CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

This study addressed the issue of little knowledge about the extent to which learner-centred methods were used in selected high schools of Mongu district, Western Zambia and what perceptions pupils and teachers held about such teaching and learning methods in history. Learner-centred learning is an approach to education focusing on the needs of the learners, rather than others involved in the educational process, such as teachers and administrators like head teachers and deputy head teachers. The learner-centred paradigm departs from the traditional teaching methods (lecture methods) by focusing on learners more than teachers and learning more than teaching. Traditionally, teachers direct the learning process and students assume a receptive role in their education. With the advent of progressive education in the 21st century, and the influence of psychologists, some educators have largely replaced traditional teaching methods which focused on how teachers taught instead of how pupils learnt (Blumberg, 2008).

According to Farrant (1991), teacher-centred leaning (TCL) has its roots in antiquity. The Greeks and Romans saw education in terms of preparation for adult roles in the adult world. However, it was not until the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that men like Rousseau and Pestalozzi emphasised the importance of the child’s own needs and abilities in determining the kind of education he or she needed. Froebel (1931) developed teaching methods that recognised play as one of the child’s main ways of learning that the move away from teacher-centred to learner-centred learning began to develop significantly.

Dupin-Bryant (2004) defines learner-centred method as a style of instruction that is responsive, collaborative, problem-centred and democratic in which both learners and the instructor decide how, what and when learning occurs. On the other hand, teacher-centred is considered as a style of instruction that is formally controlled and autocratic in which the instructor directs how, what, and when learners learn. Teacher-centred
instruction is often associated with “transmission” models of teaching (lecture methods), which includes drill and practice. Typical characteristics of teacher-centred instruction include more teacher talk and questions than student talk and reliance on textbooks. Therefore, learner-centred learning puts pupils first in contrast to teacher-centred approach. Learner-centred learning is focused on the learners’ needs, abilities, interests and learning styles with the teacher as a facilitator of learning (Weimer, 2002).

According to Muzumara (2011), learner-centred methods (LCM) in history includes practical activities such as panel discussions, quizzes, projects, brainstorming activities, role plays, debates, textbook study, field trips and discovery learning. Learner-centred methods also include active learning in which learners solve problems, formulate questions of their own choice, and answer questions. Felder and Brent (2003) state that learner-centred methods have repeatedly been shown to be superior to the traditional teacher-centred approach of instruction. However, learner-centred methods are not intended to diminish the importance of the instructional side of classroom experience but instead, instruction is broadened to include other activities that produce desirable learners’ outcome.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Teaching in schools has been done through teacher-centred (lecture) methods since time immemorial. Of late however, learner-centred methods have emerged as an alternative and complementary form of lesson delivery and have been credited in a variety of ways such as, avoidance of boredom, durability of learnt material and proper understanding of taught material (Farrant, 1991). Learner-centred learning (LCL) is an approach to teaching that is increasingly being emphasised in many countries in the world today. This has seen a change in focus from traditional teaching methods to learner-centred methods. The Zambian education system is not an exception. Although these methods were emphasised to trainee teachers in the universities and colleges of education in Zambia, little was known about the extent to which these methods were used in the teaching and learning of history in schools and what pupils’ and teachers’ perceptions were about them. Not knowing the extent to which learner-centred methods were used
and what pupils’ and teachers’ perceptions were about them in the teaching and learning process of history posed a challenge (problem) in the sense that it could have made it difficult for the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education to implement and support such methods.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to find out pupils’ and teachers’ perceptions of learner-centred methods in the teaching and learning of history in selected high schools in Mongu District, Western Province of Zambia.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following objectives:

i. To determine the extent to which learner-centred methods were used in the teaching and learning of history.

ii. To establish pupils’ and teachers’ perceptions of the learner-centred methods of teaching and learning history.

iii. To identify which learner-centred methods were mostly preferred by pupils and teachers in the teaching and learning of history.

1.5 Research Questions

The study had the following research questions:

i. To what extent were learner-centred methods used in the teaching and learning of history?

ii. What were pupils’ and teachers’ perceptions of the learner-centred methods of teaching and learning history?
iii. Which learner-centred methods were preferred by pupils and teachers in the teaching and learning of history?

