gudhlanga 2010). In some communities the women were married at an early age of 12 years or less, and while still in primary school they could be withdrawn for the purpose of getting married. The Demographic Survey (DHS) indicated that about 46.2 percent of girls between 14 years and 19 years were already considered to be of a childbearing age the community. This practice robbed the girl-child of any meaningful opportunities of acquiring higher education such as university education (Gaidzanwa 1992).

An article appeared in the Teacher’s Voice in Zimbabwe (2002), where in a certain family, a girl in Form 1 was forced by relatives to stop school and was asked to get married in order to have
money to educate her younger brother. This seemed to imply that women’s education did not receive any meaningful priority in life. This notion was supported by Serere (2004), who said that early marriage, early pregnancy and early death of young women in childbirth are connected to how long they stay in school. This might also mean that women’s education was never considered important by the society. With the above discussion in mind, it therefore, implied that the girls might feel discouraged and never attempt to advance into higher educational levels, especially into university education. Females have many roles to do especially domestic chores. It is in this context that the present study seeks to close this gap. The following section dwells on culture as a hindrance to university education.

2.10.9 Culture and access to university education

David (2009), notes that the domination of women by men hinders women to venture into university education. Females’ access to university education was undermined by social attitudes and beliefs (Itzim and Newman 1995). Bunyi (2004), points out that female career options depended on the quality and quantity of attention given to the special needs of girls by the guardians, teachers and guidance programmes. Universities need take an active role in directing female clients of supporting non-traditional career interests and exposing girls to a wide range of career possibilities (Mouton 1991). This would determine whether women would choose to advance to university level or not, in this case they might be discouraged to do so.

Haralambos and Holbon (2004) observe that women were concentrated in particular types of jobs which were typically seen as women’s’ occupations. These were primary school teachers, nursing, factory packing, domestic products, secretarial and lower clerical jobs. In view of this, it
would mean there would be no reason for them to advance to university level of education. Alsatain (2002) affirmed that socialisation theories ignored the ability of the individual to reject, or modify the social expectations surrounding them. It would therefore, imply that, even the highly educated women might not be recommended to take up occupations which were not seen as feminine. It was important to remember that people were active agents who created and modified roles for themselves. Meena (1992) suggests that the economic crisis exposed the fallacy of the bourgeois perspectives and assumptions about gender. In Zimbabwe, it was clear that women’s natural mothering instincts and roles did not manifest themselves naturally. On the contrary, Giddens (1997), states that in the African culture, keeping the home area tidy, preparing food for the family among other commitments was the women’s responsibility. This would also influence women to the responsibilities for the home, and take educational advantages as peripherals. Serere (2004), in her thesis said that, traditionally and culturally, women’s role revolved around family care. Meena (1992) argued that, through state intervention women had been given access to men’s income without giving them the education to earn reasonable incomes inevitably and up tidying women into dependence on men. This could also erode the survival possibilities of such women. It remained the task of the researcher to prove if the women’s commitment and dependence on men affected their advancement into university education. Apart from culture, financial constrains affect access to university and this is discussed below.

2.11 Financial constraints as a deterrent on women to university education

The lack of finance could be a factor which hindered women from advancing into university education in Zimbabwe. On paper both sexes had equal opportunities to pursue education to the
maximum extent of their ability. Instead, male students seemed to be preferred by the institutions and society than the female students. This was often constrained by lack of the necessary financial resource within the family. Battle (2000), stresses that, education involved financial expenditure by way of fees and other equipment, increased cost of fees and examination fees had resulted in increased numbers of female drop-outs. Bunyi (2004), points out that a student did not only incur cost on fees and examinations but also had to incur other costs, which included book fees, travel expenses, and accommodation among others. The students and their families bore the costs which to the student were inescapable. Priorities in the family, therefore, could hinder women from advancing to university education as a result men are advantaged to university access.

Financial constraints might be incurred because of the size of the family. Mudoch, cited in Haralambos and Heald (1996), maintained that this was a social group characterised by common residence, economic co-operation and reproduction. The social group could either be nucleus or extended. Female’s students at times might have difficulties in enrolling for higher education because they might not get the fees when their families are extended. The male student in the extended families would also be given first priority than the woman in the nuclear family. Haralambos and Holborn (2004), say that such families could be seen as an extension of the basic nuclear unit. They are the additional members of a third generation such as the spouses, the husband’s brother or an additional wife. Providing services to the extended family and meeting personal financial needs might be difficult. African families are overburdened by heavy financial constraints but not Japanese families; this can explain why it might be very difficult to send a girl child to university. The research study would find out if this had a bearing in the advancement of
women’s education. Haralambos and Holborn (2004) also pointed out that poverty was a social problem. In most countries the incidence and experience of poverty differed between men and women. Women tended to be over-represented among the poor and their experience of poverty burden partly reflects the fact that women, historically had less access towards employment and within the labour market, that they tended to be thick in low paying jobs.

Compared to their male counterparts, women were portrayed as poor in society. The reasons why women were poor was not the question here, but poverty influenced their social status. When it came to learning at higher levels of education, the numbers of women were consequently lower than that of men (Eshiwainni 1999). The reflection was that the numbers of girls and eventually women remaining in school at higher levels dropped as compared to a number at lower levels. Such an observation is true and is beyond doubt.

Poverty was linked to levels of one’s education by the society. Giddens (1997) argues that without access to adequate training and education, women were unable to obtain gainful employment. Neumann (2005) pointed out that another barrier which required breaking was resource allocation. There was much research which suggested that within households, women had less access to resources and faced different work commitments and responsibilities compared to men.

Evans (2001) observed that women did not own land but worked on land that belonged to men. This is the same in companies and work places. With little or no resources at their disposal, women were more likely not to venture into furthering their education than their male
counterparts. According to the Teacher’s Voice in Zimbabwe (2002), a family withdrew a girl child who was in Form One so that she could care for the family as well as selling vegetables to boost the family income because the parents had passed away. The girl’s brother, who was in Form Three continued with school, and to the society that was quite normal.

Child labour was indispensable for the survival of some households in Zimbabwe and schooling represented a high opportunity cost to those sending children to school (Landman 2006). While the importance of child labour for agricultural, domestic and marketing tasks had been well documented, when it came to child care, girls were more likely to be involved than boys and girl children in the rural areas spent more time working than boys (Kuyayama 2009). This in turn drew back the academic performance of girls which hampered their chances into university education. With the rapid rate of growth in urbanisation, the demand for domestic labour in urban areas had also increased. Poor rural households have responded by sending their daughters into the domestic labour market in exchange for regular cash income. This also drew young girls away from schools. Information from some studies done by Morley (2006) indicates that rural young girls are sent to urban areas to become domestic servants for kin and non-kin families. Such transfers often occurred in their primary school years (Kwesiga 2006).

Parental or familial attitudes had strong influence on the decision to invest in children’s education. Morley (2006), comments that imbalances toward investing in girl’s education is based on many negative perceptions of girls and women. These perceptions needed to be challenged, parents believed that boys were more intelligent than girls, educational investments was given to males than women. The prime beneficiaries of family assets, boys were favoured in
human capital investment decisions. In addition, parents worried about wasting money on the education of girls who were likely to get married before completing their schooling. There was also a strong belief that, once married, girls became part of another family and the parental investment was lost (David 2009). Some communities and parents held a negative view of educated girls. Some parents believed that schools push girls into prostitutions, made them unfaithful to their husbands and made them difficult to control by parent. Such beliefs and attitudes in African culture can hinder development as long as they are left unchecked. The following section seeks to discuss Affirmative Action.

2.11.1 Affirmative action and university access in Mauritius and Tanzania

The two countries mentioned above have different access to university; as a result there is an observable difference in terms of quality of life and the standards of living. UNESCO (2010), studied university education in Mauritius and that of Tanzania and came out with a difference in quality of life. The small island of Mauritius and a much larger nation of Tanzania are separated by the Indian Ocean but have contrasting experiences towards increasing enrolment and access to university education between males and females. UNESCO (2010) says that due to low access and poor participation in higher education, life expectancy in Tanzania is 45 years. The fertility ratio is at five children per woman where as in Mauritius life expectancy is 72 years with two children per woman fertility rate.

David (2009) reveals that Tanzania’s university education is struggling yet Mauritius has moved from being a low income to a middle income country due to wide access to university education. The above comparison demonstrates how important university education is. Lumumba (2008),
sums up by pointing out that Tanzania though a relative large country it remains one of world’s poorest nations. Important to this study is that Mauritius has made impressive progress towards increasing access to university education than Tanzania and the quality of life has improved.

Gender issues affect access to university education not only in Zimbabwe, but in the region and Sub Saharan Africa. However, as women pressure groups continued to fight, the government adopted a deliberate affirmative policy that sought to give advantage to the girl child in higher education. Female students were given an edge over their male counter parts, such that if entry points in the Faculty of Medicine were 12 science passes, a female student could enter with 10. This meant that a male student with 11 points could not enter, and would give way to the female student with 10. This was the case in all departments. The result was that many male students were disadvantaged by this affirmative action policy, which following Galtung’s explanation is in reality a barrier in operation. Kapungu (2007), however disagrees with this and says that there is still gender imbalance in Zimbabwe’s education system. In 1980, the proportion of female students in primary schools was 47.6% compared to 52.4% male students. By 1999, the proportion of females had increased to 49.1% and that of males had gone down to 50.9%. The trend has continued at the same level, such that today the proportion of female to male students in most private universities like Africa University is in favour of females (Africa University Prospectus 2005).

The work of Mandaza (1987) is important to this study who asserts that the policy formulation process of the first decade after Independence was adhoc (1980-1990). The goals and targets were not put within a reasonable time frame by the post-colonial state. It was largely an act of
faith as the strategies and targets were neither well defined nor focused. These goals were not tied to the availability of the requisite resources to achieve them. The provision of university education was therefore, regarded as a compensatory act for those who had been denied the opportunity by successive regimes of the colonial era and as a payback to the people who participated in the liberation struggle to bring about independence.

By the end of the 1980s, it became evident that the government’s socialist ideology adopted in 1980 was no longer suitable to the changing world. It had to pursue new strategies to address the economic challenges facing the country. These strategies were prescribed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), through the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP). This programme was adopted by the government in 1990. It helped in the liberalisation of the economy with the consequence that many people lost their jobs as local companies closed down because of high competition from outside. The introduction of this programme required the government to cut expenditure in social services sectors, including education. The government therefore, had to make the most of meagre resources to meet the educational and training needs of a growing young population. Poverty became more acute and widespread (Chimanikire 2009). The majority of industries closed down and many people lost their jobs. From the discussion above university education became very expensive. The next section focuses on gender and access to university education.

2.11.2 Gender and access to university education

Nyandiya (2002) believes that gender roles are culturally rather than biologically produced. Whatever the biological differences between males and females, it is the culture of the society
that exerts most influence in the creation of masculine and feminine behaviour. The child’s self-concept is affected by manipulation for example, mothers tend to pay more attention to girls’ hair and to dress them in feminine clothes. Differences are achieved through canalisation. Toys encourage girls to rehearse their expected adult roles as mothers and housewives. Socialisation is the use of verbal appellations such as you are a naughty boy. Male and female children are exposed to different activities. Under the term gender there are several concepts. Gender identity refers to the subjective state in which someone comes to say I am a man or woman.

A person’s gender is not simply an aspect of what one is but more fundamentally it is something that one does and does recurrently in interaction with others. There are invisible inequalities and role differences in relation to men. In fact, what we have taken as universal and absolute knowledge of the world is in fact knowledge derived from the experienced powerful section of a society and men as masters. In any normal situation it is the masters who design and implement policies, including the educational policies. It is women who are subordinated but indispensable serving roles have worked to sustain and recreate the society that we live in. In relation to this study, access to university education should focus on merit rather than anything else. Having looked at gender issues the next sections are looking at discrimination issues and how the influence access to university education.

2.12 The extent at which discrimination influences access to university education

According to UNICEF (2011), moral philosophers have defined discrimination as a disadvantageous treatment or consideration. Shinder (2014), observed that discrimination is a Latin term which means “to separate”, to distinguish or to isolate. According to the above
organisation discrimination at present affects an estimated 250 million people worldwide. In this study discrimination is an unfair treatment of a person and it is action based prejudice. In this context students have the right to get an education free from illegal discrimination university institutions.

The actions of a student teacher, administrator or school employee may be discriminatory by favouring one sex at the expense of the other. A college or university policies in the way they are applied can be discriminatory. The victim may not be one individual but a whole group which can be negatively affected. An example of discrimination in education is the teacher disciplines or grades students differently based on their race nationality religion or disability. Poor students are denied opportunities such as access to university because of poverty. Warburton (2004), declares that the right to education has been vigorously classified as an economic right. Two thirds of the world population is women yet they are dominated by men. The right to education epitomises the inclusion and interdependence of all human rights. If women are discriminated against by denying them university access then it is clear that they cannot occupy key administrative posts in the society.

Ho (2007), agrees with Kapungu (2007), that gender discrimination is a structural barrier since some societies like Moslems and other independent churches have a permanently engraved negative attitude towards women no matter their qualifications or skills. Naturally this negative attitude has a negative effect on women, to the extent that some of them feel that it is useless to spend years in university only to be despised by some men who may not hold the same qualifications as they have. This may be as a result of social inequality and gender imbalance due
to social structures. The scholars noted that discrimination results in denying people important rights such as economic opportunities, social and political equality and a sense of autonomy and freedom. Jeong (2000) argues that the lack of an opportunity for self-fulfilment can be based on race, religion, gender, sex, economic or age. If a young female’s need for education is not provided adequately because of gender differences, it constitutes inequitable life conditions. Serere (2004), posit that women find it difficult to compete in getting places at universities and the discrimination is more direct. However, Zimbabwe’s affirmative action has tried to increase opportunities to women and girls. In this study gender inequalities has evoked a lot of debate therefore the following passage traced the origins of gender inequalities.

In a research carried out by Geiger (2000), proved that discrimination is when members of a particular group are barred from a particular institution. Such a group receives less than its fair share of enrolment in universities. Discrimination of any kind can have a profound negative effect both on the person towards whom the discriminatory behaviour is directed. Gordon (1994), carried out a similar study in Zimbabwe and observed that awareness to issues of discrimination and harassment is essential to create and maintain an environment that benefits everyone. The University of Illinois’ policy prohibits discrimination or harassment of any student of the campus community. In a study carried out by Shinder (2014), on access the inclusion of non-discrimination statement is required by federal regulation and is designed to make clear to prospective applicants that the university is committed to equal access to its programme and activities. Ayiah (2004), and Warburton (2009), claim that in India, among the limited positions for university education in government institutions. Geiger (2000) observes that Bolivia, Honduras, Tanzania and Madagascar males spent more and longer time in university
than females do. This study looked at how discrimination affects access to university education in Zimbabwe.

Shinder (2014) agrees that in order to reduce discrimination, universities should have clearly defined structures that govern them. The above observations relate to this study because discrimination influences access to university education in Zimbabwe. It is an ailment which hinders A-level students from accessing university education. There are exposed and are subtle types of discrimination in the world. In relation to the topic under study, the types of discrimination are outlined below.

The main cause of discrimination is constructed by the society. According to Mangela (2000), society is characterised by fundamental inequalities between men and women. UNICEF (2009), brings together previous legislation such as the Race Relations Act and the Disability Discrimination Act and provides a more consistent approach to comply with the law. There are two types of discrimination. Associative discrimination is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses one of the protected characteristics of discrimination which are: age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion, belief, sexual orientation, sex, maternity and pregnancy. Perceptive discrimination is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess one of the protected characteristics as listed in the paragraph above. The issue of gender discrimination is not only found in Zimbabwe but it is an eye sore in the region of Africa.
Research by Lowe and Nyakujarah (2011) found that the adoption of the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development in 1997, the proportion of women in parliament in Southern Africa increased from 17.5% in 1997 to about 24% in 2010. Nevertheless, Lowe and Nyakujarah (2011) points out that, out of the 263 in the Upper House Assembly, only 85 (32.3%) seats were held by women in the year 2010 in Tanzania. Moreover, the number of women in the Botswana’s government fell from 18% in 1992 to 11.1% in 2004. It further dropped to 7.9% in their October 2009 elections. Such a gender disparity can be a result of poor access to university education by females. Although many treaties and pacts have been agreed by heads of states and governments on equal access to university education the above figures indicate reality on the ground. Women are always lagging behind men. The following section looks at disability and discrimination.

2.12.1 Disability, discrimination and university access

In most cases discrimination in education leads to discrimination at work. According to the Education Act of (1987), there should be no discrimination in the provision of education in Zimbabwe. However, the Act fails to articulate the provision of education to persons with disability; as a result those with physical disability can be discriminated by university institutions.

The educations of persons with disability have been left to be addressed by the Disability Act. At the same time Zimbabwe opted for inclusive education as a policy that would lead to the avoidance of discrimination in university when it accepted the provisions of the Convention of the Rights of the Child, the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development, the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action and the Dakar Framework for Action. All high achievers
must be able to go to university nearest them or universities of their choice without impediments being put in their way.

Sweetman (2000), also explains that women who join political parties, even those with a background in civil society and or a significant female constituency, become isolated which is another aspect of discrimination. Significant to this study is the symbiotic relationship between university education and work because if there is discrimination in education then that aspect will manifest at work places. The next section looks at pregnancy and access to university.

2.12.2 Pregnancy maternity and access to university

UNESCO (2011) states that a woman is protected against discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity during the period of her pregnancy and the statutory maternity leave which she is entitled to. UNICEF (2009) says that during this period, pregnancy and maternity discrimination cannot be treated as sex discrimination. Discrimination against someone because they associate with another person or are perceived to have one of the protected discrimination characteristics is also against the law. It is important in this study to fight discrimination throughout the education system that is if we are to widen university access. There the following section seeks to discuss race discrimination.

2.12.3 Race discrimination and access to university

Mukonyera (2007) makes it illegal to treat a person less favourably due to their colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins. Race discrimination covers all aspects of employment from recruitment, salaries and health including education.
Discrimination covers four areas:

- Direct discrimination – treating someone less favourably on racial grounds.
- Indirect discrimination – applying practices that might favour one racial group over another.
- Harassment – unwanted conduct that violates a person’s dignity and creates a hostile or degrading environment.
- Victimisation – unfair treatment of a student who has made a complaint about racial discrimination. Access to university should not be affected by some of these discriminations. However, the next section focuses on issues of religion and belief, how they affect access to university education.

2.12.4 Religion or belief and access to university

UNESCO (2010) protects people from discrimination on the grounds of religion or beliefs. The Regulations mean that any organisation’s recruitment and selection procedures must treat everyone fairly regardless of religion or belief. Religion or belief should not hinder any one from having access to university education. The following passage is going to focus on sex discrimination and access to university.

2.12.5 Sex discrimination and access to university

Gunawardena (2006), and UNESCO (2010), say discrimination and access to university should not be done on grounds of sex. Sex discrimination covers all aspects of education from registration to graduation. It includes application requirements, conditions or practices at which, though applied equally to all, have a disproportionate effect on one sex which cannot be shown
to be justifiable. Gunawardena (2006) observes that knowledge and skills for employment are acquired from universities, therefore females A-level high achievers should not be denied access or equal opportunity to universities.

Odejide (2006) declares that the regulations mean that any organisation or education system, recruitment and selection procedures must treat everyone fairly regardless of their sexual orientation. Important to this study is that access to university education is the starting point of fairness in all life matters.

The ill-treatment of pregnant women and girls by the society is of great concern. Generally, discrimination is found when pregnant female students are failing to cope with the demands of university education. Although the national policy allows the pregnant students females to continue with university education authorities and societal pressure are not favourable. The following section highlights on how Tanzania, Bolivia and Honduras deal with discrimination.