1.6 Significance of the Study

It is hoped that the findings of the study may help policy makers in the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocation Training and Early Education (MoESVTEE) to assess how best learner-centred methods can be applied and implemented in schools. The study has also contributed to the already existing body of knowledge in learner-centred methods. The research has provided a platform for further research in learner-centred methods because other researchers may build on its gaps and limitations so as bring about new issues not explored by the study.

1.7 Limitations of the study

The study was limited to selected high schools in Mongu district, making it difficult to generalise its findings.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

The humanistic theory of learning by Carl Rogers, theories of learning that stress active engagement and social interaction propagated by John Dewey, Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky guided this study. Choice in the area of learning is emphasised by Bredo (1999:34) as he interprets Rogers’ ideas of Learner-centredness as “Learners might not only choose what to study, but how and why that topic might be an interesting one to study”. He also emphasises Rogers’ belief that students’ perceptions of the world were important, that they were relevant and appropriate. This definition therefore, emphasises the concept of students having ‘choice’ in their learning. According to Rogers, realness, genuineness, or transparency in the facilitator means that he or she must be real in the relationship with his/her learner, be the person he/she is and not use any masks or facades in communicating with the learners.
Bredo (1999) further asserts that acceptance, prising, or respect towards the learner implies that the facilitator accepts and respects the whole personality of the learner and feels basic trust in his or her constructive tendency, his/her striving for solutions in his/her own way. Deep understanding, often called empathic understanding, means that the facilitator actively listens to the students with the ultimate goal to profoundly understand their questions, motivations, intentions, and the meanings of their communication as well as solutions.

The term learner-centred learning was also associated with the work of Piaget and more recently with Malcolm Knowles (Burnard, 1999). Rogers (1983), in his book ‘Freedom to Learn for the 80s,’ describes the shift in power from the expert teacher to the learner, driven by a need for a change in the traditional environment where in this so-called educational atmosphere, students become passive, apathetic and bored. In the School system, the concept of child-centred education has been derived, in particular, from the work of Froebel and the idea that the teacher should not interfere with this process of maturation, but act as a guide (Simon, 1999). Simon (1999) highlighted that this was linked with the process of development or ‘readiness,’ this means that the child will learn when he/she is ready.

Theories of learning that highlight the roles of active engagement and social interaction in the learners’ own construction of knowledge like those propagated by John Dewey, Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky also supported the learner-centred paradigm. The Dewey “lab” school focused on the students needs rather than on covering a well defined scope and sequence of curriculum. Much of Dewey’s philosophy is evident in the learner-centred classroom. Learners become a part of the learning team, empowered to make choices and to move at their own pace (Burnard, 1999).

According to Vygotsky (1978) environment should be the starting point for learning, and the student-centred learning should be designed within the Zone of Proximal Development. Lambert and McCombs (2000) states that the many environmental factors including how the instructor teaches, and how actively engaged the learner is in the learning process positively or negatively influence how much and what to learn. In
comparison studies between learners in lectures and learners who actively construct their learning, there are significantly more learning gains in learners who actively construct their own learning (Lea, Stephenson & Troy, 2003).

Learner-centred methods draws an alternative theory of knowledge known as constructivism which emphasises activity and the importance of practice in the teaching and learning process. Constructivism assumes that knowledge emerges through interaction among knowers and knowledge is not external to the known and awaiting discovery by him or her; rather, knowledge “is created through a process of new information interacting with prior knowledge and experiences of learners” (Duplessis & Muzaffer, 2010:45). Piaget and Vygotsky consider knowledge as relevant for teachers and students when it is ‘in use’ rather than when it is delivered in a way that dissociates it from previous experience and from the opportunity for engagement with it.

According to constructivism, teachers should create conditions for students to discover and actively construct knowledge. To ‘learn to learn’ and to develop the higher order thinking skills of analysis and synthesis through inquiry-oriented lessons in the classroom. From this perspective, lessons should draw upon, connect and analyse their prior knowledge and experiences through self-discovery and interaction with other students and with the teacher. The primary rule is to engage students in inductive, hands-on activities, group work and integration of knowledge across traditional subject areas (Duplessis & Muzaffer, 2010).

Cognitive psychology is a family of learning theories that emphasise the role of the learner in the construction of knowledge. Specifically, these theories emphasise the important role of social interaction in the learning process. Learner-centred practices are deeply rooted in social and cognitive constructivism where active learning is central to processes and outcomes. Establishing appropriate environment facilities, student learning and engagement. Literature indicates that learners learn best during active participation in the classroom. Active learning activities promote student knowledge and enhance understanding of course content (Henson & Eller, 1999).
1.9 Definition of terms

**Affect**-to move the feelings of someone.

**Aleocentrism**-learner-centredness.

**Anthropology**-The study of humankind in all its aspects, especially human culture or human development.

**Antiquity**-ancient history, especially the period of time during which the ancient Greek and Roman civilization flourished.

**Augment**-to increase.

**Autonomy**-a state of being independent without any restrictions.

**Behaviourist**-a psychologist who subscribes to behaviourism.

**Cognitive Psychology**-the study higher mental processes such as attention, language use, memory, perception, problem solving and thinking.

**Constructivism**-it is a theory to explain how knowledge is constructed in the human being when information comes into contact with existing knowledge that had been developed by experience.

**Cortical**-pertaining to, resembling or consisting of cortex. Resulting from a function or condition of the cerebral cortex.

**Dendrites**-these are branched projections of a neuron that acts to conduct electrochemical stimulation received from other neural cells to the cell body, or soma, of the neuron from where the dendrite project.

**Disposition**-this refers to one’s mental outlook, tendency or final state of matter.

**Egalitarian**-maintaining, relating to, or based on a belief that all people are, in principle, equal and should enjoy equal social, political, and economic rights and opportunities.

**Egocentrism**-teacher-centredness.

**Empathy**-the ability to identify with and understand somebody else’s feelings.

**Excursion**-it is a field trip.

**Faculty**-it is a division within an institution or university comprising one subject area or a number of related subject areas. It also means academic staff of an institution, senior teachers, lecturers and/or researchers.
**Formative assessment**-also known as diagnostic testing is a range of formal and informal assessment procedures employed by teachers during the learning process in order to modify teaching and learning activities to improve student attainment.

**Genuiness**-the ability to be honest and open in relationships.

**Neurobiology**-a scientific discipline that studies nerve cells or the nervous system.

**Neuroscience**-it is the scientific study of the nervous system.

**Neuron**-it is an electrically excitable cell that processes and transmits information through electrical and chemical signals.

**Paradigm**-a belief system or theory that guides the way we do things or more formally establishes a set of practices. This can range from thought patterns to actions.

**Pedagogy**-the science or profession of teaching.

**Intrinsic motivation**-it refers to the motivation that is driven by an interest or enjoyment in the task itself, and exists within the individual rather than relying on external rewards.

**Merrier**-joyous or cheerful.

**Meta-cognition**-this is knowing about knowing.

**Microcosm**-a miniature copy of something, especially when it represents or stands for a larger whole.

**Overaching skill**-these are skills which are encompassing or over shadowing everything.

**Perception**-This is insight into something or the faculty of perceiving or the result of perception.

**Perceptual Psychology**-this is the sub-field of cognitive Psychology that is concerned specifically with the pre-conscious innate aspects of the human cognitive system perception.

**Pragmatism**-the idea that philosophy is only valuable if one can apply it.

**Rote memory**-is a memorization technique based on repetition.

**Self-efficacy**-is the measure of one’s own ability to complete tasks and reach goals.

**Systemocentrism**-teacher/learner-centrednes.

**Zone of Proximal Development**-The difference between what a learner can do without help and what he or she can do with help.
CHAPTER TWO

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview

This chapter reviews relevant literature on pupils’ and teachers’ perceptions of learner-centred methods in the teaching and learning of history. The chapter starts by reviewing literature on a historical perspective of learner-centred methods, then it reviews literature on an African perspective of learner-centred methods, and thereafter it reviews literature on the rationale for learner-centred methods as well as views of teachers on learner-centred methods and finally it reviews literature on learner-centred methods used in the teaching and learning of history.

2.2 Learner-centred methods: A historical Perspective

According to Ozmon and Craver (1999) Signs of learner-centred education began appearing with the dawning of formal education and can be traced back to the Sumerians and the development of written language (around 3500 B.C.). Within 500 years, the Chinese had also established formal schools. These early teachers emphasised individual character and citizenship. Perhaps the earliest individual teachers to have a profound, direct effect on learner-centred education was the Chinese philosopher Confucius (551 B.C.-479 B.C.) and the Greek philosopher Socrates (469-399 B.C.). Confucius stressed character and good citizenship, and Socrates stressed the individual. Confucius believed that every person should strive for the continual development of self until excellence is achieved.