Significant to this study is the work carried out by Hadzizi (2006), who points out that in Tanzania expulsion of pregnant students is implicitly sanctioned by a regulation (GN295 of 2002: Cap. 66), and thousands of females students are forced to drop out of universities each year due to pregnancy. Morley (2005) adds her voice by claiming that universities should be adaptable to students’ needs through addressing laws and practices, as well as positive action, for instance, to make timetables and physical infrastructure responsive to include those who are pregnant. Availability of university education must also take into account multiple discriminations, or the interaction of gender discrimination with other forms of discrimination, which can explain how women and girls are often the most marginalised among marginalised
groups. This includes sexual identity and preferences, which must be respected within university environment.

Ho (2007) claims that Bolivia, Honduras, Tanzania, Madagascar and many other countries, rich urban males spend more than twice as long in education as poor rural females. In support of the above observation the Zimbabwean education policy does not address such a discrepancy. Related to this study is the work of UNESCO (2008), which reveals that in Mali 2006, 17% of poor rural females complete university education, compared to 68% of wealthy urban males. With the Commission on the Status of women focusing on rural women in its current session, particular attention should be paid to the education of rural women. Discrimination in education funding for Africans can be seen as a vicious circle that ultimately keeps needed funds from those who might need it the most. The historical period of colonisation in Zimbabwe marks the beginning of the cycle because it was during this period that Africans were denied the right to higher education. It could be argued that there is an unseen thread that continues to penetrate people’s belief system, such that as a society, policies are made that deny students access to university education (Iram, Reza and Mohammad 2011).

University finance reforms or state-based funding formulas have not provided enough funds for many students who are systematically kept in the lower echelons of labour and education (Reza 2011). Much of the literature on university finance reform simply examines the lack and/or the acquisition of funding education. This thesis considers the need to end discrimination by not only presenting analysis of current and past scholars’ rhetoric on discrimination for Africans but also by showing how access university arena has failed to do what the laws are intended to do.
Therefore we can capture an understanding how a populace within a nation that considers education as its number one priority. Roberts (1999), notes that students continue to suffer from discrimination perpetuated in the inadequate funding of programmes and administration of education. Utilising the framework of political economy, we can understand how discrimination in the provision of university education finance becomes a test of this society to resolve the racism and the class bias that exists, and why the allocation of adequate funds to those who deserve them is essential. The next section therefore looks at empirical studies on university education.

2.13 Empirical studies on access to university education

Alina (2009), researched on access to university education and the value of a university education in USA and found out that Governments sometimes promote reforms that increase access to education for a large share of the population. These reforms may lower the returns to education by altering returns to skills, education quality, and peer effects. The researcher further mentioned that public intervention, should not take the form of greatly expanded education provision by state-controlled universities. The inefficiencies in the public provision of education might be magnified by enrolment expansions and might limit the benefits for targeted students. Therefore in this research the researcher will probe factors hindering access to university education.

Another study related to this study was done by Chukwurah (2015), who researched on access to university education in Nigeria. According to him, meaningful access to university education has recently become indispensable in Nigeria as a result of the population increase and awareness of
the role of the university education in the development of the individual and the nation at large. The researcher observed that admission policies of Nigerian universities of recent have been so dissatisfaction to Nigerian public that many applicants are subjected to rigorous processes which are difficult to accomplish.

Wanjiru (2007) examined why access to university education must be a global priority. His major views were that access movements are growing old and are beginning to retire. He concluded that it is time for the next generation to take responsibility for the promotion and proliferation of university education as a universal opportunity. The researcher further mentioned that the new generation must take up the battle for university education as a public good. However the researcher studied access to university education outside Africa this research study therefore focussed on increased factors hindering access to university education in Zimbabwe.

Lumumba (2008), researched on empowerment of women in higher education in Africa. He further mentioned that the major problem in academia is power, rather than gender per se, and that what is needed to solve the gender problem. The researcher further pointed out that i democratisation of university institutions is critical. Other major sentiments were that in Africa, the quantitative and qualitative participation by gender in education systems are the lowest. Therefore in this study access to university must be sensitive to women.

Hadzizi (2006) also investigated into the barriers to women’s access in the faculty of Commerce at Zimbabwe Open University in Mashonaland East Region and reveals that, poor performance in Mathematics or the decision to discontinue Mathematics effectively closed the
doors for many women who aspired to pursue university education. In findings he concluded that women tend to dominate the Arts discipline in many universities. The researcher further observed that underachievement and representation of girls in Mathematics and Sciences have been a common phenomenon worldwide.

Warburton (2004) researched on gender discrimination, found out that unless there is a critical mass change in attitudes and mentality of both men and women in nation building and economic development, attaining gender parity and the near universal education would be fought with difficulties. Changes in attitudes and mentality are the importance of role of education in society. It was further observed that two thirds of the world’s non-literate adults are women; this is a striking example of gender discrimination. Furthermore, one observation was that, women have a lower level of protection as their living conditions are poorer, and are victims of discrimination such that access to university education favours males. Another recommendation is that, governments should act immediately to deliver the right of every child boy, girl, woman and man to a free quality public education. It was further recommended that, all stakeholders in education have to unite and demand access to higher education. For this to be achievable, the governments must take the responsibility to implement education for all goals and strategies agreed by 180 world countries at Dakar in April 2000. These ideas will be examined according to the Zimbabwean context. The following section therefore examines the gaps identified in the review of related literature.
2.14 Gaps identified in the review of related literature review

The main purpose of reviewing related literature was to interrogate the research problem and reveal gaps which the current study sought to plug. The researcher was able to identify the following four gaps in knowledge which were expected to be filled;

- The challenges of access policy to university education in developed countries have not been fully explored by the available related literature.
- Most of the studies reviewed did not fully capture the symbiotic relationship between high schools and university institutions.
- The researcher did not come across adequate local research in Zimbabwe which focused on access to higher education.

2.15 Summary

This chapter reviewed related literature on access to university and education factors contributing towards low access to university education in Zimbabwe. The critical theory was used as the framework for the study. The theory is oriented towards critiquing the changing society and the theory seeks to understand and explain phenomena of emancipation of human beings through a wider opportunity to university education. Education is a key to social development. Literature was reviewed in four areas of the research objectives which are to; determine how access issues influence access to university education in Zimbabwe, explore how the socio-economic status influences access to university education in Zimbabwe, explore the effects of gender related issues in accessing university education in Zimbabwe, and to establish the extent to which discrimination influences access to university education in the Zimbabwean context. The next chapter looks at the research methodology.
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on important research process and activities. The process involved stating and justifying the methodology that was utilised, the philosophy that underpinned the study, the selection of the research design, instruments employed and how issues concerning ensuring the trustworthiness of the study such as credibility, dependability, transferability and conformability were addressed. The chapter also clarifies how the relevant data were generated, presented, analysed and interpreted in a way that yields accurate, correct and acceptable findings with regard to the issue of hindrance of access to university education in Zimbabwe. The chapter focuses on the methodology and tools that the researcher used to generate data that answered the research questions:

1. How do policy issues influence access to university education?
2. To what extent does the socio-economic status of A-level high achieving certificate holders influence their access to university education?
3. How do gender issues affect access to university education?
4. In what ways does discrimination influence access to university education in the Zimbabwean context?

3.2 Detailed explanation of philosophy of the study

3.2.1 The ontological beliefs of constructivism

Ontology is a branch of philosophy concerned with the nature of existence or reality and its main thrust is what the reality is. This philosophy insists that there is reality which is stable and law
like in the world. Therefore, this study took the interpretive view that there is multiplicity of reality out there. Ontology seeks to explain what is happening on the ground (Opie 2014). This study sought to explain the high achieving Advanced-Level student’s perceptions, views and reasons why they were coming to train as teachers in colleges and polytechnic institutions rather than going to universities. This study took the anti-positivist view that there is multiple, emergent, shifting reality out there that can be obtained through subjective experience. The next section explains epistemological belief of constructivism.

3.2.2 The epistemological beliefs of constructivism

Epistemology is the basic assumption about what we can know about reality, and about the relationship between knowledge and reality. It answers questions on what is knowledge and what do we know about reality (Silverman 2000). Positivists say meaning exists in the world while the interpretive insist that meaning exist in our interpretation of the world. Thus, this study subscribed to the argument that knowledge is interpretation of findings on factors hindering increased low access to university education in Zimbabwe. The next section examines the ontological beliefs of phenomenology.

3.2.3 The ontological beliefs of phenomenology

There is a link between ontology and phenomenology. Gray (2006) explains that phenomenology is an umbrella term that encompasses both a philosophical movement and a range of research approaches. Thus in this study of examining the factors hindering increased access to university education realities are the pure phenomenon and the only absolute data from where to begin. Thus this research sought to observe and describe basic lived experiences by the high achieving
Advanced-level students. The justification is that the phenomenological researcher hopes to gain essential truth of the lived experiences of Advanced-level high achieving students. The phenomenologists believe that knowledge and understanding are imbedded in our everyday world. Thus in this study knowledge is not quantified but it emerged from the peoples’ experiences. As the central task of phenomenology, this study provided a clear undisturbed description of the factors hindering Advanced-level certificate holders to Access University. These Advanced-level high achieving students are the actors in the Zimbabwean situation. Thus, their perceptions of the reality are very critical to this study. The researcher structured in-depth interviews and from the data generated he searched for themes and pattern there by organising data into meaningful units in order to create meaning. The next section looks at the epistemological beliefs of phenomenology.

3.2.4 The epistemological beliefs of phenomenology

According to Lithman (2013), experiences and beliefs are different sorts of mental states, and are often taken to belong to very different domains. Experiences are paradigmatically phenomenal, characterised by what it is like to have them. Beliefs are paradigmatically intentional, characterized by their propositional content. There are a number of crucial points where these domains intersect. One central locus of intersection arises from the existence of phenomenal beliefs that are about experiences. The most important phenomenal beliefs are first-person phenomenal beliefs: a subject’s beliefs about his or her own experiences, and especially, about the phenomenal character of the experiences that he or she is currently having. Therefore, the belief and experiences of the deans of students and Advanced-level high achieving students are a critical component in this thesis.
Examples include the belief that one is now having a ready experience, or that one is experiencing pain. These phenomenal beliefs raise important issues in the theory of content and in epistemology. In the theory of content, analysing the content of phenomenal beliefs raises special issues for a general theory of content to handle, and the content of such beliefs has sometimes been taken to be at the foundations of a theory of content more generally. Therefore in this study a theory was generated from different coded experiences and beliefs of participants. In epistemology, phenomenal beliefs are often taken to have a special epistemic status, and are sometimes taken to be the central knowledge between cognition and the external world. The next section discusses the link between constructivism and phenomenology.

3.2.5 Link between constructivism and phenomenology

Creswell (2014), observed that constructivism often combines’ with interpretivism it is a perspective and it is typically seen as an approach to qualitative research. In this study of factors contributing to low access to university education by Advanced- level high achieving students, the researcher constructed the reality by interpreting information in a natural setting on barriers hindering access to university education for Advanced- level high achievers in Zimbabwe. Ritchie (2014), commended that through constructivism knowledge is produced by exploring and understanding the social world of people being studied focusing on meaning and interpretation.

The researcher constructed meaning and interpretations based on those of participants. The school of thought stress the importance of constructivism as well as observation in understanding the social world. Constructivism emphasises that knowledge is actively constructed by human
beings. In this research the researcher focused on understanding lived experiences of Advanced-level high achieving students who have high points and they are not going to universities. Opie (2014) concluded that constructivists believe that individuals understand the world in which they live and work. In this study the researcher intended to make sense why A-level high achieves are not being absorbed by universities. There is a sound link between constructivism and phenomenology. Lichtman (2013), observed that researchers who take this position believe that reality is socially constructed. Fisher (2010), noted that phenomenology was formulated in 1967. It was a study on how things appear to people and how people experience the world. Phenomenological research uses the analysis of significant statements and the generation of meaning. These involve generating categories and positioning it within a theoretical framework and then explicating a story from the interconnection of these categories and this led to selective coding.

3.2.6 The philosophical perspectives of the study

The philosophical perspectives are that, knowledge is a social product. There are, therefore different qualitative approaches. Central to this thesis is the issue of subjective and a matter of its appearance in the social world. This therefore means in subjective the world becomes real through the researcher’s conduct with the high Advanced-level achievers who are failing to access university education. In this study the researcher is guided by the living experience of the participants. The researcher therefore was involved in the study. He had original contact with the deans of students and Advanced-level high achievers who fail to go to universities. The philosophical perspective of this study enabled the researcher to understand some of the views,
perceptions and attitudes of the participants. The following section focuses on the ontological belief of constructivism.

3.2.7 Basic ontological beliefs in qualitative research

O’leary (2004) states that the basic ontological belief in qualitative research is that ontology is the branch of Philosophy concerned with the nature of existence or reality. In ontology the question is, what is the nature of reality, especially barriers hindering Advanced-level high achieving students to access university education in Zimbabwe? The basic ontological belief in qualitative research is that it seeks to explain what is happening on the ground. Opie (2004), observed that this philosophy insist that there is reality in the world. The basic ontological belief in qualitative research in this study seeks to explain the Advanced -Level high achieving students perceptions, views and reasons why they are failing to enrol into university education. The next section, therefore, explains the epistemology of qualitative research.

3.2.8 The epistemology of qualitative research

Silverman (2000), observed that the epistemology of qualitative research is the theory of knowledge. It is the basic assumption about reality. According to Cohen and Manion (1994), positivists say meaning exists in the world while the interpretivist insists that meaning exist in our interpretation of the world. Therefore, this study subscribe to the argument that knowledge is interpretation. Trochin in Kruss (2005), has it that epistemology is the philosophy of knowledge or how we come to know it. Therefore in this study the experience of Advanced-level high achieving students will bring out required knowledge of why they are failing to access university education in Zimbabwe. The next section focuses on the research methodology.
3.3 Methodology

Generally, a method is an established habitual, logical or prescribed practice or systematic process of achieving certain ends with accuracy or efficiency (Collins 2008). The steps in a methodology are orderly arranged. There is also a technique of inquiry which is scientific. A method is a programme of action, in simple terms; it is a particular way of doing something. Such an explanation brings the study to the methodology undertaken to answer the set research questions of the thesis.

3.3.1 Definition of methodology

Howel (2013), states that methodology is the systematic, theoretical analysis of the methods applied in the field of study. It comprises of the theoretical analysis of the body of knowledge. Meadows (2003), defines methodology as a system of broad principles or rules from which specific methods or procedures maybe derived to interpret or solve different problems within the scope of a particular discipline. Therefore, from the above definitions, the researcher views methodology as a system of methods used in a particular area of study or activities. It is a set of ideas or guidelines on how to proceed in gathering and validating knowledge of a subject matter. It is also a method of doing something. Research methodology, therefore, ranges from approaches which are used in the educational research in gathering data to obtain effective outcome. Thus, in this case it is the principles and procedures in the inquiry of factors hindering increased access to university education by Advanced- Level higher achievers in Zimbabwe. Therefore the next section focuses on research paradigm.
3.3.2 The research methodology

The researcher aimed at gathering the opinions of deans of students, high achieving Advanced-level students and general students. Guided by constructivism, a qualitative research methodology was used in the study. The selection of the qualitative methodology is consistent with the view of Litchman (2013), who posits that qualitative methodology was found to be a suitable methodology for a study that is linked to attitudes, perceptions, meanings and descriptions of social reality.

3.4 Research Paradigm

An interpretive paradigm guided this study. Scholars, like (Miles 1994), call it anti-positivist paradigm). It is sometimes referred to as constructivism because it emphasises the ability of an individual to construct meaning. The importance of this paradigm in this study was that the researcher was the main tool and had direct experience with participants. Lincoln (1985) says that paradigms are all encompassing systems of inter-related practice and thinking that define an investigation. In this study the nature of the inquiry goes along with the three dimensions that are, ontology, epistemology and methodology. The researcher found out that there is a very close relationship among the three dimensions. Ontology is that reality on the ground perceived by people differently. It therefore, involves the philosophy of reality. The reality in this research is that Advanced-level high achieving students were failing to have access to university education in Zimbabwe. This philosophy is then linked to epistemology in this study. Krauss (2005) says epistemology is the philosophy of knowledge and more importantly how people come to know that reality on the ground, especially on access to university education by high achieving
Advanced level students. In this study methodology is a set of rules, principles and conditions that are grounded and can be guided scientific inquiry.

The present study focuses on the nature of social reality of human beings in finding out factors hindering increased access to university education in Zimbabwe. The goal of interpretive research is to understand and interpret human behaviour. The underlying assumption however, is that if the researcher has the correct tools, he could construct the reality objectively. Ritchie (2014) observes that some of the subsets of qualitative research such as interpretivism accept that reality is shaped by various forces such that findings are value laden rather than value free. Thus, in this study the researcher interpreted views of participants. The above is supported by Merrian and Simpson (2000), who argue that qualitative research enables the researcher to uncover the lived experiences of individuals through enabling them to interpret and attach meaning to their experiences and in the process the researcher constructs their world view. In this case, focus was placed on high achieving Advanced -Level students who did not have access to university education, yet they qualify to enter universities. The importance of utilising qualitative research paradigm in this study was that the researcher utilised participants’ views of their world. Stephen (2009), posits that it is an understanding of people in terms of their own definition of their world that is valuable to any study.

It is also a set of interrelated assumptions about the world that provides a philosophical and conceptual framework. O’ Leary (2004) observes that the basic paradigms in social science research rely heavily on verbal and visual communication to answer questions. The researcher examined humans in their natural settings. Qualitative research paradigm seeks to know the stories behind numbers and figures and for this reason it has become an indispensable part of
methodological repertoire of Social Science Research. This was done by describing the perceptions of students’ parents and deans of institutions especially on their experiences and successes. Drawing from the above information, the interpretive paradigm becomes a method to construct reliable and authentic depiction of meanings and situations.

The interpretive paradigm was suitable for this study because it examined the interrelatedness, emotions, reactions and social process which cannot be grouped into small and clear definitions. Cohen and Manion (1994) state that sensitive issues that deal with human beings entail the use of qualitative techniques because it is the researcher who derives meaning from the generated data. In this research, high A-level achieving students are failing to have access to university education in Zimbabwe. The following section therefore discusses on qualitative methodology.

3.4.1 Qualitative Methodology

The qualitative methodology was more appropriate because it explored beyond numbers. The researcher employed qualitative methodology because it uses inductive reasoning. The researcher was also a key participant. He persuaded, interacted, asked questions observed and even reached the point of de-rolling. He participated in generating data on factors hindering increased access to university education in Zimbabwe. The researcher was in a position to generate rich and thick information from students, lecturers, principals, deans of students and even other stakeholders in education. Qualitative methodology is relevant in this research because data is generated in a natural setting. Thick and rich information can be generated using this method (Creswell 2014). Quality information can be generated since the researcher has the chance to observe, to ask questions as well as to immerse himself into participants’ situations.
The following section discusses challenges faced by the researcher in using the qualitative research paradigm.

### 3.4.2 Challenges faced by the researcher in using the qualitative research paradigm

The most prominent challenge in qualitative study is to immerse one’s self deeply into the situation. This is so because the researcher is a co-creator of meaning (Henning, Rensburg and Smith 2004). The researcher’s personal experiences and insights are an important part of the inquiry and critical to understanding the phenomenon (Patton 2002). In most instances, a single case can highlight the general situation of the problem to be investigated. This characteristic of qualitative research has a shortfall as the researcher can be tempted to use few cases in examining factors hindering increased access to university education in Zimbabwe. To guard against this shortfall, the researcher used grounded theory and collected data as they emerged from the research process. The researcher got a number of cases for in-depth study to ensure that the results would be dependable, trustworthy and credible. This is in line with (Merrian and Simpson (2000) due to the large quantity of data generated through the varied methods, it could be difficult to analyse the data all at once. Data were analysed throughout the research. The researcher put in place checklists for participant observations and document analysis. These were taught to the research assistants so that they could use them effectively during administering research questions.