The earliest known formal teaching method was the tutorial method. For five thousand years, the tutorial method continued to dominate. Although English philosopher John Locke (1632-1704) recommended its use, he introduced the concept of tabula rasa or blank slate, proposing that at birth the mind is a blank slate, and the only way to fill it is through having experiences, feeling these experiences, and reflecting on them. Locke's
experience-based educational philosophy gave birth to a concept called experiential education (Garforth, 1964).

The Swiss-born philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) was one of history's greatest contributors of learner-centred learning. With the birth of his own children, he gave away each child, yet, perhaps no one else has ever done so much to help children. In his adopted country, France, as perhaps was true universally at the time, children were seen as small adults and were not treated well. Rousseau understood that such treatment was unnatural and damaging to children. After tutoring a boy named Emile, and Emile's sister, Rousseau wrote a book titled ‘Emile’. In his book ‘Emile’ Rousseau recommended a type of education that at the time was unknown, an education that was natural, child-centred, and experience-based. His intent was to protect the children from a corrupting society and permit them to develop naturally. Emile was given the freedom to explore and interact with nature (Ikenberry, 1984).

Influenced by Rousseau's writings, a European neighbour in Switzerland designed a learner-centred school. In Switzerland, Johann Pestalozzi (1746-1827) opened a school with a learner-centred curriculum. Pestalozzi believed that the whole child should be educated physically, mentally, and emotionally and that children should be nourished like a plant while they learnt by doing. Pestalozzi believed that teachers must respect children and base their discipline on love. He pointed out that the school should be like a good home and the teacher should be like a good parent. Pestalozzi's school succeeded educationally but failed financially. In Germany, Friedrich Froebel used the learner-centred, child-centred, experience-based ideas to develop the world's first kindergarten, a school for young children (Campbell, 1967).

John Dewey (1859-1952) used his very long life (92 years) to exert more influence on education and philosophy than any other American. Dewey was influenced by Locke's tabula rasa, Bacon's scientific method, Immanuel Kant's pragmatism, Charles Peirce's (1839-1914) insistence on the clarification of ideas and his belief that one's mental grasp of any idea depends on the unification of the idea in actual experience, and William
James' (1842-1910) beliefs that truth is inseparable from experience and that experience, like life itself, is a stream of sequential events (Good & Brophy, 1997).

Dewey's works were made powerful because he recognised that each child has both a psychological dimension and a social dimension and to be effective, education must begin with understanding how the child's capacities, interests, and habits can be directed to help the child succeed in the community. In opposition to Rousseau, who wanted to protect children from society, Dewey believed that the only way a child would develop to its potential was in a social setting. He believed that the school should be a microcosm of its community and that education is living, not just a preparation for life. Dewey's view of learner-centred education embraced the idea that education should be both problem-based and fun. He pointed out that each experience should leave each student motivated and that the solving of each problem must lead to new, related questions about the topic (Good & Brophy, 1997).

The review of literature supporting learner-centred learning suggests several important dispositions including: education should be experience-based, each individual learner's own unique qualities and dispositions should be considered when planning experiences, the learner's perceptions should shape the curriculum, learner's curiosity should be fed and nurtured, learning is best when it involves the emotions, and the learning environment should be free from fear. Education should be experience-based. John Locke believed that the only way an individual can learn is through experience. Lev Vygotsky believed that all learning involves trying new information to prior experiences. Bacon, Montessori, Rousseau, Froebel, and Piaget believed that the best experience occur when learners are manipulating objects and solving problems. John Dewey is known for his expression, "Learning by doing," an expression used a century earlier by John Locke (Parker, 1998).

Each individual learner's own unique qualities and dispositions should be considered when planning a curriculum. Locke believed that the planning of educational experiences should begin by focusing on the learner. He recommended that teachers observe their students to learn their dispositions. By doing so, the curriculum can be
personalised to meet each student's needs. The learner's perceptions should shape the curriculum. In his work titled “Conduct of Understanding”, Locke expressed the important role that perception plays in learning: "knowledge is seeing till we ourselves see it with our own eyes and perceive it by our own understandings, we are so much in the dark and as void of knowledge as before.” Learner-centred teachers must learn to view the curriculum through the learners' perceptions (Parker, 1998:167).