### 3.5 The case study Research design

Yin (2003), regards research design as a blue print of a research that deals with questions to the study, what data to collect and how results were analysed. Moyo(2002), notes that case study is a research design where the researcher immerses in a community in order to study in detail what
goes on in that particular case? In this study the researcher became involved with research participants. The research was a qualitative case study because of the dynamic and nature of the problem. Cresswell (2014), states that case studies are extremely useful for understanding a particular unique problem in an in-depth way. Case study was appropriate due to quality constructions in a natural setting. This research employed inductive reasoning as it focused on existing constructions of quality facts on the factors hindering increased access to university education by Advanced- level high achieving students in Zimbabwe.

Important to this study, is the work of Yin (2009), who states that with the field of qualitative research, the case study methodology is the most prevalent. Meadows (2003), agrees with Yin by declaring that the descriptive case study focuses on the systematic description and can expose the hidden aspects on why Advanced level high achieving students with good passes are coming to train as teachers. The justification for using a case study was that it was a strategy for doing research which involved empirical investigation of particular contemporary phenomenon within its real context. In this study the issue of access is a contemporary challenge and a case study helped the researcher to maintain a continuous focus on the issue of access. Hopkins and Lee (2001), argue that a case study allows a researcher to carry out intensive study of different parts, to discover relationships that exist among and to identify the direction of given relationships and recognise what actually causes them.

A case study also probed beneath the surface of the experiences of students. Cohen and Manion (1994), advocate that the purpose of a case study is to probe deeply and analyse intensively multiple phenomena that constitute the life cycle of the unit with a view to establish
generalisations about situations in their open institutions. Another advantage of a case study was that, it was experienced using various methods. Data in this study were generated through, open-ended questionnaires, interviews and document analysis.

One weakness of a case study, as explained by Stephen (2009), is that a case study may have some shortcomings. For instance, sometimes researchers get biased to their observations as they tend to interpret things based on their own cultural background and beliefs. To avoid the mentioned weakness the researcher used triangulation of sources, ideas and instruments like, questionnaires and structured interviews to verify and avoid bias. The researcher looked into the weakness of the case study, the greatest of which could be its limited scope for generalisation of results. Studies were confined to a fragment of a social unit or an isolated social cases e.g. colleges, polytechnics and universities. Nevertheless, in this research, the researcher argues that generalisation is not a consideration in qualitative research. Another weakness was of obtaining data which may be subjective. However triangulation was used to overcome the weakness of the design as will be explained in detail under 3.20. The next section therefore explains the dimensions of the selected case study.

3.5. 1 The dimensions of the selected case study design

3.5.2 Contextual dimension

The study as a case study was done in Zimbabwe. There is need to analyse the contextual dimension of the country in relation to access to university education. There is a role of contextual influence on the issue of access in Zimbabwe. However, nations differ in the socio economic, cultural institutional or political context. Contextualization according to Virginia
(2014) is part of epistemology. It is the human act in context. It can be seen as a version of constructivism in that it does not assume a single reality. It sees knowledge as emerging from context, hence the name. Knowledge emerged from the researcher’s position so that it is locally situated and, therefore, always provisional. However, in this study it refers to an interest in understanding the truth and hence has realistic dimension. Thus knowledge is in certain contexts. The gravity of the issue is influenced by the context. The next section explains descriptive dimension.

3.5.3 Descriptive dimension

Creswell (2014), points out that descriptive dimension aims to give voice to a topic or group of people particularly those we know very little about. The above dimension is relevant because descriptive tries to gain a deeper understanding of data that have been gathered and often looks beneath the surface of situations. This study employs descriptive dimension on factors that hinder access to university education in Zimbabwe. Gay (1981), observes that descriptive research dimension involves generating data in order to test hypothesis on barriers affecting Advanced-level high achieving students to access university education in Zimbabwe. Virginia (2014), claims that descriptive dimension is a semantic approach to analysis which aims to investigate and describe the nature of factors hindering access to university education in Zimbabwe. In this study the researcher generated data to describe factors hindering high achieving Advanced-level student access to university education. The above is in agreement with Gay (1985), who declares that descriptive data are typically generated through questionnaire, an interview or observation. The researcher in the initial stage observed that there are too many Advanced-level students with high points (points above eight) but they are not in
universities. The following section focuses on exploratory as a dimension in qualitative research.

3.5.4 Exploratory dimension

Ritchie (2013) observes that exploratory research is concerned with why the phenomena occur. In this study the researcher sought to explore why there are too many A- level high achieving students failing to go to university see table 1.1 in chapter 1. Jane and Ritchie (2013), explains that there are forces and influences that drive occurrences. The exploratory dimension tries to explain human events. Besides our natural curiosity about how things work we have a strong practical motive to explore, predict and shape certain conditions. Exploratory dimension in research include a great deal of activities. In this research the researcher explored, observed and compared rival views against data. Exploratory dimension helps to make sense out of diverse observation. Dooley (1995), concluded that in exploratory dimension the researcher first generates qualitative data and then follow it up on his data base. The above dimension is significant in this study because the researcher was able to generate new knowledge and meaning on why some Advanced- level high achieving students are failing to access university education in Zimbabwe.

3.6 Population of the study

A population can be viewed as a group of people or individuals that have one or more common characteristics that are of interest to the research. Leedy and Ormond (2009), maintain that, the definition of population in research refers to the entire group about which some specific information is required. The population in a research context is any target group of individuals
that has one or more characteristics in common, that is of interest to the researcher for purposes of gaining information and drawing conclusions (Best and Khan, 1993 and Tuckman 1994). In this study, the target population was too large for all members to participate, making it necessary for purposive convenience sampling to be used in selecting information-rich cases from which data was collected and studied (Babbie and Mouton 2005).

The population of this study was defined as three teachers’ colleges, and three universities. Participants fell into two groups. The first group was the consumers and these are students enrolled in teachers colleges. The second category was those involved in training processes and recruitment including deans and registrars. The researcher went to university not to deal with students but to interact with deans and registrars especially on recruitment and cut off point. Joining the two provided practical and ontological perspectives which assisted in arriving at the truth on factors hindering increased access to university education in Zimbabwe. The following section looks at the sample of the research study.

3.7 Sample

The sample of this study was derived from 6 tertiary institutions. Students who had Advanced-levels and are majoring in one academic main subject were involved because they are the ones who were supposed to be in universities but failed to go due to barriers. They were likely to give objective answers. Fisher (2010), and Walliman (2011), point out that a sample is that representative subgroup of the population that is chosen for direct participation. It is a specific unit of study drawn from the population. It is selected through a sampling process in which it represented the targeted population. The purpose of a sample is to gain information about the
entire population and for this study it was factors contributing to low access to university education by Advanced-level high achieving students in Zimbabwe.

The participants were selected through purposive sampling technique. The participants were knowledgeable and informative about factors hindering access to university education. Purposive sampling is a process of selecting information rich participants for in-depth study. The number of participants was not determined prior to the research and the criteria of sufficiency and saturation was used to determine the number of participants to be interviewed in the study (Rossman and Rallis 2003). The point of saturation was reached when the researcher began to hear the same information being reported by additional participants, while sufficiency was reached when enough participants were interviewed to reflect the range of participants and issues for the study (Rossman and Rallis 2003). The following section looks at sampling techniques.

3.8 Sampling techniques

The main type of sampling was purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a non-random method of sampling where the researcher selects information, rich cases for in-depths study (Patton 2001). Information-rich cases are those from which the researcher could learn a great deal about issues of central importance, in this research the researcher sampled the participants with rich information on barriers which hinder Advanced-level students to access university education. This was done through sampling of post Advanced Levels students with high passes in each main subject area at teachers’ colleges. The researcher also used deans of students because they are the people who deal and interact with students more directly than other college staff members. The researcher, in most cases arrived at the reception of the intended institution and he was directed to the dean’s office where he was referred to students having their main
subject’s academic study. The lecturers availed the participants with high Advanced-level passes from their main subjects. Purposive sampling allowed selecting a case from the general population because it illustrates some features or processes in which we are interested. Silverman (2000), and Goulding (2001), say that in grounded theory most sampling should be purposive and be defined before data generation commences.

In purposive sampling the researcher sought individuals and sites that could best supply relevant information needed to answer the research questions. The above is in agreement with Patton (2002), who contends that the logic and power of purposive sampling derives from the emphasis of in-depth understanding. The selected participants freely aired their perceptions and views on the barriers to access University Education. The deans, the registrars, including high achieving Advanced-level students who are training as teachers in teacher’s colleges were involved. There were 12 deans of students, two students in each teacher’s college (20) students per each teachers college, giving a total of sixty students with Advanced-level passes. Gender distribution was considered on the interviewees so that balanced information could be generated. Thus students and deans were equally distributed by gender. The next section looks at data collection tools.

3.9 Data generation tools

The instruments used in this research on a critical analysis of factors hindering Advanced level students with passes to access university education in Zimbabwe. The researcher was the main research tool. Open-ended questionnaires, open ended interviews, focus group discussion and document analysis were used.
3.9.1 The researcher as an instrument

The researcher analysed data using grounded theory and followed steps. The data was organised and prepared for analysis that is transcribing interviews, typing field notes and arranging data into different types depending on the sources. The data was read and re-read to get a sense of the overall data and start to list broad themes that existed. Detailed analysis began with coding, which was a process of organising materials into “chunks” before bringing meaning to those “chunks” (Rallies 1998). Data was coded according to details of setting, types of situation observed, processes, events, strategies and methods observed and social relationships (Bogdan and Biklen 1992). Once the themes were identified the researcher read through the notes again, looking for relationships among themes and other salient features within the themes that exist. Finally, the researcher chose one category and related all the other categories. In this research grounded theory was used to analyse data because its strength lies in the cyclical process of collecting data, analysing them, developing a provisional coding scheme, using this to suggest further sampling, checking out emerging theory, and until a point of saturation (Virginia 2013).

3.9.2 The questionnaire

3.9.2.1 Open-ended questionnaire

An open-ended questionnaire was used. The participants responded freely and even expressed whatever they intend to. An open-ended questionnaire was used to generate data from participants. Section one focused on bio-data of participants. Section two addressed the missing links especially those issues raised in the research questions. In this study, questionnaires were used to extract information from the students who had high passes at Advanced – level. The reason for
selecting this technique is that participants were free to air their views and feelings. These are displayed in appendix number (v). The next section looks at the strength of open ended questionnaire.

3.9.2.2 The strengths of an open ended questionnaire

Open forms or unstructured questionnaire called for free response to the participants’ own words. According to Ghoshal (2006), open-ended questionnaires maybe designed to tap into a richer view of perceptions and attitudes that are possible. Denzin (1992) states that processing of information from questionnaires is also less complex, compared to observation. Patton (2002), state that an open ended questionnaire reduces errors and has a greater opportunity to be responded to. It also has anonymity and covers wide geographical area. An open ended questionnaire was ideal for extracting attitudes, views and expectations of internal stakeholders of the college and university deans and registrars, on factors hindering increased access to university education in Zimbabwe. The following section discusses the weakness of an open ended questionnaire.

3.9.2.3 The weaknesses of an open ended questionnaire

The researcher was also aware of the instrument’s weaknesses which include lack of control of the participants. There were also limited responses due to space provided and also the idea of probing beyond the required answers the researcher substantiated the evidence by carrying out interviews on similar issues. Burton, Brundnett and Jones (2011), declare that to this effect, there is need for triangulation of data. Ghoshal (2006) explains that open-ended questions may be designed to tap into a richer vein of perceptions and attitudes than is possible with closed
questions and they usually generate qualitative data. However some participants can be carried away and may lose focus. The following section considers the challenges faced in using an open ended questionnaire. Hopkins (2008), points out that open ended questionnaires are known to have challenges, participants may not answer all questions. To minimise the problems of using open ended questionnaires only, the researcher made sure that the participants fill in the questionnaires within the stipulated given time. Such a measure reduces the rate of interaction and sharing of ideas among the participants. Another challenge faced on questionnaire was that some of the answers needed clarification. The questions however were presented with clarity. The next section therefore looks at semi structured interviews.

3.9.3 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with deans of students. The interviews were conducted face-to-face. Krathwohl (2000), defines that an interview is a conversation between the interviewer and the interviewee with specific purpose of obtaining relevant information. Using semi-structured interviews allowed flexibility because the participants were free to air their views within the given guidelines. The interviews pursued issues of particular significance related to the research questions. According to Gray (2004), the use of semi-structured interviews is congruent with grounded theory; the interviews explored new paths which were not initially considered. The research was not limited but probed deeper into given situations. The researcher asked detailed questions about an individual or explained and rephrased questions depending on the type of participants. Creswell (2008), alludes that individual interviews allow participants freedom to describe their world and reality. In this study, the researcher adapted the formulation of questions including the terminology to fit the background, position and education
levels of the participants. The researcher concentrated on topical issues and not specific questions, hence utilisation of semi-structured interviews. Thus, the researcher got a diversity of ideas from the participants. It was also critical in this study to understand the strengths of using semi-structured interviews. The next section therefore looks at the strength of semi structured interviews.

3.9.3.1 The strengths of Semi structured interviews

The strengths of semi-structured interviews are that the researcher was in control of the conversation process of data generation. The interview guide served as a basic checklist during the interview to ensure that all the relevant topics are covered (Patton 2002). Using semi-structured interviews allowed some flexibility, for example, it permitted the interviewer to pursue issues of particular significance that related to the research questions. The other strengths of semi-structured interviews is that the researcher probed deeper into given situations. The researcher asked detailed questions about individual participants’ situations and not adhere only to the interview guide. The researcher also explained or rephrased questions depending on the type of participant. This method allowed for the exploration and clarification of comments made by the participants as well as letting the interviewer use prior knowledge during the interview process on factors hindering increased access to university education by Advanced- level higher achievers in Zimbabwe. It was observed that semi-structured interviews have their own weaknesses and challenges that are discussed in the next section.
3.9.3.2 The weaknesses of semi structured interviews

The researcher identified a weakness in using semi-structured interviews as premised on the large amounts of raw data that were generated by the researcher and the research assistants. It was difficult to compile the generated data. This problem was mitigated by processing data concurrently with data generation. The study utilised the semi-structured interview guides because the researcher aimed to concentrate on topical issues not specific questions. The researcher adapted the formulation of questions including the terminology to fit the background, position and education levels of the participants.

Rotebower (2008) asserts that comparability of data maybe different from interview to interview. Therefore, the research assistants were not involved in the interviews. Another challenge, according to Lutrrel (2010) is the large amounts of raw data which are difficult to compile. It is also a challenge to listen to the interview so as to concentrate and capture the essence of the participant. Writing notes and tape recording were effective measures of mitigating the problem. Another challenge, according to Muijis (2011) is that some participants are likely to give answers they feel the interviewer wants to hear. The researcher incorporated the issue of trustworthiness because different perceptions may distort the facts if not captured correctly. The researcher obtained information through careful motivation of the participants. This was done by way of listening and respecting their views. The researcher made appointments and agreed on the convenient dates with deans of students. The following section looks at focus group discussion.
Focus group discussions

Focus groups are a gathering of 6 to 12 people who share some common characteristics relevant to the research (Burtnik 2011). Focus group discussions are essentially a qualitative data-gathering technique that rely upon the systematic questioning of several individuals simultaneously in a formal or informal setting (Denzin and Lincoln 2000). The focus group discussions allowed discussions on factors hindering increased access to university education in Zimbabwe. Focus group helped in facilitating the generation of data from many participants. Six members per group was the appropriate size which the researcher interviewed. Daymon and Holloway (2002) states that, six members is about the right size for most research purposes associated with traditional focus groups. This study borrowed Daymon’s view, and six members were in each focus group discussion. There were three focus groups drawn from the main subjects in the study. The justification of using this focus group discussion in this study was mainly because the groups interviewed were large enough to provide a variety of perspectives but small enough not to become disorderly. This helped the researcher to have an insight of what the Advanced-level high achieving students thought and it generated broad overviews of the factors that limit access to university education. The groups had a mixture of both males and females, as a result, gender balance was considered. Focus groups can be thought of as collective interviews in which it is hoped that participants, through their interaction may provide data and some insights, which may not be revealed through interviews with individuals. The focus group session is similar to an interview. Focus groups were done collectively rather than individualistic. data generation It is a method that focuses on the participants’ attitudes, experiences, and beliefs. It was a very good technique for generating appropriate data in this thesis. The researcher had three focus groups which were made out of Advanced-level high achievers doing main academic subjects in
teachers colleges. The researcher was the chairperson. Everyone contributed through the chair and the discussions were done freely. Therefore the next section focuses at the strength of focus group discussion.

3.9.4.1 The strength of focus group discussion

Focus group resulted in a collective synergy that helped to explore and clarify participants’ perceptions. Every participant with the competence to speak and act was allowed to take part in the focus group discussions. The researcher used focus group to provide a means to obtain collaborative and construction of meaning. Details and experiences of one individual stimulated others. Focus group discussions were conducive and often enjoyable for participants as they shared their ideas and perceptions. They revealed the extent to which there was a relatively shared view or great diversity of views. The focus groups enabled the researcher to generate data quickly and information gained in focus groups was then used in subsequent interviews. The researcher made an effort to tactfully give the group members a chance to talk as well as to allow for free flow of ideas. Opinions, discussion and proceedings were recorded using a tape recorder with permission from the participants and it took one hour. The following section therefore discusses the challenges faced in using focus group discussion.

3.9.4.2 The challenges faced in using focus group discussion

Focus group discussions are not as efficient as interviews in covering maximum depth on particular issues. Members in a group setting might be reluctant to openly share their views in a group. There is also bound to be the scenario that moderator leads a discussion into reaching a certain negative conclusion (Tuckman 1994). Furthermore, if focus groups are not properly
constituted, a few individuals may dominate the group proceedings at the expense of others. In the above view the researcher mitigated the above by organising the focus groups prior discussions and ground rules were laid down by the participant and the researcher. The following section looks at document analysis.

3.9.5 Document analysis

Document analysis is the careful examination of documents and their content in order to draw conclusions about the social circumstances in which the documents were produced and read (Schram 2003). The following documents were keenly studied keenly to generate the required data.

- Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front Election Manifesto item L (1972);
- 1899 education ordinance of Rhodesia and 1979 Education Act.
- Education circulars since 1904.
- Government tertiary institutions policies (public) and
- Church related tertiary institution policies (private).

These documents were accessed at a time convenient to the researcher at a minimum cost. Secondly, documents tend to contained data that are thoughtful because adequate time and care was given to compile them. They helped in analysing factors hindering increased access to university education in Zimbabwe. Triangulation of data generation techniques enabled the researcher to verify the data generated from documents.
In this research critical educational ordinances and policies were interrogated starting from the Rhodesian educational policy of (1899-1979), the educational policies of 1982, 1987, 1996, The Z.A.N.U. P.F. Manifesto item L 1972 including public and private tertiary institutions seculars and policies in Zimbabwe. Document analysis techniques included content analysis, in order to describe the characteristics of documents, interpretative analysis was used in order to explore meaning within content and critical analysis was done to focus on the relationship between documents and aspects of social structures. The above documents were analysed in relation to their contribution to low access to university education by Advanced-level high achieving students. The next section looks at document analysis guide.

3.9.5.1 Document analysis guide

Document analysis guide is an instrument that was used to analysed information. It is a careful examination of documents and their contents in order to draw meaningful conclusions out the circumstances in which documents were produced. Babbie (1992), states that organisations have documents and in this research documents analysis guide was used to organise various documents so that they can be interpreted easily.