The learning environment should be free from fear. Locke cautioned teachers that affection, not fear, is the incentive that spurs children to their duty. Rousseau felt a need to protect children from society, which was not child-friendly. Pestalozzi thought teachers should be as good parents and schools as good homes. His commitment to removing fear from schools greatly influenced Froebel, Herbert, and Montessori (Campbell, 1967).

According to Campbell (1967), Learners' curiosity should be fed and nurtured. Locke understood that curiosity is the engine that drives learning. He advised that teachers should always answer students' questions and when doing so, listen not to the learners' words but to the learners' thoughts. Dewey (1938) clearly used learner activities to nurture learner curiosity. In a certain sense every experience should do something to prepare a person for later experiences of a deeper and more satisfying quality of life. The most important attitude that can be formed is that of a desire to go on learning.

Learner-centred education was advanced by the Progressive Education Association Movement (PEAM), which was formed in 1919. The Progressive Movement flourished until the United States entered the Second World War in 1941. A massive evaluation of the learner-centred approach to education, known as the "Eight Year Study," was conducted from 1932 until 1940. The study found this approach equal or superior to traditional education in every way. According to the findings, some of the advantages of learner-centred methods over the traditional teacher-centred methods included students': attaining higher grades, attaining more academic honours, developing superior intellectual curiosity, developing superior creativity and developing objectivity (Ikenberry, 1984).
Ozman and Craver (1999) state that during the 20th century, several psychological developments influenced the development of learner-centred education. Paramount among these was the development of perceptual psychology, constructivism, and dispositions. In the mid-twentieth century, a considerable amount of research and thought was given by psychologists to the effect that perception has on behaviour and ultimately to the power that perception has to shape the kinds of people learners will become.

Combs (1962) and his colleagues explored the process by which young people grow up to be psychologically healthy and become the type of adults that they call adequate people. These perceptual psychologists say that a term that all teachers should know well is efficacy because highly successful teachers have a strong sense of efficacy towards their students and towards themselves. They believe that their students are capable of succeeding at a high level and that they are capable of ensuring that they can learn by doing. Learner-centred teachers can nurture the development of positive self-concepts by: assigning problems that challenge students but are within their abilities, encouraging them to succeed, and recognising their successes. Students are engaged in activities that nurture their development, they can even help shape the destiny of their classmates.

During the early part of the twentieth century, a Russian psychologist and sociologist named Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934) studied childrens' interactions. He saw that when students worked in small groups to solve problems, by discussing problems, the learners were able to talk each other through to the solutions, which is to say that by helping other group members, they collectively solved problems more efficiently than they could solve them when working alone. He called this social learning approach. Vygotsky used a system which now is known as cooperative learning, to encourage cooperation within each learning group. To receive a good mark on any task, the members had to successfully help their fellow group members understand and succeed at the task. This system is in sharp contrast to traditional education in that it is not teacher-centred but is learner-centred, not passive but active and problem-centred, and is based, not on competition but on cooperation (Ozman & Craver, 1999).
Another leading psychologist who contributed significantly to learner-centred learning was the Swiss educator Jean Piaget. Piaget focused his attention on the learner as an individual. While many may not think of him as a constructivist, his work consisted of giving his students (usually his own three children) problems to solve, not written problems but problems that encouraged them to manipulate concrete objects. He watched the ways in which they manipulated the objects and saw that each learner made assumptions and drew right or wrong conclusions about the objects (Good & Brophy, 1997).

2.3 Learner-centred methods: An African Perspective

Learner-centred methods are now more emphasised as opposed to teacher-centred methods in the teaching and learning process. This has seen many of the countries in the world today including African countries embrace this paradigm shift (Garrison, 2003). Learner-centred education is a ‘travelling policy’ which has been endorsed by many governments in Africa because it is a foundation for the building of democratic citizens and societies, and the development of a skilled population ready for the knowledge economies of the future African countries (Ozga & Jones, 2006). These methods have been successfully implemented to reform education in countries such as Tunisia (Khemmani, 2006), Ghana (Yakubu, 1994), Mozambique (Baloï, 1994), and Swaziland (Dlamini, Lubben & Campbell, 1996).