3.10 Data generation procedure

Data from interviews, focus groups, observations and document analysis were transcribed. The researcher read and re-read the textual database in order to discover categories, concepts and their relationships. Bogdan and Biklen (1992), recommend reading data several times in order to begin a coding scheme. Detailed analysis began with open coding, which was a process of organising materials into ‘chunks’ (Rossman and Rallies 1998). This enabled the researcher to
capture a range of concepts used by participants to be identified and to extend the analysis so that research questions could be better understood in terms of grounded theory. The researcher made use of in vivo codes during these first stages to explore how participants saw their social world. The second stage in the analysis was axial coding, where the fractured data are put back together, looking for relationships between the data (Henning and Smith 2004). Close attention was given to deviant cases, which helped to develop the analysis. The researcher developed a single storyline around which everything else was draped. In developing the storyline the researcher retained the language, syntax and semantics of the participants. Visuals were used as adjuncts to the discussion. The following section looks at data analysis.

3.11 Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis consisted of examining, categorising, tabulating or recombining evidence to address the initial proposing of a study. Data collection and analysis occurred simultaneously as an on-going process. Based on the information gathered through open-ended questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, the researcher identified major themes of categories within. According to Taylor (2011, p. 158), research questions are very important. They derive all the processes of imperial research from data gathering to reaching conclusions. In the research, the data was arranged on the basis of common emerging themes and the themes were derived from research questions. The data from focus groups, questionnaires and interviews were presented by means of narratives. Analysis of data was narrative with some of the responses from the participants presented as was said verbally. According to Burton (2011, p. 147), presented in narrative, the qualitative research provides tones and a means of helping the reader to connect with the research that pure numerical data is unable to convey. By using
quotations from interviews, questionnaires and focus group discussions, depth and greater meaning is added to data. Burton (2011, p. 147), concludes that, “qualitative data by its very nature is more open to ambiguity and it requires the identification of emergent key themes for it to be organised, collected and interpreted.” Responses are likely to be unique to each individual participant so the researcher needs to be alive to the potential patterns that might exist and be aware of the opportunities for categorisation. According to Horbeg (2003, p. 65), qualitative research integrates the opportunities of organising, analysing and interpreting data and call the entire process.

Data analysis in qualitative research has a number of characteristics which were seen in this research. Data generation and data analysis occurred simultaneously. Alongside field notes the researcher generated analytical memos. These include notes about probing ambiguous and ambivalent statements and also notes on the pursuit of recurring issues. Qualitative data analysis is a vigorous process, in this research there was constant comparison, and there was systematic process of selecting, categorising, comparing, synthesising and reflecting on data to gain an understanding on the factors contributing to low access to university education.

The generated information went through a rigorous process. When all the scripts were collected, line by line cording was used on transcript that were thick in description. The researcher used key words in the in formats own words. Notes were written on the margins of the open ended questionnaires in form of memos .The interviews recorded in an exercise book were read and other data was classified and categorized repeatedly allowing deeper immersion. Similar codes were grouped together and these grouping are called chucking. Codes and categories were compared for similarities and differences through the techniques of constant comparison.
Through the process memos were written. Major codes categories were explained and a theory was generated.

3.12 Grounded Theory

This study used Grounded Theory which is a qualitative research method that was developed for studying the social phenomenon from perspective of symbolic interaction. It focuses on people, defines events and how they act according to their beliefs. According to Goulding (2005), grounded theory exposes behaviour of people in an organisation and their interaction which is highly symbolic. In this study the factors hindering increased access to university education in Zimbabwe derived a theory from the words and actions of the participants.

Using Grounded Theory, the researcher began his analysis when he started lecturing at Nyadire Teachers College in 2012. The researcher dwelt on typical cases so as to draw meaning from schooling experiences in factors hindering increased access to university education in Zimbabwe. Grounded theory suited very well with this study because it enabled the researcher to develop a theory. The theory offers an explanation about the main concerns of the population of the substantive area. It also addressed how access to university can be widened. The method assisted the researcher to seek out and conceptualise the latent social patterns and structures of the area of interest. As the researcher used grounded theory, he gathered data pertaining to a substance using diaries and documents. The data was open coded. The researcher wrote memos throughout the entire process. Literature was read and integrated with the theory. A grounded theory data analysis technique is relevant in this study because of the following characteristics, it focus on everyday life experience. It values the participant’s perspectives. It provides enquiry as
interactive process between researcher and participants. The next section focuses on measures to ensure trustworthiness.

3.13. Measures to ensure trustworthiness

Any study or research becomes trustworthy only if the readers judge it to be so. The qualitative researcher considered trustworthiness including credibility, dependability, transferability and conformability. Gray (2006), states that in qualitative research the ability to replicate observations reliability and to obtain correct answers and impressions (validity) are the terms referred to as trustworthiness. Lindman (2004), says that credibility of data is achieved through the following means, prolonged engagement, staying in the field until data saturation occurs, persistent observations and triangulation (the use of multiple methods of inquiry was also used). This triangulation is a method used in qualitative researches to check and establish validity in their studies. This is done by analysing a research question from multiple perspectives as to arrive at consistency across data or approaches. In this study four research instruments were used so as to remove bias from using only one set of instruments. These were, open ended questionnaires, structured interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis. In the social sciences, triangulation is often used to indicate that two or more methods are used in a study. The concept of triangulation is barrowed from navigation and land surveying techniques that determine a single part in space with the convergence of measurements taken from two other distinct points (Rotebaur 2008). Triangulation was done by cross verification of sources, theories, method and materials. This is in agreement with Denzin (1975) claims that methodological triangulation involves using more than one methods to gather data e.g interview, observation, questionnaires and documents.
Triangulation is referred to as the validity procedure where research for convergence among multiple and different sources of information to form these categories in the study (Creswell 2010). Multiple data sources were also employed in this research on factors contributing to low access to university education. Data was generated through focus group discussions, interviews, document analysis and open ended questionnaires. In this study on barriers that are affecting access to university education, participants were registrars, deans of students and Advanced-level high achieving students who fail to go to university yet their points qualify for university education. Different institutions of higher learning were used and these were teachers colleges and universities. The next section looks at credibility.

3.1.3.1 Credibility

Credibility was ensured through triangulation. Yin (2009), asserts that in qualitative research the term credibility relates to the vividness and faithfulness of the descriptions of phenomena. Open ended questionnaires and document analysis offered an opportunity to investigate why Advanced-level high achieving graduates are not having access to the university education. There was prolonged engagement and perusing of documents. The researcher after checking, reading, organising, arranging, coding and analysing data, gave the same report to the chief research assistant to evaluate accuracy and correct capturing of the meaning of the experiences. These comments and processes served to provide some checks and balances, thereby ensuring credibility (Patton 1990). The following section looks at transferability.
3.13.2 Transferability

Transferability measured the extent to which the findings of this study can be applied to another situation (Neuman, 2008). Transferability was established by expanding the type of sites and contexts in which the phenomenon was investigated. After getting permission from the participants, the researcher addressed the concern by video-taping the interview for purposes of transcriptions. The following section looks at dependability.

3.13.3 Dependability

Lincoln and Guba (1995), stress the close ties between dependability and credibility. In this research, the use of focus group discussions and individual interviews enhanced dependability. This was done to ensure triangulation. The way the study was carried out was also described in detail to enhance dependability. Such a detailed description allowed the reader to assess the extent to which proper research practices have been followed. A permanent record of the original data for analysis and researchers’ comment was kept. This was to allow others to examine the thought process involved in the research and also to enable them to assess the accuracy of the conclusions. The following section looks conformability.

3.13.4 Confirmability

In this study, the findings were the result of the experiences and ideas of informants rather than the characteristics and preferences of the researcher. In order to enhance conformability, the researcher offered a self-critical reflective analysis of the methodology used in research. The
self-reflection created an open and honest narrative that was aimed to resonate well with the readers.

3.14. Ethical and legal implications of the study

When conducting a research, one must be mindful of ethical elements. In this study, the researcher got a clearance or consent letter from Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU) and the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development that spelt out the aim of the research. After arriving at the data generating setting, the researcher had an opportunity to meet the principals of some colleges. The introductory letter was stamped and this made the researcher’s work very simple, see appendix (ix). He introduced himself, stated where he came from and what he does. He explained the purpose of conducting the research which was to interrogate factors hindering increased access to university education in Zimbabwe. Before data generation, he let the participants know that they were not being coerced to participate in the study, and that they were free to withdraw from taking part at any point in time. Kruss (2005), points out that by caring about ethics and acting on consent, promotes the integrity of the research. Merrian (1998), also states that participants should be assured of confidentiality and anonymity.

In this research, issues of confidentiality, informed concert and safety of participants were addressed. The researcher respected the rights, needs, values and desires of the participants by allowing them to withdraw any time as suggested by Creswell (2012). This implies that when conducting research with human beings, the researcher considered the scientific and moral values relating to his or her research. Feldman (2007), states that respecting people`s humanity
and dignity, even if it means that information may be lost, is of great importance to make the truth known. Research ethics refer to the type of communication, respect and privacy the researcher is supposed to maintain when working with participants. In this research no one withdrew.

In carrying out the study, the researcher was concerned with the well-being of the participants by protecting them from harm. This also implies that the researcher avoided the exploitation of the participants. The researcher obtained informed consent from relevant stakeholders. Feldman (2007), went on to observe that after receiving permission, the researcher must make sure to understood the topic and the purpose of the study by explaining it to them. In view of this, pseudo names were used for the names of the participants as suggested by Creswell (2010), who pointed out that confidentiality implies that no one has access to the participant’s data or names. The participant’s right to justice, equity, dignity and protection against any possible harm were respected. The study was planned and carried out in a manner that fostered goodwill by avoiding any harm to the participants either psychologically, physically, emotionally or socially. The researcher also ensured that participants were not asked sensitive questions that could cause discomfort.

Confidentiality, privacy and anonymity were respected in this study. Privacy in this regard implied that no information was being forced from the participant. If they did not wish to give information, their rights were respected. Confidential documents that include videos, transcribed interviews and additional notes were locked away for safety reasons. Thus, confidentiality of the participants was taken into account. No information was made known to the third person without the consent of the participant.
Lastly, the researcher identified himself before providing the participants with a consent form, which outlined what the researcher intended. They completed the form, only after they understood the requirements and accepted to provide the information willingly. The next section focuses on the summary.

3.5 Summary

This chapter has presented the methodology that was used in this study. The philosophy of the research used was interpretive. The accessible population was six tertiary institutions in Zimbabwe. Three teachers colleges, and three universities. The participants were the dean of students and students. A sample and sampling procedures were justified by the researcher. The research instruments employed to generate data were open-ended questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and documents analysis. Data was analysed using the grounded theory technique. The next chapter, will present, analyse, interpret the data and discuss the findings.
CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION.

4.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter paid attention to the research methodology that was employed by the researcher in the process of generating data for the purpose of evaluating the factors hindering access to university education in Zimbabwe. Data generation instruments which were employed by the researcher included the questionnaire with open ended questions, semi structured interviews, the focus group discussions and document analysis. To facilitate accurate interpretation of participants’ views with regard to factors hindering access to university education for the Advanced-level high achieving students in Zimbabwe, the grounded theory approach was used as a method for analysing and interpreting the generated data. This meant that the findings drawn from this study were grounded in the generated data.

The approach enabled the researcher to identify categories and themes relevant to the research questions stated in Chapter one. The generated data was, therefore, presented, analysed and interpreted following the identified categories and themes. Though reference was made to statistics in some areas, the purpose of the study was not to quantify the participants and variables but to present a thick description of their views and experiences based on the data. The data generated was presented according to the following sections: How access influence university education. Perceptions of informants on socio-economic status in relation to access to university. At the point of saturation, the sample comprising all the categories was as follows:
TABLE 4.1: Sample of participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deans of students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students Third years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main subject</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General students</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus group</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>PARTICIPANTS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 4.2: Data on deans of students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deans</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years at Institution</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years as Dean of Students</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age in years</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>47</td>
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<tr>
<td>Qualification</td>
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<td>M</td>
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<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Under qualifications: (M) Stands for Masters.
4. 2. Profiles of informants

The sample for this study was decided upon by way of purposive convenience sampling as discussed in Chapter 3 in an attempt to discover the factors hindering increased access to university education in Zimbabwe. The researcher generated data from three groups of participants namely the deans of students, Advanced-level high achieving students and general students. In the process of data collection, the researcher employed three different data collection instruments namely the open ended questionnaire, the semi structured interviews and the focus group discussion. A total of 60 students completed the questionnaire, while 12 deans of students provided data through interviews. In addition, three focus group discussions were held with a total of 18 participants. Female and male students participated in the interviews (Focus Group 1), (Focus Group 2), and (Focus Group 3). The researcher generated data from students who responded to questionnaires, 70% were females and 30% were males. D1, D5, D6 indicated that there were more females in colleges but the differences were in the subject areas like Mathematics which has more males.

For the purpose of maintaining the anonymity of the participants in this study, the researcher used the following codes with digits (numbers) in reference to participants from the various categories involved in the study:
Table 4.3: Key of Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CODE</th>
<th>POSITION IN INSTITUTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DS</td>
<td>Dean of students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GS</td>
<td>General students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWH</td>
<td>Students with high points (8 points and above)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOC</td>
<td>Focus Group (DS GS SWH )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data were presented, analysed, interpreted and discussed under the categories and themes derived from the research questions. The chapter answers the four research questions which are:

- How policy issues influence access to university education in Zimbabwe?
- To what extent does socio-economic status influence access to university education for A-level high achieving students in Zimbabwe?
- How do gender issues affect access to University education?
- To what extent does discrimination influence access to university education in the Zimbabwean context?

This study was influenced by the number of students who have high points at Advanced-level as well as the high unemployment rate which is above 86% in Zimbabwe. The Advanced-level high achieving students are the most affected group. They are roaming the streets while others are doing cross-border education to obtain degrees from outside the country. Some are venturing into small enterprise businesses. The above information is evidenced by statistics obtained from documents which provides figures of Advanced-level candidates who sit for examination each
year. The gravitas of this issue is that large numbers of Advanced-level high achieving students who are applying to have access to teachers’ colleges to train as teachers. They are being trained at a lower level than their potential. Not that teaching is bad but the argument is that, they are not being developed at the level they should. However, the above reasons motivated the academic spirit of the researcher.

The outstanding themes from the questionnaires were identified and quotes were extensively used to provide qualitative information. The researcher is a lecturer who works in the church related teachers college. There is a hospital, a primary school, a high school a farm and an orphanage. This community is made up of parents who have children who passed A level but they are not in university instead they consider coming back to train as teachers. Such an anomaly can reflect what is happening to some of our A level high achieving students in Zimbabwe. The following section focuses on how access influence university education in Zimbabwe.
4.3 How access influence university education?.

Opinions of deans of students, students with high points at Advanced-level and general students were varied, especially on factors contributing to low access to university education in Zimbabwe. A question was asked to the deans of students on the length of time they have been working in their institutions. This aspect was necessary because it assisted the researcher to see the average time frame each dean has served in their institutions.

These are some of the sentiments echoed by the deans of students:

D S 1. If I am not mistaken 5 years.

D S 2. I have been working in this college for 8 years.

D S 3. DS4, DS5 and DS6 worked for 8 years, 9 years, 7 years and 10 years respectively.

My interpretation is that for one to be promoted to be a dean of students one should have served the college for more than 3 years. This may have logic because for one to deal with the students affairs one should have information on the institution one is serving.
Enrolment numbers ranged from 300 -600 students per intake. However, the number of females outnumbered males in teachers colleges. This was unanimously agreed to by all college deans. From the above information, deans are sworn in offices after serving a particular period of not less than three years. This was critical to this particular research because a chance of gathering rich and true information was high.

There are quite a number of themes that emerged under the research question on how education policies affect access to university education. The themes are listed below and each theme was discussed with reference to information obtained from different instruments and sources. These are the themes that emerged from the current research question and they were clearly explained featuring as excerpts from interviews since the study is qualitative.

1. Perception on issues of access to university education.
2. Problems faced by students in accessing university education.
3. Lack of guidance and counselling of Advanced- level students.
4. Lack of information and knowledge on how to access university education.

The findings obtained indicated that progress towards universal access to education has been patchy and sometimes very disappointing. Quite a number of perceptions were aired by the participants.

D S 4 explained:

In Zimbabwe access to university remains strongly affected by policies. Access to university education has a lot of barriers that
hinder access to university. Some of these barriers are financial constraints, social issues, religion and culture.

The above responses suggest that access to university education is a critical component in the development of a nation. However, it appears there are so many factors that deny Advanced-level high achieving students to go to university.

4.3.1 Perceptions on major causes

D.S 6 also expressed that,

The major cause of low access to university education was that the education policy which was crafted is not being monitored and evaluated. Policies are there to create fair play. In this case our system should be open to all those capable to enter university education. There are so many barriers hindering access to university education in Zimbabwe.

However, it emerged that access to university education was hindered by policy ambiguity, socio-economic, gender and discrimination. From the six colleges, 12 Deans of students were interviewed and sixty students from the three teachers colleges. The majority of students, especially those in the main subjects of the Diploma in Education have points that range from 5 to 14 points at A-level.

D S 1 also confirmed that:

The Government, the employer and the Public Service Commission prefer a diploma holder more than a general degree holder.

These sentiments are in agreement with the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education which uphold a diploma as the benchmark in the teaching profession (Nziramasanga 2014). Focus
group discussions, interviewees and respondent to questionnaires also pointed out that going to university without a Diploma in Education is not beneficial because there is no employment in Zimbabwe. Most of the participants echoed that by coming to teachers’ colleges they wanted to pursue teaching as a profession.

Another response from FGD 1 was that:

A diploma in education has many advantages over a general degree. With a diploma one is assured of employment and job security.

Students' backgrounds and how they ended up in teachers’ colleges were recorded; some of the typical cases were transcribed below. These were the original transcripts.

4.3.2 Typical Cases

Typical Case 1

Herbert (Pseudo name)

I was born in a family of nine (9). I am a fourth born. My father was a farm labourer. My mother was a peasant farmer. I grew up as a cattle herder. I did Ordinary level at an upper top in Mutasa and obtained seven subjects at Ordinary level.

After O’ level I got a place for Advanced-level. My school head opted to pay for my fees and at times I had to do some community services especially when doing lower 6 at that high school.

I wrote my Advanced level and passed with 11 points in Divinity, Shona and History. My desire was to go to university, but I did not have anyone to pay for my fees, I did not have any
knowledge on how to apply, both the school and newspapers did not provide me with application information to university.

At the moment I am training as a teacher, a third year student doing History as a main subject. I decided to go for teaching for various reasons:

I did not have someone to pay for university fees. The programme at teachers’ college gives the poor students an advantage. The 2. 5. 2. Programme makes me to struggle for two terms and the 5 terms allows the student to save from teaching practice allowances.

Joining the teachers’ college has a number of advantages: chances are that you can complete and get a diploma; there is employment guarantee and job security.

In as much as I needed university education. I could not afford the tuition fees. After obtaining a diploma I shall consider otherwise to join university especially on part-time or block release basis.

The above mentioned student desired to go to university and has the right qualifications. The student obtained 11 points at Advanced-level. The Zimbabwean Education Policy states that for a student to be enrolled at a university one should obtain two or more points at Advanced-level (Nziramasanga 1999). The above student qualifies to go to university but due to circumstances beyond his control he is not at the university.
There are a number of barriers which hindered the candidate to have access to university. One of the barriers included lack of information from both school and newspapers, financial problems an lack of guidance and counselling. However, he pointed out that after the diploma the battle is not over, since he hopes to go to university even on part time basis. Access to university is stiff in terms of points. Some universities in Zimbabwe consider 6 points others 8 points and some 10 as cut off points Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU) is offering degrees but it is most favourable to working students who need to study on part time basis. The findings not very easy for Advanced- level high achieving students or school leavers to proceed from high school to Zimbabwe Open University without any form of employment. This research was not about mature students it is concerned with students who write June and November examinations each year in Zimbabwe.