Learner-centred methods have been emphasised in Africa for more than a decade now. The United Nations Education and Scientific Culture Organisation (UNESCO) and the International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA) have been committed to enhancing the quality of education in Africa assisting in capacity building and promoting learner-centred education (UNESCO & IICBA, 2011). Many African countries have been reforming the historically common teacher-centred curriculum which employs a lecture style and promotes rote learning to a learner-centred one. Since the early 2000s Ethiopia, Mali and Tanzania have instituted policies specifying that teachers should use pedagogical approaches that engage students and make learning more interactive. National curricula in Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, and a
growing number of African countries seek to promote such skills as analysis, creativity, critical thinking and problem solving. The aim of these reforms is to enable teachers to move away from standard ‘learning by rote’ methods and utilise alternatives that encourage inquiry among students as they develop research skills (Henson, 2001).

The Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report (GMR) (2005) of UNESCO states that the pedagogical renewal across Africa has included many attempts to switch to learner-centred, activity-oriented pedagogy and away from teacher-dominated instructional practices. These efforts may be explained in part by the current tendency to favour such pedagogies. In most of these African countries concerned, attempts to institutionalise learner-centred pedagogy in schools and teacher training institutions have produced inconclusive results. Learner-centred pedagogy in Tanzania, offers an example of the adoption and implementation of learner-centred methods in Africa (Ministry of Education Vocation Training (MOEVT), 2008). In Rwanda, the Ministry of Education (MoE), through the Rwandan Education Commons (REC), has embarked on a programme to scale up the learner-centred methodology of teaching in schools across the country. In 2006, government introduced the learner-centred methodology of teaching as opposed to lecture method because it was ascertained to be more effective. The method involves learners taking the centre role during the lesson while the teacher acts as the coordinator. Experts say:

*When the learners take the initiative to come up with ideas during the lesson, it sticks in their brain than when the teacher does the lecturing (Henson, 2004:123).*

According to the Global Pedagogical Reform Movement (GPRM) (2006), pre-service and in-service teachers need to understand the theories and methods associated with learner-centred methods so as to promote critical skills and inquiry based learning. Sarojini Rao, Principal of Indus International School at the Towards a Student-Centred Classroom Conference in Cambridge 1999 said that: “Research proves that a student-centred classroom can improve both learning and examination results” (Chung & Walsh, 2010:98). These strategies, if appropriately implemented by the Ministries of
Education of various African countries can make pedagogy more effective and will help achieve excellence in education in Africa.

In Zambia, the National Education Policy of 1996 (Educating Our Future) stresses the importance of using methods which focus on the learners. The policy document states that:

*Through the inspectorate, teacher training colleges, resource centres and school-based activities, the Ministry of Education (MOE), will promote a variety of teaching strategies with focus on stimulating learning through inquiry, guided-discovery, problem solving, application, and similar activity-based teaching and learning method (GRZ, 1996:47).*

Therefore, it can be clearly seen that the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education promotes teaching methods which are learner-centred.

*The Ministry of Education emphasises that the child is at the centre of the entire education process which exists solely for the sake of the learner. It also recognises that each child is unique with his or her own individuality and personality, fashioned in family and community backgrounds that are themselves unique. This contributes a rich diversity to the entire educational enterprise which would seek to cultivate the qualities and potentialities of each learner, without trying to mould all children according to the same pattern (GRZ, 1996:28).*

The Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education recognises that learners have individual differences and they require methodologies which cater for their different abilities. It places emphasis on individual learners as opposed to teacher-centred methods which focuses just on the learning and teaching
process without taking into consideration the potentialities and capabilities of individual learners.

According to Muzumara (2011), teacher-centred methods in Zambia have generally proved not to be very effective in the teaching and learning process because they tend to keep learners on the passive side as learning is not reinforced by practical activities. Learner-centred methods are now more promoted in teaching because they involve the learner both mentally and physically. Kapale (1996) points out that learner-centred methods emphasise learning by doing and becoming actively involved, experiencing, formulating ideas and solving problems. Pupils learn better by doing and not by merely listening to the teacher.

It can be clearly justified through the findings of these studies that learner-centred methods are now embraced in different parts of Africa and in many subject areas and therefore history being a social science is not an exception (Gavy & Crug, 1999).

2.4 Rationale for learner-centred methods

Many researchers have conducted studies which justifies the promotion of the paradigm shift from teacher-centred (lecture method) to learner-centred methods. Strong research evidence exists to support the use of learner-centred methods as opposed to teacher-centred methods based on what the former leads to and promotes.