4.3.3 Typical Case 2

Tracy (Pseudo name)

I am a 24 year old female student at one of the local colleges in Zimbabwe. I did my O level in 2008 in one of the remotest parts of Mutoko. I passed my Ordinary level despite the 2008 economic hardships and I managed to pass 8 subjects.

After my Ordinary level I got a place for high school. The challenges of school fees started because I was an orphan my father had died long back due to political related violence in Mutoko. My mother could not afford paying for my Advanced- level tuition fees as she was a peasant farmer. Another NGO named Plan International opted to pay for my Advanced- level since I was the best student at our school. I managed to complete my A level and obtained 13 points in English Literature, History and Geography. Despite all my wishes to pursue university
education I did not have any one to pay for my fees. Thus, I went to the Education District Offices and looked for a job as a temporary teacher. It was not easy to save money to proceed to university. Although I worked as a temporary teacher, I had to cater for the fees for my siblings and the family as a whole. But being hard as it were, I managed to save for the fees for the first semester. And I enrolled at a university. After completion of the first semester I deferred since I had no money for the second semester. I went back to teach as a temporary teacher again. I then failed to resume my studies at the university. I applied for teaching and was enrolled. I was given financial aid through Cadetship. However this financial assistance was very little. I sometimes resorted to vending especially air time, sweets and vegetables to cater for my financial needs as a student.

The participant is an orphan. She indicated that she was assisted by a Non-Governmental Organisation to complete her Advanced- levels and she was admitted at the university with 13 points. Apart from tuition fees, food accommodation and stationery were also needed. It has been pointed out that financial problems and home background were major barriers hindering high achieving Advanced-level students. Cadetship is not popular in many institutions in Zimbabwe. In most cases it is given in the last term of study and normally it does not exceed two hundred dollars. With such any amount it is very difficult to complete the course.

SWH: said financial problem was the major problem that affected her studies towards university education. Focus group discussions also pointed to similar reasons as to why Advanced-level high achieving students are not going to universities?
The following emerged in the focus group discussion FOC1:

High A-level achievers do not apply because some of the parents do not have money for transport, registration and police clearance.

The focus group discussions in FOC 2 suggested that university education in Zimbabwe is not about passing it is about having money. But registration fee tuition fees and transport and accommodation need sound financial support.

On a similar note, focus group FGD 3 pointed out that in African context the families are too large to afford, such that going to university is not a pre requisite. The group concluded that;

- The siblings are too many, they all need school fees.
- In most families boys are given first preference.
- In rural areas it was even worse, you cannot come across a university graduate as, a result there is no role model. The issue of university education is not given space and recognition.
- In most communities secondary education is viewed as the highest level of education in Zimbabwe yet those who are capable should acquire more skills from universities.
4.3.4 Typical Case 3

Jestara (Pseudo name)

My name is Jestara born on the 7 July 1989 at Concession Hospital, Mashonaland Central Province. In 1997 I started formal school with my aunt being my Grade 1 teacher as well. She cared for me a lot so that her expectations were to see me scooping many awards that included being number 1 at grade 1 level. With her assistance towards my school work I managed to excel very well. I was elected class monitor when I was in Grade Two and later rose to a prefect of infant grades together with my friend Peter.

In 2001 I raised to the post of being a prefect to manage the junior pupils. At this time I was in Grade 4. My performance towards school work raised an alarm to the headmaster such that he managed to find sources of income so that I could transfer to a boarding school. This did not do well with my aunt as she says I was still young to be away from her. I thought she was doing me wrong but I later realised her fears.

In 2004 after completing my Grade Seven with four units I proceeded to Chipindura High School in Bandura for my secondary education. In 2009, after completing my A level with 13 points I was employed by an insurance broker company to be one of its secretaries in the manager’s office. I worked for two years as a secretary even though I was given some responsibilities but I wanted to raise fees for me to pursue with my studies. I was then employed at Shashi Private School as a temporarily teacher manning Early Child Development (ECD) A class. I applied for teachers training at Nyadire since there were many advantages for teacher training course. Now
I am a student teacher. I was not interested in this profession. In fact socio-economic challenges forced me to train as a teacher but I intended to be a lawyer because I was good at Arts subjects.

The participant did not have parents; she grew up under the care of an aunt. The background reflects that she was brilliant. She obtained 13 points at A-level. Interestingly she worked as a temporary teacher with very high points. College institutions should train teachers for early child development (ECD) rather than training Advanced-level high achieving which could be a waste of human resources. At Nyadire Teachers College Para-professional (ECD), teachers are trained with mere Z.J.C or below. How can a person with 13 points at Advanced-level are employed to teach (ECD) pupils. Later on she applied to be a teacher at Nyadire Teachers College. According to the participant, she desired to be a lawyer and she qualifies. There is a gap between access to university education policy and its implementation.

From the interviews, all 12 interviewed deans of students indicated that they have been at their respective institutions for over three years. The range of student enrolments covers the range of 200-650 students per intake. Most of the Deans of students were able to explain the concept of policy access. This gave an insight to the researcher on what the participants understood by the concept policy. These are some of the statements extracted from the interviews with Deans of students on access policy to university.

4.4 Understanding of policy

A question was posed to check on the participants understanding of the term policy and different versions were given.
A Policy is something that controls an organisation. At the moment I may say a policy is that determines what done. I think a Policy is found everywhere at home, in churches, at schools, in the ministry of education and in the government at large.

A policy in my view is a guide, I can give an example of a campus which guides a ship or an aeroplane, if there is no campus the direction is lost. Therefore a policy provides direction of any institution. This may mean that if there is no policy it is very difficult to achieve the aims and objectives of any organisation. Policies can be there but they can be weak policies and such, access to universities can be affected.

A policy is a measure that provides a standard, without standards it will be very difficult to control schools and other institutions. Looking at it rationally a policy provides order, discipline and focus.
Due to my experiences as a pastor as well as a dean of students, I can say a policy is a canon, a rod that guides the organisation. It’s like a bible with rules and regulations. These regulations are imperative they must be followed; policies are put in place to achieve a smooth flow of events.

Deans of students concurred that a policy can be a guide, a standard, a measure, a rod or a canon, and they further pointed out that if the Government makes a pronouncement, then that pronouncement can become a policy. The other dean D3 concluded that, a policy can be a course of action that can be used to govern people. These are some of the statements which came out of the discussions,

FGD 1

It can be a law governing an entity. It can be an agreement with Government; the people can come up with a statement that guides them.

FGD 2 Another focus group mentioned that:

University policy access is a policy that allows everyone to have access to university education. Education is for all irrespective of colour, race, creed or physical abilities. Inclusive education should come into consideration.
FGD3  This focus group concluded that:

We are exposed to colleges and not universities. There is lack of information on access to university education.

SWH 9  I cannot afford to buy a newspaper every day.

Participants in the four triangulated data generation methods in the study pointed to access policy as one of the major factors contributing to low access to university education. The majority explained that a policy is a standard or guide in any functional institution and can influence access university education.

D S 3  indicated that:

The education access policy of Zimbabwe is not adequately addressing high Advanced-level achieving students. If the policy was well implemented, the policy must track all capable candidates and equip them with requisite skills for development. Both high schools and the government should have a track record of candidates who have done well at Advanced-level.

D S 4 agreed that, education is the light or torch to the nation. It should be used to transform the lives of the people.

From the observation above, access to university education is a preserve for those with means. It can be concluded that there are quite a number of factors hindering access to university education in Zimbabwe. The deans of students concur that financial problem is
a major challenges affecting Advanced-level high achieving students to access university education.

The document analysed especially, The Rhodesian education policy supported the white minority with tuition fees and grants that assisted them to access university education in Rhodesia. This was done in order to dominate over the black majority; therefore failure to have wide access to university by A-level high achievers may reduce the development of that nation.

**FGD 3**

Some of the views from the focus group discussion included that,

Access to education is not stretching up to university institutions. When one collects the A level results then the problem starts you don’t know where to go, there is no advice, bus fare and transport costs are not available in most instances, parents leave the burden in our hands. Some parents may say that you are over educated then see it to yourself; it is time to look after the siblings. We put Advanced-level certificate aside and apply to college using form four results.

One GS1explained that:

The education policy has a lot of loopholes because one can have very high points and cannot access to university while some with very few points are admitted. The reasons are many for example the distance factor, issue of exposure and even the communication system
can affect access to university education not mentioning career
guidance.

G S 9 went on to say that:

The recruitment is very rigorous and challenging. One has to apply,
must be selected and should write an interview. The waiting period is
too long for one to be admitted. Others may fail to attend the interviews
due to long distances and expensive bus fares. In most university soon
after application one need to wait until one is short listed through the
newspaper. The first thing is to register in person by paying registration
fee or a deposit which is almost half the tuition fees. Without money
then that place is forfeited.

The general view from all the participants is that policy issues are not adequately addressing
access to university education in Zimbabwe. It seems as if there are different interpretations of
university education access policy by the stakeholders. This is in agreement with Zvobgo (2014)
who claims that most governments adopted a segmented approach to the implementation of
access policy to university education.

4.4 .1 Problem faced by students on access

A question was raised on problems students face in accessing university education. According to
students interviewed access to college is not automatic; some of the students have spent four to
five years without getting a place at these colleges and universities.
One senior D S 5 explained in detail that:

First a student has to respond to the advertisement in the media; the student should go to the college to fill in application forms in person. The second phase is that the selection is done by the college staff and the cut-off point varies from one institution to another. 5 O’ levels including Mathematics and English are required. The selected candidates are subjected to a written and oral interview which is rated out of 100 per cent. There is a lot of politics when it comes to student enrolment. The church can demand a certain share, politicians can also penetrate the system. As a result those with better qualifications can be left out.

This is related to this study because from the above it can be concluded that having high points at Advanced level one can not guarantee to secure a place at any teachers college in Zimbabwe.

D S 4

Also echoed that, the written interviews and questions are interesting, some of the questions were,

- Why do you want to be a teacher?
- What are the qualities of a good teacher?

The answer given included:

The process is too long such that those who do not have adequate support materials like bus fare and good communication system can be left out.
It is easy to observe that the nature of questions asked on interviewees has no link to academic achievement.

The above responses indicate that in most cases high Advanced-level achieving students are less considered especially for primary teaching course.

*SWH 3*

I missed the Sunday mail hence the deadline passed. I did not have any option; time was running away so I decided to join teaching.

*SWH 11*

At that time I did not have bus fare to travel to a faraway university again no one advised me on courses to pursue. I did not have career guidance. In my community role models through university graduates are not there. In my family am the first to sit for Advanced-level and pass.

The above sentiments show that though students have a desire to access university education they fail due to barriers beyond their control. Some of these barriers included transport costs, lack of information and newspapers, no role models and geographical location when there is no support for university education by the family members, and then the Advanced-level high achievers cannot break the glass ceiling.

The emerging themes pointed out that the instruments used to screen students should be valid, reliable and sensitive to students from diverse cultural backgrounds. Access to university must
include multiple types of quantitative and qualitative objective and subjective sources of information used in the screening process. The pool of data gathered indicated that it has never been more imperative for board members to understand some of the key specifics of the policy landscape and their potential impact on the institutions they serve. Some of the themes which emerged pointed out that the nation’s universities are key vehicles for upward mobility and they must do more to even the playing field for all students. A sound education policy provides a synopsis of its provisions for example the Jordanian education policy (Shizha 2011). It established the Jubilee School. These institutions in Jordan enrol students according to merit. Grants and financial aids are channelled to universities. Korea is also a case in point where Advanced-level high achieving students are supported by the access policy up to university level (Kariwo 2011). The mentioned countries above support their candidates financially. These statements appear to substantiate this stance by pointing out that there is a missing link between the education policy access to university and the high achieving students. The following section looked at how socio-economic factors affect access to university education.

4.5 How do socio-economic factors affect access to university education in Zimbabwe?

A number of themes emerged from the above research question. Some of the themes that emerged are listed below:

1 Educational background;
2 Family situations;
3 Rural backgrounds; and
4 Geographical distances.

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4.5.1 Socio-economic Factors

The majority of the Deans of students indicated that students at universities and colleges are struggling to pay fees. From the participants the majority of the students at teachers colleges also mentioned that they were paying the fees themselves. However others went on to say that relatives and guardians assist to a less extent. Generally working for fees and studying at the same time is not very sustainable especially at universities. The following statements captured the views of the participants,

S W H 7

I am paying fees for myself, I have been a policeman but I resigned and joined teaching. The source of income was cattle which I sold, right now I am struggling to pay for my tuition fees as well as fees for my children who are in form three and form one. I am not very sure to complete this course because the cattle are all finished.

G S 2 1

My brother is the one who is paying the tuition fees. He is a civil servant and at the same time he has a family to look after. Relying on him is very difficult at times I fail to register and my hope is that he has made arrangement with the college administration that he maintains my account by paying 100 dollars every month into the college account until I graduate.
SWH1

My father passed away. I was in first year. During my teaching practice I managed to serve for the first term but it was not enough. I pleaded with the college and it allowed me to work throughout the holiday. I am very fortunate that I don’t have a family to run otherwise I should have dropped learning by now.

The majority of the participants demonstrated that they were standing on shaky ground when it comes to course completion, due to lack of tuition fees. Their financial position shows that these students were having serious challenges of fees payment. If students are struggling to pay college fees it means university education is even more complicated to access.

4.5.2 Financial aid issue

Does your institution have financial aid?

SWH1 mentioned that the financial aid facility is limited.

The DS 3, 4, 5 and 6 gave statistics that not more than 5% of the entire population of students receive financial aid and at times there is none.

DS 8 indicated that we do not rely on financial aid at this college,

DS 4 I have never met a student who has received financial aid at this college for the past three years. Normally on the opening day all students report to the finance office. Their accounts are checked and cleared that is if they have paid the fees. If you had not paid up then you are not given accommodation as a result you won’t attend lectures.
DS 5 One senior dean of students summed up by saying that yes, I have heard of Cadetship but at times students are called to the dean’s office where they are asked to fill application forms, filling the forms does, not guarantee that one has qualified for it. The government has no money to pay its workers how can it manage to allocate funds for students teachers?

DS 6
Yes there is financial aid in form of cadetship, the students are supposed to be aided in paying fees but the money came in the last term of their studies, the money is just a name it does not even reach a quarter of the tuition fees. It’s not reliable at all, I think the government must revisit that policy.

DS 1
On the issue of tuition by saying that there is no financial aid at this institution. Students fill in forms but the government continues to say that the forms are lost at times some of the in-takes graduate without having anything. As a college we don’t rely on these financial aids. The students pay fees for themselves and that is the college’s position.

DS 3 summed up by saying that:
The institution does not receive any financial help from the state. Students pay fees for the services. One advantage we have as an institution is that students from poor social-economic backgrounds are
identified by my office and they are allowed to sit for the examination but they will not graduate or collect results until they pay up their fees. The administration does not have control over financial aid. It is announced again and again year after year, papers and forms are filled but nothing materialises.

Most participants unanimously agreed that socio-economic status is affecting students negatively. It is not clear whether there were students receiving scholarship. Students from universities and colleges were struggling to pay fees. Probably there is quite a large number of students who were dropping out as a result of lack of financial resource. Kapungu (2007) notes that university education is underfunded the amount of money allocated to universities is inadequate. The following passage looks at document analysis as an instrument for data gathering. The researcher summarised a number of policy documents on education access policy in Zimbabwe, see appendix 10 on page 245.

Dokora in The Sunday Mail of October (2015), summarised some of the education reforms since 1899 to 1980. Dokora (2015), points out that step by step reforms before independence which facilitated key changes that European settlers used to facilitate and advance their colonial agenda. Through document analysis of the Kerr Commissions report, the researcher noted recommendations for the need for compulsory education in all areas for all citizens up to university. The interesting phenomenon about document analysis is that the Rhodesia Government unveiled financial assistance to increase access to university education for white minority children alone.
In analysing these policy documents, the education policy and resource distribution favoured white settler’s children and their schools. Document analysis by Mandaza (1987), concluded that compulsory university and fully state funded was given to intelligent white high school students. According to the documents of the Rhodesian Government in 1929 the colonial regime set up at the Frank Tate Commission that reviewed only European education. The Fox Commission in 1935 endorsed the restrictive measures for Africans to access higher education. It can be pointed out that A-level high achieving students with high points are struggling to have access to university education in Zimbabwe due to financial problems and the education access policy from high school to university is segmented in nature (Zvobgo 2014). The above information is relevant to this study because most developments are a result of good planning and sound university education policies.

Through document analysis, the researcher noted that the colonial education system supported the white children, leaving the African child student unsupported. The church and Africans did not have any resources. However, in this research the majority of the participants mentioned socio-economic status as a major hindrance towards low access to university education. The college and university deans of students concurred that the state has transferred the burden of fees payment to parents and guardians. In short there is a general feeling that low access is affecting those without financial means. Yes, some can argue that in Zimbabwe university doors are open to everyone, but what is the position of the Government in terms of financial support and political will?
Policy issues and implementation

D S I commented that education is a basic human right and it should extend to tertiary education. The interviewed dean of students, and focus group discussions supported the above notion. If access to higher education is limited then that nation remains in darkness and can witness little development.

S D 2 was also interviewed and responded that the post-colonial states including Zimbabwe lack craft literacy and craft competency to generate new information and inventions. Drawing from the above interview, the participants seem to agree that in order to build a dam there must be a model for it. Similarly, before formulating a policy, there must be a blueprint of the policy which should spell out the procedures, dimensions and requirements. The intellectual process of arriving at such a model or blueprint is called craft literacy. The dean of students is in agreement with Mazrui (1980), who says that Africa, because of policy and education, does not have the technological capacity to invent new inventions. In fact, the dean of students are in agreement that Africans do not have knowledge to produce technological artefacts such as engines, wheels or even some photocopying machines from scratch. In most cases African governments modified pre-colonial education policies which do not suit the indigenous local people.

DS2 commented that Zimbabwe did not have craft literacy to meet the expected needs of its citizens. Access to university policy is a foreign phenomenon to Zimbabwe and it has not been well interpreted or implemented. The intellectual process of arriving at the various models is also very critical indeed. There must be craft competence which involves the ability to understand,
select, replicate and localise information about models or policies which have been developed by other developed countries. In Zimbabwe there is a big gap between implementation and formulation of policy for access to higher education. Our education system is not well interpreted when we come to access university education. In this view the absence of craft literacy and craft competency has serious implications. From the above analysis the emergent themes indicate that education inequality between the rich students and the poor students continues to widen. Another emergent theme is that children from poorer families who are often the minorities come from families that distrust institutions. It is also important to point out that there is a correlation between the academic successes of parents with the academic success of their children. Children from rich parents provide a lot of educational support to their children. The fees are paid in time, homework is followed up and in many cases the parents act as role models and are a source of motivation.

FGD 1 had this to say in this direction those from poor socio-economic background have very little chances of going to university. Apart from tuition fees students need food, clothing, stationery and transport costs.

4.5.3 Educational Backgrounds

A question was raised as to how the student’s background affected access to university education and different sentiments were given. Some of the sentiments are presented below;

DS1:

The majority of the students were from rural schools and had five to ten points.
SWH3; pointed out that:

The background really affects access like myself I did not get the correct information on programme due to staying in the deep rural area.

G S 4 Said;

Yes, parents who are enlightened guide their children with materials such as role model and books. Homework and support material is given to children of rich families.

FGD 3; Also adds on to say that:

Students from poor backgrounds have very little chances of having access. The processes are expensive and rigorous. Without money access to university education is very limited.

The above condition explains why the high achieving Advanced- level students in Zimbabwe are choosing teachers college. The majority of the participants did their ‘O’ level at rural day schools. Mullen (2010), says that rural environments affect an individual’s decisions about university education and influencing choices about carrier and life prospects. The chances of students selecting rural or inferior institution for their higher education is further increased if the students attended their primary school in a rural setting too. The phenomenon is further demonstrated by the fact that among the students under discussion, a very small minority did their Ordinary level and Advanced- level in an urban setting. In most remote areas of Mudzi, Mutoko, Uzumba, Maramba and Pfungwe, there is no network and the Zimbabwe Broadcasting
Corporation transmission is very weak. Such backgrounds and geographical location can affect access to university education. Those students who live in less developed rural areas are likely to meet challenges in accessing university education in Zimbabwe. This is supported by Rukuni (2007) who suggest that lack of information and knowledge can be some of the barriers to access university education.

**SWH 1**

There is no Zimbabwe Broadcasting Co-operation Transmission services, meaning to say there is no access to radios and televisions channels at times.

**SWH 2**

The newspapers are scarce in fact pupils and students rely on information they get from local school heads and teachers which is very much inadequate.

**Lack of proper advice, guidance and counselling in high schools**

SWH 1 said that they learned at a later stage during their Advanced level studies that their combinations would not allow them to pursue the courses they like at university and so did not bother to apply but due to lack of proper advice they studied different subject combination.

SWH 3; echoed that: there is lack of proper advice guidance and counselling.

I took up Divinity, History and English Literature. I should have continued with Commerce, Accounts and Science which I did very well at’ O’ level.
Lack of proper advice is prevalent in universities since students fail to secure a place because their Advanced-level subject combination does not lead to the pursuit of a discipline. Information and advice is very important to students who desire to enrol in university. This problem comes from lack of proper guidance and lack of information at Advanced-level. Not all secondary schools in Zimbabwe are receiving guidance and counselling from District Education Offices.

School heads contribute to this problem because they do not advise students on subject combination on courses. There is need for a powerful orientation before Advanced-level high achieving students embark on their academic journey to university.

An emergent theme that appears is that there is a big vacuum between high school education and university education. The point is that school heads teachers do have a formative and summative summary of the achieving Advanced-level students. The Advanced-level high achieving students graduate from high school and they scramble for limited resources. Most of the high schools’ heads teachers put emphasis on high pass rate. This only boosts their school enrolment and teachers' reputations at the expense of the students’ future careers. Career guidance is very important in the life of a student because it helps to make informed choices which influence future life. Career guidance is offered to some schools in the urban settings and few schools in rural setting and some boarding schools.
4.5.4 Geographical distances

Most participants gave their views on the relationship between geographical distance and access to university education. Some of the sentiments are given below:

D S 4 said:

From experience, those around town stand a better chance. They are better positioned in terms of sending applications, interview, accessing information through radios and newspapers.

S W H 6 had this to say:

With nine points I reside in the remote area where there is no communication.

FGD 2 One participant indicated that there are no role models in the rural areas. Those with educational influence go into towns.

G S 38 I could not get the adverts in time and hence I failed to meet the deadlines. I was denied access by distance. I had identified the right combination of courses but later felt that transport cost and family commitment could not permit me to go to university. Nyadire Teachers’ College is close to my home area and it is the only College I know, so I find it easy to sometimes visit my village when there is need.

G S 39 I come from a polygamous family with a lot of siblings and extended family. They need money and so parents could not afford the regular transport costs from University to home and
vice versa. They prefer to teachers college where they are assured of decent accommodation and assured completion.

GS 31 Long, distance especially from remote areas where roads are a problem and these are a hindrance to the processing of accessing university education.

The above is supported by UNESCO (2010), which pointed out that the location of institutions affect high achieving students especially were roads and public transport have not penetrated.

4.5.5 Family situations

A few high achieving students said they could not destroy their marriages and the lives of newly born babies as well as aged relatives under their care. They decided to go to Teachers Colleges instead of going to universities

S W H 9 I got married recently and have a new baby. My family lives in Mutoko which is near the College. I find it very easy to commute between home and college to breast feed my baby. With distance and accommodation problems, I doubt if I would be able to do this if I were at any University in the country. Although ZOU is offering degrees through ODL it is most favourable to those who work and study.

Another S W H 11 with 9 points expressed in detail that:

I had got place but my husband prevented me because he is not so well educated, he does not have a degree so he stopped me from going to University.
DS 1 said;

Some religious family those of the Johane Marange do not encourage female students to enter university education, because according to them when they are educated, they become rebellious.

The majority of the participants pointed out that marriage and access to university is not very favourable. Most men discourage sending wives to universities because they fear to lose their marriages. Culture and religion in Zimbabwe do not encourage women to go to university because in African context women are viewed as second class who cannot be above men. This scenario can be true since African woman are supposed to look after children, to work in fields as well as cooking and washing for the husband. The themes developed from these issues are that family and marriage affect female girl students’ ability to receive higher education. Gaidzanwa (1992) observes that early marriage, household responsibilities, pressure of work and related issues can inhibit girls and women from accessing and competing university education.

4.5.6 Rural backgrounds

Different views were given on how the rural background of students affected their access to university education.

DS I said that;

Most students come from rural backgrounds and rural schools. The high achieving students lack exposure to information and also career guidance. Some of them discover later that teaching is not for them.
Another very important factor was that Advanced-level high achievers’ decision to come to teachers’ college instead of going to University was the guarantee of a job.

DS 4Once somebody qualifies as a teacher in Zimbabwe they are almost assured of a job. Jobs and employment are a problem in the country today and will continue for ten to twenty years.

GS 14 said:

I withdrew from University because I had been offered a combination which I did not like. I did not like the programme I was being offered at University. Bachelor of Arts, Geography and English and ultimately will still become a teacher upon completion. Enrolment for a programme like Bachelor of Arts degree usually means that one would still need to do general certificate in education to put some weight and status on your profession as a teacher.

In other words students realised that doing a Bachelor of Arts in Geography and English would limit her prospects for jobs and whereas a teaching diploma from teachers’ college would give her professional status, the employment opportunities in these economic hardships prevailing in our country are very slim. This tends to indicate that the A-level high achieving students may decide to go to teachers’ colleges not by choice but by default.

A very interesting point raised by GS 15 is that:

It is better to have a diploma and get a job than going to university to obtain a general degree that does not pay. Perhaps this can be one of
the reasons why teachers colleges are being flooded by A-level high achieving students in Zimbabwe.

DS 5 had this to say:

There is also the added problem of widespread poverty, worsened by poor harvests and high unemployment. This means that, students find it extremely difficult to finance their own education and for a long time they depended on scholarship.

The above assertions are in line with UNESCO (2010) claims that recent statistics from the Consumer Council of Zimbabwe (CCZ) stating that more than 85% of the Zimbabwean population is living under poverty datum line and so can be classified as poor. In addition to that, the methods used by the scholarship managers to reach out to these poor students are far from adequate. Only one method is prominently used, the print media especially the Sunday Mail, The Herald, Manica Post and the Chronicle for advertisement. These newspapers do not reach every corner of the rural districts. Some parts of Zimbabwe are not easily accessible by road and this means such people hardly get any newspaper. Another problem is the prohibitive price of the newspaper at the cost of a dollar per copy, many Advanced-level high achieving students cannot afford especially if one has to buy it for many times until one gets an advertisements.

This issue of poverty is a major form of violence and Ho (2007), mentions that if poverty is not eradicated within a country, human development cannot take place and this becomes a structural barrier. Family commitment also forms part of cultural violence in that a married woman is not
encouraged to leave her husband and family in pursuit of university education. Culturally elderly people should also not be left out unattended to and young people should not prioritize their educational quests at their expenses.

Most participants highlighted that another point of concern raised in the study is that of state sponsored scholarships are targeted to youth from poor rural and disadvantaged backgrounds. The participants noted that the above observation is not fair to urban schools and more often than not there are people of low economic position in urban communities than rural communities. In addition, the participants highlighted that rural communities can afford to get a living from land obtained through the resettlement programme. Urban communities on the other hand suffer from high unemployment and are ravaged by HIV and AIDS and have to purchase almost everything they consume under most difficult conditions of earning a dollar.

4.6 How Issues of Gender Affect Access to University Education

The raised question on gender led to the emergent of the themes:

1 gender issues
2 religions
3 cultures
4 fees

4.6.1 A question was asked to check on the participants understanding of gender

Many views were given by the participants, and among them are the listed below;
It is about the roles undertaken by females and males.

A construction of a society, it emulates from socialisation, people are socialised in terms of gender. The theme that emerged is that gender issues can be biased because it is designed by people in most cases the elders and the most powerful. There are so many sentiments that were given by participants.

From the interviews carried out:

D S 3 explained:

Gender is there but from a glance it is subtle. It is through analysis that one begins to see the factors of gender affecting access. The majority of the participants demonstrated the same sentiments that gender issues affect access to university education. The majority of the views showed the complexity of gender and education. Aspects like society, roles, family responsibility and marriage affect a certain sex or gender.

Participants expressed that, gender was really a problem in accessing university education. It became a problem because women are loaded with more duties than men. Pregnancy, child bearing and other household duties affect women to access university education.

4.6.2 Issues of Religion

There were many views mentioned by the participants some of them included the following:
DS 3 included that:
Religion militates against women’s advancement into university education. Most religions educate women to confine them to the kitchen.

Some of the Pentecostal Churches do not even allow women to preach or to assume leadership roles. Children are socialised into specific gender roles as soon as their parents know their gender.

Comment

From the available data it can be concluded that men are the preferred gender and are encouraged to engage in computer and scientific learning. These gender roles are rooted within institutions. Women are socialised to be obedient to their husbands, to look after the family and to be loyal to the church. In the Apostolic Church the men can marry as many women as possible, in such conditions the women work for the families and pay fees which is difficulty for the majority to send Advanced-level high achievers female students to university.

DS6 said: Religion can blind someone not to pursue university education.

Mbiti (1998) agrees with the assertion that Africans are notoriously religious. Africans, when it comes to religion they can sacrifices their education for the sake of religion.

FGD 3 Pointed that:

Some females sacrifice their opportunity in education advancement for Christian values.
D S 4 commented that,

Some communities in Zimbabwe have got girls who are married at primary school at the age of 12. This practice robs the girl child of any opportunities in acquiring higher education. One of the issues of early marriage is connected to early pregnancy.

Comment

It emerged from the questionnaire and interviewees that another factor which was frequently mentioned is the issue of culture. Most female students with high Advanced-level results are found at teachers colleges. Another explanation advanced for the reason of low access was that of culture and socialisation, culture and society expectations. In an African context a woman is supposed to be married and the husband is expected to pay lobola. This may affect access to university because in most cases these married women are over burdened by family responsibilities.

DS1 said:

The boy child is given better opportunity than a girl child. In remote rural areas, some girls are paid to appease the spirits of the dead (avenging spirit).

D S 2 claimed that:

Culture is viewed as what the society values, the norms ethics and values of a society cement the society together. In an African context a
wronged family should pay another family by surrendering a girl child. Such a practice disregards educational endeavours. No matter how intelligent the girl is, she is forced to leave school by culture. A boy child is more respected by the family members. Therefore, more support is given to boy child and this is observed when a parent prefers to pay fees for a boy to go to university ignoring the girl child.

Quite a number of questionnaires, participants, focus group discussions and interviewees pointed out that most husbands do not want to release their wives to study in universities.

SWH In African culture a girl is over-burdened by a lot of duties at home. They are asked to look after babies, to cook, to do field work as well as to learn to become a mother. Yet boys do have less burden and they have more time to do their homework and to study. From some of the questionnaires, it emerged that educating women is viewed with suspicion by the society and family members.

**4.6.3 Financial hindrances**

A number of barriers were mentioned by participants and some of them are:

G S 7 said:

Financial constraints incurred due to the size of family forced me to drop out from university. Most Zimbabwean families have got extended families and this has a bearing on accessing of university
education by females. At one of the universities there were few females, most females are affected at school level for example; child labour is indispensable to their survival. This is evidenced by some domestic workers in the urban places who are females. In town most families need a house maid, some of these maids are school going age. Due to poverty, these females are found working in some homes rather than going to school.

SWH8

Probably parents are worried of wasting money on girls’ education, because they are likely to get married after schooling. Eventually wealthy is transferred from the girl family to a boy family.

SWH 9

There is also an attitudinal problem, some of the parents and husbands see universities as training grounds for prostitution. Such a view assumes that university education will make girls and females very unfaithful. Most husbands are not interested in supporting their spouse to university education. Even paying fees for their spouses, you see.

Analysing the data from the above paragraphs, higher education access for female students has not seen much improvement despite global consensus. Very few females are found in Medicine, Mathematics and Computers programmes.
Another comment from D S 3 says:

   Females are facing greater challenges than men; the affirmative action programme was a step to advance females in accessing university education.

Despite the implementation of the Affirmation Action policy, female students continue to suffer exclusion from universities. However, if these females access university education, it could help to break the glass ceiling.

D S 6 explained that:

   An educated female is likely to send her children to school and is likely to have healthy babies.

D S 5 further explained that;

   These days the gender gap is narrowing though inequalities still persist. She further explained that lack of sustainable colleges, universities and government policy access on women can be argued to contribute to the sustained gender gap in Zimbabwean tertiary institution.
4.7. The Extent of Discrimination and Access to University Education

How discrimination affect access to university education?

There are quite a number of themes that emerged, some of them were:

Early marriages
Disability
Racism
Religion

4.7.1 Views on Discrimination and Access

There were many sentiments echoed by the participants, some of the sentiments are found in the following section:

DS 1 pointed out that

In a global village that we live in, university education institutions have a critical role to play in the social and economic transformation of African societies. Increased women participation in university education is particularly important in era of globalisation. Globalisation seems to favour those with high level skills and useful knowledge.

From the large volume of data generated on what is discrimination, participants mentioned that discrimination occurs when someone was treated unfairly or badly in certain respects.
FGD 2 Discrimination occurs because people have stereotypical ideas or beliefs about other people because they happen to belong to other groups or they have certain characteristics or attributes.

FGD 3 Also pointed out that discrimination can be viewed as elimination, it is inferiority imposed to a certain group over another and being deprived of their rights.

From focus group discussion it can be concluded that the participants were aware and they have some idea about discrimination.

SWH 6 agrees that:

It can be a way of denying someone his or her rights basing on silly judgments of the mind.

G S 4 said;

Treatment or consideration based on class or category rather than individual merit or being looked down upon as not potentially worthy.

D S 3 Pointed the fact that:

It is a form of injustice against a certain group. The elimination of others from opportunities can be a way of discrimination. These are ways of isolating others.

The majority of the responses from questionnaires indicated that, among the frequently mentioned types of gender discrimination are:
**Gender:** It has been said by the participants that university education female gender equitable access rate is quite unimpressive. There are more female students in high school than males. As these students proceed to university the reverse is true. High school female students face more challenges than males as they grow some are married others get pregnant and because of culture parents can support male students to go to university.

**Religion: Women leadership** in many Initiated Church in Zimbabwe is perceived as unattractive by many people. They are not allowed to preach to the congregation. Polygamy is rampant, it is associated with early pregnancy and early marriage and chances of going to university are very slim.

**Disability:** The participants contributed that disability can be over looked or unrecognised. Minority students are at a disadvantage because they are not given the appropriate resources that would in turn benefit their educational needs. The participants say that discrimination is not only found in physically challenged students but the mentally retarded as well as the emotionally disturbed. According to the participants the infrastructure of our institutions are not inclusive in nature.

S W H 31 said;

My sister was involved in a car accident. Though she is brilliant, she failed to access university education because the university structures
are not inclusive. If education is for all, there must be elimination of existing discrepancies.

A lot of efforts have been made to enable females to access university education. However, there are many inhibiting factors which hinder these females to access university education. Universities are failing to adequately accommodate disabled students. It is however interesting to point out that in some cases treating everybody equally can be unfair because it can disadvantage a certain group of people. However racism was underplayed by the participants. The majority of the participants concluded in agreement that exorbitant fees are the major challenge exorbitant fees and racism could be some of them Kariwo (2011) claims that governments are unable to provide sponsorship and bursaries for university education.

DS5 Education in Zimbabwe is not for free. This is a major form of discrimination. The stationery and tuition including accommodation is not affordable to most Zimbabweans. An example of private university is Africa University which has students from over 32 countries in Africa. The Zimbabwean parent cannot afford most of the fees at Africa Universities. The Zimbabwean parents prefer sending the male child to university than females.

G S 33 pointed out that:

There is freedom of religion; some laws in these religions may make it difficult for people to access university education. Some examples of
religious discrimination were cited by students in focus group discussions.

Some findings from FGD 3 are that: Church institutions denounce Africa Tradition Religion (ATR). At times there are comments or remarks on other people’s religion which are very sensitive such that one decided to drop out at a church related institution when he was asked to shave his beard. In other sects woman are not allowed to use contraceptives yet males do use things like condoms.

D S 5 echoed that:

In Zimbabwe no female college student is being expelled due to pregnancy and breast feeding. However, at private colleges such students are forced to be non-residents which affect their studies and their performance. At times when you are a non-resident student, chances are that you can miss group discussions and other tutorials going to the library is very difficult at times especially during the night.

DS6 said:

Some universities are very discriminative on who is to be admitted. This can be seen through the courses or design and setting of admission requirements. The application process can frustrate applicants due to complexities and difficult processes.
S W H 29 said:

To increase chances of securing a place in some of these church related institutions, applications should attach a letter of recommendation from your pastor or church.

The following section focuses on the link between findings and the theoretical framework.

4.8 The Link between Findings and Theoretical Framework

The major theory in which this research is grounded in is the Citizenship Education and Critical Theory. These theories propound that in societies there are structures which oppress humankind. These structures are embedded in silent social economic or political relationships at local, national and international levels. These structures result in harm to the recipients of such hindrances, through poverty, inequality, lack of education, health care and insurance.

The major finding of this research was the lack of information about scholarships. This arises directly from inadequate dissemination of information within the country. Such information is disseminated through media and this is not enough. This is coupled with the dollarization of the economy which is heavily depressed and associated with high unemployment. With this scenario, it is clear that the lack of information or knowledge is a case of structural violence especially in a global village in which information is a right. It is also boosted by lack of resources which translate into other cases of structural violence because parents lack the income
to send their children to university or if they get the scholarships they may have problems in raising money for daily upkeep during their stay at universities. Some students noted that they chose wrong combination of subjects at Advanced-level, consequently disadvantaging themselves when they wanted to select the course to pursue at university. Critical theory provides an understanding on lack of knowledge as a form of structural and political structure of power created and maintained by society and human actions including institutions.

The same goes for the geographical locations where the students come from. It was not by their choice to stay in remote areas but their parents. The students just found themselves victims of their parent’s decisions. In some cases the blame could be shouldered by government in that it moved people and resettled them in some areas where information did not reach them quickly.

The process of applying for the available scholarships is full of structural violence and barriers that hinder Advanced-level high achieving students. As revealed by the participants, the scholarships are not easily accessed by their intended beneficiaries; the application process is long, rigorous, tiresome and costly. In this regard, the participants concurred that the majority of the rural students find it almost impossible to access the financial scholarship consequently exposing them to the violence or harm of unjust or unfair economic relations.

Poverty is a clear case of structural violence. The majority of students interviewed said that they did not go to university because their parents failed to raise the required fees. This is not the fault of the students or their parents but a fault within the structures of a society which allows some sections of the society to have a lot of resources while disadvantaging others.
According to Burke (2001), the students’ lack of finances is not physically visible, but felt by students. They only realise it when they need to exercise their rights or when they need certain services. Critical theory and citizenship education seeks to emancipate the humankind through university education. The paragraphs however discussed the findings of the study.

4.9 Discussion of Findings

The study findings are discussed under four main research questions which are:

- How do policy issues influence access to university education in Zimbabwe?
- To what extent does socio-economic status influence access to University education in Zimbabwe?
- How do gender issues affect access to university education?
- To what extent does discrimination influence access to university education in the Zimbabwean context?


Policy for university provision in Zimbabwe has been crafted soon after independence. From the findings, research data yields neither categorical praise nor blame of university provision. The researcher has taken a robust stance to present in categories or levels of success or failure of policy of access to university education in Zimbabwe. From the findings any successful access policy needs high political support or will, sound resource mobilisation and distribution, craft literacy and competence as well. From the amount of data generated and analysed. There are two groups of people in Zimbabwe. The educated people are the ones who demand university
provision and they sacrifice family resources to pay tuition fees. Another category does not value education at all as a result they don’t make noise on access to university education. This typology however will assist in generating new information or perceptions on Zimbabwean situation. The above findings are in agreement with Moyo (2015), who points out alarming statistics, 2% of the population do have Masters Degrees and below, those with Doctors of Philosophy degrees are 0.06% that is 5000 in number. These findings indicate that there is need for further research on why the majority of our Advanced-level high achieving candidates are not accessing university education.

Access to university education in Zimbabwe by Advanced-level higher achievements is limited. David (2009), who noted that policy, determines the quality of the air people breathe, the water we drink and the type and level of education one can receive. Access affect the type of education we learn, the food we eat, how it is harvested and processed, where it is distributed and sold and how much we pay. In this study it appears as if the Advanced-level high achieving students are struggling to have access to university. This study explored the barriers hindering access to university education. The above is in agreement with Richard (2006), who observed that access reflects theoretical or experimental assumptions about what is required to solve a particular issue or problem. The majority of Advanced-level high achieving students are found roaming the streets while others are flooding the teachers colleges, yet they qualify to go to university. This finding is also in agreement with the research by Chung (2009), who shares these remarks by saying that the role of access to university is related to the level of development, economically and politically and there is a relationship to university access.
4.9.2 Socio-economic factors influence access to university education in Zimbabwe

One of the barriers that hinder access to university education was finances. The state budget allocation on universities is done basing on Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The fiscal support in monetary value budgeted for higher education or tertiary falls or grows in direct proportion to the GDP. Where the GDP is low hypothetically than fiscal allocation to universities is low. 5 million dollars can be allocated to Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education and two percent of GDP is $100,000 dollars. For the past decades the GDP has been falling rapidly. Such finding indicates that universities in Zimbabwe are underfunded. The state then relegated its financial obligation to universities to raise their own finances. The budgeting of university money fell in the hands of universities authorities. Paradoxically these universities are not productive. They do not generate money. It is from the above finding that the financial constrains were transferred from the state to the students and guardians. The Government has opened 19 universities but the tuition fees are very inhibiting. If university education in Zimbabwe is a business therefore quality of the graduates from our universities need more research. The data generated indicate that socio-economic factors influence access to university education to a greater extent.

The above finding is in line with Banya (2001), who says that, the socio-economic status of parents is a crucial factor in deciding whether a student stays in school or progresses to the next higher level of schooling, and the opportunity to attend university. The significance of this study exposes the weakness of access policy to university in relation to those intelligent A-level high achieving students from poor socio-economic status who cannot afford to go to university.
One’s socio-economic status influences access to university education in Zimbabwe. This is a form of structural barrier in that students from low income families find it difficult to access university education. The same barrier can also be said to be based on class and economic status. It is by far the single biggest barrier hindering access to higher education for high achieving A-level high achieving students.

These A-level high achieving students from disadvantaged families are exposed to different barriers due to the socio-economic status of their parents, of which their access to university education is limited. Participation in higher education can be affected by situations surrounding the social life of the student, such as where they live. The reasons for these are complex, as regional disparities may be due to socio-economic factors, as well as geographical location. Access to higher education can be a real issue for some, particularly those who live in remote or rural areas. Mullen (2010) agrees with Ho (2007) that background and status can have a huge bearing upon the decision to participate in higher education. They acknowledge that factors such as parents’ occupations, incomes and the socio-economic environment of the society in which a child is raised, have a big impact on the aspirations of young people. Statistical evidence suggests that there is low access to university distinct to certain social groups in higher education. There is lack of information on advertising and scholarships. Their capabilities and potential is not realised because they have less information and it becomes a barrier. Furthermore, many high achieving students enrol in mediocre institutions of higher education because they lack information. The large numbers of young people, especially in low income countries, continue to have limited access not only to new sources of information but even to traditional sources such as radios and televisions as compared to those living in middle income
countries (World Bank Report, 2007). Lack of information and knowledge about universities and financial aid plays an important role in limiting access to higher education for A-level high achieving students.

4. 9.3 Gender discrimination and access to University Education

The researcher found out that gender issues are a cause for concern in affecting access to university education in Zimbabwe. Mukonyora (2007), pointed out that the most important factor affecting women’s achievement is not the external environment (poverty or other handicaps) but the inner environment, the self-image and the level of aspirations, which is at the most of motivation. Women on the whole have greater social and psychological disabilities than boys and this affects both their opportunity for education and their achievement in school. There are many missing links between gender and access to university education policy. David (2009), dwells on socialisation, gender, academic achievement and aspirations of university females. It was observed from the findings that an important factor in the imbalance of sexes in universities seems to be the attitude of society, reflected in the parents towards the education of girls and the self-image which girls have as a result of cultural conditioning. Thus the finding is an indication that, gender issues affect access to university education not only in Zimbabwe, but in the region and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Zvobgo (2004) says that in the Zimbabwe post-independence era, gender equity was a problem only in the first few years. However, as women pressure groups continued to fight, the Government adopted a deliberate Affirmative Action policy that sought to give advantage to the girl child in university education. Female students were given an edge over their male counter
parts, such that if entry points in the Faculty of Medicine were 12 points good science passes, for example, a female student could enter with 10 points. This meant that a male student with 11 points would not enter, and would give way to the female student with 10. This was the case in all departments. The result was that many male students were disadvantaged by this affirmative action policy, which, following Galtung’s explanation is in reality a barrier in operation. Kapungu (2007) however, disagrees with this, and says there is still gender imbalance in Zimbabwe’s education system. In 1980, the proportion of female students in primary schools was 47.6 per cent compared to 52.4 per cent males. By 1999, the proportion of females had increased to 49.1 per cent and that of males had gone down to 50.9 per cent. The trend has continued at the same level, such that today the proportion of female to male in most private universities like Africa University is in favour of females (Africa University Prospectus 2005).

4.9.4 How Discrimination influences access to university education

The researcher observed that discrimination influences access to university education. Society is characterised by fundamental inequalities of discrimination between men and women. Women who form the majority of the population are marginalised in education systems, politics, economy and various other areas where decisions that affect them are made. With regard to discrimination, Mangella (2000), brings together previous legislation such as the Race Relations Act and the Disability Discrimination Act and provides a more consistent approach to comply with the law. There are two new strands to the Act – associative discrimination and perceptive discrimination. Associative discrimination is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses one of the protected characteristics of
discrimination, which are age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation, sex, maternity and pregnancy.

4.10. Summary

From the findings in the Chapter, it can be concluded that, as mentioned by Millen (2010), the likelihood of participation in higher education is influenced from an early stage by numerous socio-economic factors. The circumstance of one’s birth, family income, parent’s occupation, the first school one goes to, the geographical environments of one’s home are some of the factors that influence one’s access to one’s choice towards university education. There is little that students can do to change them. Within universities there are also barriers in the form of selection systems, courses offered and marketing of these courses can determine student’s choice. The availability of scholarships is yet another factor. This Chapter has revealed that finances are the biggest structural barriers in accessing higher education.
CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents summary and key findings of the study. The chapter also presents conclusion of the entire study based on the research findings. Chapter 5 also presents recommendations to stakeholders who are the Government of Zimbabwe, students and members of administration in tertiary education institutions.

5.2 Summary of the study

The study critically analysed factors hindering A-Level students with high passes to access university. The study’s findings were derived from the four research questions which are:

- How do policy issues affect access to university education?
- In what ways do socio-economic factors affect access to university education?
- How do gender issues affect access to university education?
- In what way does discrimination affect access to university education?

The study gave a brief background of the nature of access to university education and factors that contributes to low access to university at a global perspective in chapter 1.

Chapter 2 reviewed related literature by looking at access to university at global level, importance of access to university, the Zimbabwean situation on access to university, gender issues and access. It also reviewed how the socio-economic status of a student affects access to university education as well issues of discrimination.
Chapter 3 discussed the research methodology. A qualitative research approach was used because it allowed the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the Zimbabwean education policy on access to university education. Purposive sampling techniques were used in the study. The study's participants included students, deans of students and students in teachers colleges.

Chapter 4 presented data analyses; it discussed and interpreted generated data. Information gathered from participants was in the form of excerpts and from the excerpts an analysis was done to bring out emerging themes. There was also a discussion on findings.

5.3 Findings

The study found that policy issues affect access to university education; it was found out that policy issues in Zimbabwe affect access to university education. Thus there is limited access for Advanced-level high achieving students.

The study found that Socio-economic position is one of the major factors hindering access to university education in Zimbabwe. The issue of tuition fees has been transferred from the Government to parents.

Gender issues are affecting access to university. It was observed that females students were overburdened by the multiplicity of roles, women in African societies were treated as second class citizens and this affected their access to university education. Gender is a
determining factor in how resources are distributed and because patriarchy permeates in Zimbabwe, thus males dominate in most institutions because of patriarchy.

- Discrimination has been found to be a hindrance to access to university education. Culture religion and sex contributed a lot to discrimination. Some of the religions in Zimbabwe allow polygamy as a result such families cannot afford to send all their children to University.

These barriers are found in an unfair allocation of institutional scholarships, application and admission into the university. Most, if not all of the universities market their programmes in urban areas through, leaving out those in the rural areas which are actually larger in terms of population and need.

One of the main findings of this research study was the lack of information or knowledge. However, the majority of Advanced –level high achieving students are ignorant of programmes. Gauteng (1996) declared that it is a form of structural violence against them. Gathering from the Gauteng’ theory of structural violence it might be that these potential Advanced-level high achieving candidates are entitled to information pertaining to their educational needs of accessing university education.

Another finding is that the lack of information and knowledge results in Advanced- level high achieving student’s failure to choose the right combination of subjects at advanced level. Guidance and counselling are significant to lower sixth candidates so that they can select the courses they like to pursue at university. The application process was prohibitive because of the
costs which needed to be met. This lack of information can affect choices. This lack of information and guidance for poor people is a form of structural violence on their right.

The study found that gender issues are a cause for concern in accessing university education in Zimbabwe. Patriarchy is an informal system whereby men hold the power in a given society and while informal, it is very influential on young women who seek to continue with their educational pursuits. Gender is a determining factor on how resources are distributed and because patriarchy permeates in Zimbabwe, the role of men in the lives of the research participants became a recurring theme. Several participants acknowledged that from a glance it is not observable. It is through analysis that one begins to see the factors on gender affecting access. Women are marginalised in higher education and as a result very few women occupy high position in the society and job market, in Zimbabwe out of 19 universities ZOU is the only university with a female vice chancellor. Because of gender roles women are also over burdened by duties and roles at home such that they leg behind men in terms of university accessibility.

Discrimination affects access to university education in Zimbabwe. From participants, discrimination is still in higher education access. The majority of the participants from questionnaires indicated that, among the frequently mentioned types of gender discrimination, religion, sexual, harassment, disability and race. Some of the religions in Zimbabwe allow polygamy. Disability is very visible form of discrimination in university education system. The infrastructure does not cater for any form of disability. Polygamy can affect access because resource distribution could outnumber children available who might be in need of tuition fees.
5.4 Conclusion

From the findings above, it can be concluded that there are factors hindering high achieving Advanced –level high achieving students from accessing university education. Advanced- Levels high achieving students are the cream of the society and they should proceed to university (Shinder 2014). Among the factors discussed are issues of access policy, socio-economic status, gender and discrimination. Gender issues are a cause for concern in accessing education in Zimbabwe. Lack of information or knowledge on financial programme also affects access to university education. Again the process of accessing scholarships is cumbersome and is full of barriers. Zimbabwe could be losing a lot of talent by misplacing high achievers. Generally access to university education is still very low in Zimbabwe. Mashonaland East province does not have a university this may explain why most A-level high achieving students are competing to train as teachers in this province.
5.5 EMERGENT MODEL

THE EMERGENT MODEL: Policy formulation theory.

Access to university is the central issue in this model.

Activity 1

Access to university is the central issue in this model. Access to university should not be left to the government and parents alone. All stakeholders should be involved, the government, parents, students, institutions, the business class and public and private sector. Countries like India, Korea
and Jordan do have access policy, from primary up to university. Zimbabwe is a developing nation which needs to widen access to university for Advanced – level high achieving students who have potential and are capable. The advantage of widening access to university graduates is that they are capable of inventing new inventions, creating new knowledge and innovation.

Activity 2
The government is a key player in widening access to university education. The government craft policies, it distributes both financial and human capital. The government has a mandate to involve all stakeholders so as to come up with access policy from primary level to university level.

Activity 3
The parents or guardians play a significant role to increase access to university education. The parents pay tuition fees; they contribute to development of infrastructure. The community and parents provide students to universities as raw materials. These universities process these students to bring out skilled manpower needed by the society and community. After all every parent desire their children to have university education.

Activity 4
The leaders of university institutions craft visions and mission statements. Leaders in institutions manage all learning activities. They are vision bearers. In order to improve access to university
there must be a standing access policy that should have undergone the four dimensions or stages which are outlined below.

5.5.1 The derived emergent theory;

1 Policy formulation theory

Drawing from the analysis of the findings, a model to highlight policy formulation process has been identified. A theoretical frame work of access to university education for high Advanced-level achieving students has been suggested. This model is not dismissing the critical theory and citizenship education theory, but it is an improvement on them. It is assumed that after a period of time any access policy should be evaluated, then adopted, improved or thrown away if it is not relevant. The model depicts that access to university education is very critical for national development. Access to university education can be achieved by a number of stages which are suggested below:

- Identifying the problem
- Drafting a proposal
- Adoption and legalisation
- Implementation

The Policy Formulation Theory outlined the access policy formulation stages which are central to any policy formulation and implementation.
Stage 1

**Problem identification**

The first stage of any policy formulation is problem identification. Since there are too many students who qualify to enter universities but they are not having access to university education, it becomes a critical issue for all tertiary institutions. Problem identification is a continuous process, which needs reviewing and improving. For example, in Zimbabwe we identified the problem of limited access to university education. University education access in Zimbabwe did not expand proportionally to secondary school. At the moment university education is a preserve of the rich because of high tuition fees. Such a problem needs some attention especially on the policy on access to university education. The low access to university education is affecting both the parents and students. In any policy formulation there is the need to identify the problem affecting the people. Therefore each institution must identify problems peculiar to its context.

**Stage 2**

2. **Proposal formulations**

A proposal is a guide, it is a torch and it can be the skeleton or a path to be followed. The process of drafting a proposal should be carried out by people who have craft literacy and craft competence. They must be able to link and involve all stakeholders. They must have knowledge of the entire policy formulation process especially when it comes to impact and its effect. The Zimbabwean government has put too much effort on primary and secondary education with very little attention on access to university education.
Stage 3

3. Policy adoption and legitimisation

This stage involves political will or support from the government. The state should adopt the policy and must be a legitimate document. All stakeholders must be involved. The government plays a pivotal role for the success of any policy. The government puts the policy structures in place, it mobilise the resources, disseminate information and therefore it must adopt and legalise the access policy document for universities.

Stage 4

4. Implementation

This stage is very important. Everyone should be involved, including, the government, teachers, parents, non-governmental organisations and students. At implementation stage focus is placed on goals and objectives. What are the goals and objectives of the education access policy in Zimbabwe? There must be an environmental impact assessment, resource analysis and requisite resource materials. There must be a strategy identification which includes strength, weakness, opportunity and threats (SWOT) analysis.

Stage 5

5.5.2 Evaluation

The policy must be evaluated. To evaluate it is to consider its’ worthiness or value. After evaluation there is need to adopt, modify or to continue. One Dean of students pointed out that universities and colleges have goal ambiguity in terms of access to university education.
Evaluation is very significant because it allows the programme or policy to be upheld or to be dismissed.

5.6 Recommendations

Basing on the research conclusion, on objective number one of the study, which aimed to interrogate how policy issues influence access to university education in Zimbabwe. It is recommended that the Government should craft an access policy, which provides access from primary to university education especially to those that are capable. The government should assess the percentage of high Advanced-level achieving students who are failing to have access to university education in Zimbabwe, because there could be wasting of a lot of financial and human resource.

Administrators of universities should have access policies that assist them in enrolling high achieving students. All high school institutions must have a track record of Advanced-level high achieving students so that these high schools and university would identify potential university graduates. The researcher recommended that both the government and the deans of students should advocate for bonding system and grants allocation to students who have potential to study at university. It is further recommended that the government should organise workshops and guidance and counselling programmes for Advanced-levels high achieving students before they graduate from high schools. The researcher also recommends that the A-level school heads should work together with university administration especially when it comes to enrolment of university students. The school heads do have a track record on Advanced-level high achievers and could link these A-level high achieving students to universities. This would assist them in choosing courses and programmes to be undertaken. Information about scholarships and courses
must be distributed evenly making sure that it reaches even the rural areas where most schools are situated.

The study also recommends that the government should increase the number of media outlets through which they advertise programmes. Instead of sticking to the traditional *Sunday Mail* in which they advertise, they should increase the number of newspapers and flight the advertisements several times preferably for a week. Radio broadcasting of the advertisements should also run for more than a week.

The government could enter into partnerships with the private sector in the provision of finance for university education and training. The government needs to provide administrative appropriate incentives for institutions and bodies to ensure efficient management and collection of revenues. More revenues for universities can be turned into more institutional scholarships for universities which may be offered to the needy students.

There is a serious need for the wide dissemination of information about scholarships countrywide. In Zimbabwe there is the presidential scholarship found in South Africa which is enrolling a small number due to the economic challenges. This arises from the fact that rural students lack information and have problems in meeting deadlines and lack knowledge on subject choices. Serious efforts must be made to ensure that the radios which are the quickest and cheapest means of communication are used to disseminate information. At present the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation is failing to cover all corners of the country in its broadest sense of broadcasting. Areas like Zishawane, Mudzi and parts of Uzumba are good example of places
which has poor transmission services. There is need for other players to come in; universities must also play their part in improving their marketing strategies to reach out to the rural students. The researcher recommends to the Zimbabwean government to support female students. On financial support female students should be given first preferences. It further recommended for female students themselves that they should emancipate themselves from the oppressive structures which has labelled them that they are the second class citizens in society. Furthermore, everyone in the society, including parents and guardians, should have positive influence on access to university starting from initial stages of education.

The researcher recommends that university education should not be left to individuals, parents and guardians. The government and all education stakeholders should be involved to fight any form of discrimination hindering access to university education in Zimbabwe. Government at all levels has an essential role in promoting and enabling access to high-quality university education for all members of society. Merit should be considered seriously. Those who are capable, it is recommended that they must not be discriminated due to resources, disability and gender. Stakeholders like, parents and non-governmental organisations, should work together to reduce discrimination in universities.

5.7 Recommendations for further Research

The following areas warrant further attention:

- Inclusive education and access to university level.
- The issue of (S.T.E.M) to be examined in relation to university access.
- Attitudes of the poor towards university education.
There is need to interrogate the number of students who dropout from universities due to a number of factors that affect them and the researcher recommend for another research can be carried out using quantitative so that the exact number of dropouts can be established.
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Appendix (i)

1: INFORMED CONSENT AGREEMENT FORM

Name of researcher: Kuziwa Kutiwa Lawrence

Institution: Zimbabwe Open University

Degree: Doctor of Philosophy in Education

Research Topic: A critical analysis of factors hindering A-level students with high passes to access university education in Zimbabwe.

Purpose of the Study: To interrogate Factors hindering increased access to university education in Zimbabwe.

Methodology
This study is going to be a case study of the tertiary institutions in Zimbabwe. Data will be collected from staff and students in selected regions and units of the tertiary institutions. Participants will be required to complete a questionnaire or engage in a face to face interview with the researcher. Completing the questionnaire should not take more than 25 minutes while face to face interview should last approximately 20 minutes per person.

Research Ethics
Persons who are willing to participate in this research should read the following information carefully so that they can make an informed decision about their participation.

Conditions for participation
Participation in this research is voluntary and participants should do so out of their own free will. The participant is free to withhold any information that they may decide not to share with the researcher or withdraw from the interview at any point if they feel like doing so for whatever reason.
Protection accorded to participants

1. Confidentiality: The research will uphold all participants’ right to confidentiality.

2. Anonymity: Names of regions, units and individuals will not be revealed. The research Will instead, use pseudo names which may not in any way link the participants to data generation.

3. Risk: There will not be any risk involved in participating in this research. Permission to Conduct this research shall be granted by the registrar of the Zimbabwe Open University.

Data Analysis

Data will be analysed using the content analysis techniques and thematic approach and presented in themes that emerge from the study.

Use of data collected

1. The end product of this study will be a Doctoral Thesis.

2. The data collected will be available for inspection by the Research Supervisor, the Research Degrees Committee, Internal Examiners of the Zimbabwe Open University and examiners from other institutions.

3. It is envisaged that some of the chapters or the entire document will be published later on.

4. All information about the participants will be treated with strictest confidentiality and will not be revealed to anyone else except the persons noted unless required by law.

Benefits and Compensation

There are no direct benefits to any individual participant. The participants will benefit from the results of the study as the university focuses on quality informed by their responses.
Informed Consent

The purpose of my participation has been clearly explained to me and has been made available to me. I understand what my participation entails and that it is voluntary. I will be allowed to ask questions and opt to withhold information that I may deem unfit to divulge. I may withdraw from participation at any point without any penalty. I have read and understood the Informed Consent Agreement and I sign it freely and voluntarily and a signed copy has been given to me.

Signature of volunteer participant: …………………………………………

Date: …………………………………………

Signature of researcher/Agent: ……………………………………………

Date: …………………………………………

Contact details:
Appendix (ii)

Interview for Deans of students

I, Kutiwa Kuziwa Lawrence, am a student from The Zimbabwe Open University. I am studying for a Doctor of Philosophy degree. My research topic reads; A critical analysis of factors hindering A-level students with high passes to access university education in Zimbabwe.

The findings of this study are going to be helpful to policy makers. Your response shall be treated with serious confidentiality and it is going be used strictly for research. Identity is not going to be disclosed and you have the right to withdraw from the research that is if you feel you need to do so.

Research Q 1: How do policy issues influence access to university education?

1. How long have you been working in this institution?
2. What is the current enrolment of students at this institution?
3. What are the major causes of low access to your institution?
4. How many are males and females?
5. What do you understand by the word educational policy?
6. How many points needed in Zimbabwe to be enrolled in institutions of higher education?
7. What are some of the procedures taken to secure a place at your university?
8. Explain your understanding on access to university.
9. Do you think access university policy in Zimbabwe is catering for higher education?
10. What was the trend of your cut off point when enrolling students at your institution for the past five years?
11. Are there factors that influence access to university education?
12. If yes can you please explain them?
13. How are the factors you have explained linked to access?

Research Q2: To what extent does socio-economic status influence access to university education?

1. Do you have a clear procedure on enrolling student?
2. Can you please explain the procedure one undergoes to become a student at your institute?
3. What are the barriers that hinder access to university education?
4. In your own opinion what is major barrier that hinders access to university education?
5. What strategies can be employed to remove some of the barriers?
6. How do you identify a student with financial problems?
7. Does your institution have financial aid? Elaborate on how it operates.
8. Explain the of beneficiaries your programme.
9. In your own opinion what are the major challenges faced by students in accessing university education?
10. How does the economy of Zimbabwe affect access to university education?
11. What are the major weaknesses and strengths of these programmes offered at your universities?
12. Are your programmes marketable after the student has completed the studies?

Research Q3: How do gender issues affect access to university education?

1. What do you understand by the term gender?
2. How do gender issues affect access to university education?

3. Have you ever experienced a problem related to gender and access?

4. In terms of application influx which sex is dominating?

5. How can the issue of low access be addressed?

**RESEARCH Q 4: In what way does discrimination influence access to university education in Zimbabwe?**

1. What do you understand by the term discrimination?

2. Can you please explain some forms of discrimination?

3. Besides gender what is a form of discrimination prevalent at your institution?

4. Explain the structure of your institution policy on recruitment and discrimination.

5. How is student eligibility for the program determined at a university?

6. If more eligible applicants than can be accommodated are available how is the selection accomplished?
Appendix (iii)

Interview guide for Deans of students

I, Kutiwa Kuziwa Lawrence, am a student from The Zimbabwe Open University. I am reading for a Doctor of Philosophy degree. My research topic is: Factors hindering increased access to university education in Zimbabwe.

The findings of this study are going to be helpful to policy makers. Your response shall be treated with serious confidentiality and it is going be used strictly for research. Identity is not going to be disclosed and you have the right to withdraw from the research that is if you feel you need to do so.

Research Q 1: How do policy issues influence access to university education?

1. How long have been working in this institution?
   (A) 10 years

2. What is the current enrolment of students at this institution?
   (A) 3500

3. How many are males and females?
   (A) 2 500 females’ 1000 males
4. What do you understand by the word access to university?
   A) A policy that governs how the education system is run

5. Explain your understanding the concept of access?
   (A) Education which provides opportunity for access to every individual of the country.

6. Do you think the educational policy in Zimbabwe is catering for higher education?
   (A) No it is not

7. What was the trend of your cut off point when enrolling students at your institution for the past five years?
   (A) 6 points females, 8 points males

8. Are there factors that influence access to university education?
   (A) Yes

9. If yes can you please explain them?
   (A) Ones results and ability to pay fees

10. How are the factors you have explained linked to education for all policy?
    A) One cannot access university without them. Thus there is no relationship with education for all policy.

Research Q2: To what extent does socio-economic status influence access to university education?

1. Do you have a clear procedure on enrolling student?
   (A) Yes. We have a constitution
2. Can you please explain the procedure one undergoes to a student of your institute?
   
   (A) One applies and is selected into faculty

3. What are the barriers that hinder access to university education?
   
   (A) Yes. Financial and lack of information

4. In your own opinion what is major barrier that hinder access to university education?
   
   (A) Economic situation.

5. What strategy can be employed to remove some of the barriers?
   
   (A) Financial aid

6. How do you identify student with financial problems?
   
   (A) We identify as they register the is a portion on the forms which shows background

7. Does your institution have financial aid? Elaborate on the modus operandi.
   
   (A) Yes

8. Explain the of beneficiaries your programme
   
   (A) One has to be first enrolled to qualify so first term fees are paid by the individual

9. In your own opinion what are the major challenges faced by students in accessing university education?
   
   (A) Yes

10. How does the economy of Zimbabwe affect access to university education?
    
    (A) It is dividing fees are hard to find due to unemployment

11. What are the major weaknesses and strengths of these programs offered at our universities?

12. Are your programs marketable after the student has completed the studies?
    
    (A) Yes. They are marketable.
Research Q3: How do gender issues affect access to university education?

1. What do you understand by the term gender?
   (a) Gender is the socialization into male or female

2. How do gender issues affect access to university education?
   (a) There are barriers that hinder female access to university education, for example, culture

3. Have you ever experienced a problem related to gender and access?
   (a) No

4. In terms of application influx, which sex is dominating?
   (a) Women

5. How can the issue of low access be addressed?
   (a) Financial.

RESEARCH Q 4: In what way does discrimination influence access to university education in Zimbabwe?

1. What do you understand by the term discrimination?
   (a) Looking down upon other members of a group

2. Can you please explain some forms of discrimination?
   (a) Sex discrimination, religion, disability

3. Besides gender, what is a form of discrimination prevalent at your institution?
   (a) Economic for example fees

4. Explain the structure of your institution policy on recruitment and discrimination.
   (a) No discrimination
5. How is student eligibility for the program determined at a university?

   (a) The best are selected we even go back to O’level.

6. If more eligible applicants than can be accommodated are available how is the selection carried out?
Appendix (iv)

Appendix Interview guide for The Registrars for colleges and universities.

I, Kutiwa Kuziwa Lawrence, am a student from The Zimbabwe Open University. I am studying for a Doctor of Philosophy degree. My research topic reads; A critical analysis of factors hindering A-level students with high passes to access university education in Zimbabwe.

The findings of this study are going to be helpful to policy makers. Your response shall be treated with serious confidentiality and it is going be used strictly for research. Identity is not going to be disclosed and you have the right to withdraw from the research that is if you feel you need to do so.

Research Q 1: How do policy issues influence access to university education?

1. How long have been working in this institution?
   (a) 6 years

2. What is the current enrolment of students at this institution?
   (a) 2 500

3. How many are males and females?
   (a) Males 800 females 1700.

4. What do you understand by the word educational policy?
   (a) It guides the learning institutions in Zimbabwe.

5. Explain your understanding of education for all?
   (a) It may mean that every citizen has the opportunity to go to school.
6. Do you think the education for all policy in Zimbabwe is catering for higher education?
   (a) No completely.

7. What was the trend of your cut off point when enrolling students at your institution for the past five years?
   (a) Points

8. Are there factors that influence access to university education?
   (a) Yes they are

9. If yes can you please explain them?
   (a) Some include fees, policy issues, gender and discrimination

10. How are the factors you have explained linked to access to university education?
    (a) They link to education for all because there are students who are not in university yet they qualify.

**Research Q2:** To what extent does socio-economic status influence access to university education?

1. Do you have a clear procedure on enrolling student?
   (a) Yes there is a procedure

2. Can you please explain the procedure one undergoes to a student of your institute?
   (a) Fill in application form, attend any interview. Receive any offer letter. Pay tuition.

3. What are the barriers that hinder access to university education?
   (a) Paying of fees, distance factor, gender issues.

4. In your own opinion what is major barrier that hinder access to university education?
(a) Financial constraints

5. What strategy can be employed to remove some of the barriers?
   (a) The high schools should align with university authorities.

6. How do you identify student with financial problems?
   (a) They applied for financial aid

7. Does your institution have financial aid? Elaborate on the modus operandi.
   (a) Yes

8. Explain the beneficiaries your program?
   (a) Students in semester two should score high on G.P.A.

9. In your own opinion what are the major challenges faced by students in accessing university education?

10. How does the economy of Zimbabwe affect access to university education?

11. What are the major weaknesses and strengths of these programs offered at our universities?

12. Are your programs marketable after the student has completed the studies?

**Research Q3:** How do gender issues affect access to university education?

1. What do you understand by the term gender?
   (a) It refers to males and females

2. How do gender issues affect access to university education?
   (a) Points can be different in terms of sex
3. Have you ever experienced a problem related to gender and access?
   (a) No

4. In terms of application influx which sex is dominating?
   (a) Women are dominating

5. How can the issue of low access be addressed?

**RESEARCH Q 4:** In what way does discrimination influence access to university education in Zimbabwe?

1. What do you understand by the term discrimination?
   (a) Unfair treatment of people

2. Can you please explain some forms of discrimination?
   (a) Disability, sex and religion.

3. Besides gender what is a form of discrimination prevalent at your institution?
   (a) Money or economic

4. Explain the structure of your institution policy on recruitment and discrimination.
   (a) No discrimination

5. How is student eligibility for the program determined at a university?
   (a) Highest points are considered

6. If more eligible applicants than can be accommodated are available how is the selection accomplished?
Appendix (v)

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

My name is Kutiwa Kuziwa; I am a Doctorate learner with Zimbabwe Open University. I am carrying out a study on; A critical analysis of factors hindering A-level students with high passes to access university education in Zimbabwe.

Please return the questionnaire within seven days. For any clarification of questions please contact the researcher on 0773305386.

General information on the participants

Sex:_____________________

Age:_____________________

College: ____________________________________________

Year of stay in College: ________________________________

Main Subject: ________________________________

Points at A-level if any?

Research Q1:

How do policy issues affect access to university?

1. Why did you decide to go to college or university?

2. Can you please link your background to your coming to this college?
3. Why did you come to this particular college or university?
4. What who influenced you most in this decision?
5. Did you face any problems in accessing university education?
6. What do you understand by the word policy?
7. What do understand access to university education?
8. Do you think educational policy has any influence on university access?
9. Why do you think A-level high achievers are training as teachers in teachers colleges in Zimbabwe?

Research Q 2: How socio-economic factors affect access?

1. Who pays for your tuition fees
2. Does your institution have any financial aid?
3. Do you know about any financial aid programme at your institution?
4. If yes have you tried sourcing any financial help?
5. If yes articulate some of the problems encountered.
6. What was the process of getting place at your institution?
7. Give two major challenges you observed in the process
8. What are the major barriers that hinder access to university education?
9. Does your institution have financial aid?
10. If yes elaborate on the modus operand.
11. In your own opinion what are the major challenges faced by students in accessing tertiary?
12. What are other necessary things needed by students apart from tuition fees?

Research Q3:

How issues of gender affect access to tertiary education?

1. Is gender really a problem in accessing tertiary university?
2. Have you ever experienced problem related to gender and access?
3. In terms of application influx which sex is dominating?
4. How can the issue of low access be addressed?
5. What do you think is the major problem towards low access to university education?
6. What are some of the challenges that affect women on access to university education?
7. Which faculties do we see more females at universities?
8. Is there a relationship between level of education and posts held at work places?
9. Do you think education can close or widen gender issues?

Research Q4: In what way does discrimination affect access to university?

1. What do you understand by discrimination?
2. Is there any relationship between gender and discrimination?
3. Which sex is dominating at your institution?
4. Explain the role of policy in relation to discrimination?
5. What is the major form of discrimination at your institution?
6. Do you think biological issues can affect access to university education in Zimbabwe?
7. What is the position of pregnant females at your institution?
Appendix (vi)

QUESTOINNARE FOR REGISTRAAR

My name is Kutiwa Kuziwa; I am a Doctorate learner with Zimbabwe Open University. I am carrying out a study on Factors hindering increased access to university education in Zimbabwe.

Please return the questionnaire within seven days. For any clarification of questions please contact the researcher on 0773305386.

1. How policy issues do influence access to university education?

2. What are the factors that influence access to university education?

3. How difficult is it to get a place at any institution?

4. What are the major barriers that hinder access to university education?

5. In your own opinion what are the major challenges faced by students in accessing university education?

6. How does the economy of Zimbabwe affect access to university education?

7. Have you ever experienced problems related to some of these policy issues, socio-economic issues, gender related issues and discrimination, if yes then explain?

8. In terms of application influx which sex is dominating?

9. How can the issue of low access be addressed?

10. What do you think is the major problem towards low access to university education?
APPENDIX (vii)

FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL FOR STUDENTS

Discussion duration……………1hrs.

Number of people ………………6

Venue……………………………..

Group Task 1 (15 minutes)

The researcher will welcome and greet the participants as they arrive. Refreshments will be served. The researcher will explain the purpose of the study as well as assuring confidentiality.

The topic; Factors hindering increased access to university education in Zimbabwe will be explained.

Group Task 2 (10 minutes)

Each group member introduces her/himself and gives a preferred title she/he would want to use. The researcher will encourage each participant to make a contribution. The researcher will also spell out the manner at which the question and answers are given.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (1hour 15min)

Research Q1

1. Why did you decide to go to college or university?

2. Why did you come to this particular college or university

3. What who influenced you most in this decision?

4. Did you face any problems in accessing university?
5. What do you understand by the word policy?

6. What do understand by access to university education policy?

7. Do you think educational policy has any influence on university access?

**Research Q 2: How does socio economic affect access to university?**

1. What is the role of policy in education?

2. Who pays for your tuition fees?

3. Does your institution have any financial aid?

4. Do you know about any financial aid programme at your institution?

5. If yes have you tried sourcing any financial help?

6. If yes articulate some of the problems encountered.

7. What was the process of getting place at your institution?

8. Give two major challenges you observed in the process.

9. What are the major barriers that hinder access to university education?

10. Does your institution have financial aid?

11. If yes elaborate on the modus operand.

12. In your own opinion what are the major challenges faced by students in accessing tertiary.

**Research Q3: How issues of gender affect access to tertiary education?**

1. Is gender really a problem in accessing tertiary university?

2. Have you ever experienced problem related to gender and access?
3. In terms of application influx which sex is dominating?
4. How can the issue of low access be addressed?
5. What do you think is the major problem towards low access to university education?

Research Q4: How does discrimination affect access to university education?

1. What do you understand by discrimination?
2. Is there any relationship between gender and discrimination?
3. Which sex is dominating at your institution?
4. Explain the role of policy in relation to discrimination?
APPENDIX (viii)

DOCUMENT ANALYSED

The following documents were analysed on the topic; **Factors hindering increased access to university education in Zimbabwe.**

1. The Zimbabwe’s educational policies of 1982 and 1996.
4. Education circulars and Acts since 1904.
5. Government tertiary institution policies (public).
6. Church related tertiary institution policies(private).
Ref: HD/21

14 May 2015

To whom it may concern

RE: MR. KUZIWA LAWRENCE KUTIWA’S REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO DO
FIELD RESEARCH IN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER AND TERTIARY
EDUCATION SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT.

This letter introduces Mr. Kuziwa Lawrence Kutiwa. He is a doctoral candidate
at Zimbabwe Open University with special interest in Education Policy,
specifically, ‘Education for all’ His methodology requires him to carry out field
research in institutions of higher education. Hence the purpose of this letters is
to request, on Mr Kutiwa’s behalf, for your permission to allow him to generate
his data from institutions of higher education in and around Harare. On
behalf of Zimbabwe Open University’s Higher Degrees Directorate and on
behalf of this candidate I appeal to the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary
education Science and Technology Development to grant Him permission to
carry out his inquiry in institutions mentioned above.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Dr A. S. Chikasha
Director, Higher Degrees Directorate
17 June 2015

Mr. Kuziva Kutiwa
Nyadire Teachers College
P.O. Box 210
Mutoko

Dear Mr. Kuziva Kutiwa

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH ON: “EDUCATION FOR ALL: THE CHALLENGES OF ACCESS IN ZIMBABWE’S TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS”

Reference is made to your letter, in which you request for permission to carry out an educational research on: “Education for All: The Challenges of Access in Zimbabwe’s Tertiary Institutions.”

Accordingly, be advised that the head of Ministry has granted permission for you to carry the research at Madziwa and Nyadire Teachers’ Colleges, University of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe Open University and the Catholic University of Zimbabwe.

However, please note that you still have to seek permission from the universities that you want to include in your research.

It is hoped that your research will benefit the ministry. Accordingly, it would be appreciated if you could supply the office of the permanent secretary with a final copy of your study, as the findings would be relevant to the Ministry’s strategic planning process.

M. J. Chirapa (Ms)
For: PERMANENT SECRETARY

cc Mrs M. Muguti - Director Higher Education Programmes
     Mr J.T. Dewah –Director Tertiary Education Programmes
     Principals: Madziwa and Nyadire Teachers’ Colleges