Learner-centred methods lead to knowledge base. According to a study conducted by Alexander and Murphy (2000), learner-centred methods promote knowledge base. The conclusive result of decades of research on knowledge base is that what a person already knows largely determines what new information he/she attends to, how he/she organises and represents new information, and how he/she filters new experiences, and even what he/she determines to be important or relevant. This implies that the use of learner-centred methods promotes knowledge base among learners as opposed to the use of teacher-centred ones. This is because a learner determines what is salient for him or her and thereby cultivating the interest to retain what he or she learns. However, these
findings may not be authentic because the research does not explain very well how learner-centred methods increase the knowledge base.

Strategic processing and control of cognitive abilities are supported by learner-centred methods. Lambert and McCombs (2000) conducted a study which reviewed that learner-centred methods promote strategic processing and executive control of the cognitive abilities of learners. The ability to reflect on and regulate one’s thoughts and behaviours is an essential aspect of learning which is promoted by learner-centred methods. Successful learners are actively involved in their own learning, monitor their thinking, think about their learning, and assume responsibility for their own learning. The research reviewed that teacher-centred learning does not make learners assume the responsibility of their own learning and think about their learning. The findings of this research may be difficult to generalise because the research was conducted in America and what were measured by the researchers are subjective feelings which are difficult to prove or dispute.

Learner-centred methods promote meta-cognitive aspects of learning. Meta-cognition is the process of thinking and understanding a person’s own cognitive processes. It is the active monitoring and control of the cognitive processes and is central to planning, problem solving and evaluation (Henson, 1999). Barnes (1999) points out that individual understanding is based on the existing knowledge and experiences of the learner. They state that most effective learning takes place if the knowledge is personally meaningful to the learner. Lambert and McCombs (1998) further assert that placing the learning experience in a context that is meaningful to the learner leads to the construction of useful knowledge that can be transferred to new situations. La Berge (1995) describes the self-regulating ability of the learner as the ability of the learner to participate actively in the learning process and this ability includes strategic knowledge, self-efficacy, ownership, and orientation towards masterly and self-reflection. Meta-cognition is a subjective feeling which can be very difficult to measure. It is difficult therefore to conclude that meta-cognition promotes learner-centred learning.
Research also indicates that learner-centred methods increases motivation and affect. The benefits of learner-centred education include increased motivation for learning and greater satisfaction with school, both of these outcomes lead to greater achievement (Slavin, 2009). Research shows that personal involvement, intrinsic motivation, personal commitment, confidence in one’s abilities to succeed, and a perception of control over learning lead to more learning and higher achievement in school (Alexander & Murphy, 2000).

Learner-centred learning is based on the belief that people learn more effectively when they are interested in a topic or problem and thus are motivated to seek a solution to such problems (Pierce, 2003). This idea is similar to Bruner’s constructivist learning theory which states that the learning process is an active one in which the learner must discover principles for himself /herself and that instruction must be offered in the context of experiences that make the learner willing and eager to learn (Pierce, 2003). Slavin (1998) further states that the teacher helps the learner to construct his or her own knowledge by giving him or her opportunities to explore concepts and apply ideas. A learner understands new events in relation to his or her past experiences, and the active learning process helps the learner to develop logical thinking. It is not easy to measure the levels of motivation among learners and what motivates them. The fact that there are some individual differences among learners implies that what motivates them may be different. Therefore, not all learners can be motivated by learner-centred methods.

Learner-centred methods promote and cater for individual differences among learners. According to Lambert and McCombs (1998) learners each come to the learning situation with their own personalities, learning styles, motivation and focus. When a learner creates knowledge based on his or her previous knowledge, he or she has to instil concepts or things with personal meaning. Each individual has a typical way of thinking, remembering and solving problems. Learners come to the learning experience with prior knowledge that is peculiar to themselves and with different beliefs and backgrounds and must be respected if they are to participate actively in their learning process.
Lambert and McCombs (1998) contend that differences in talents, emotional states, abilities and needs must be taken into account if learners are to participate successfully in the learning and self-development that they need. Litzinger and Osif (1996) point out that learners also think and learn in different ways and tend to have a consistent approach to learning. In general, sensitivity to individual differences in learners in the classroom and variations in learning materials is needed if one happens to accommodate all learners and if one wants to help learners learn effectively in a learner-centred classroom. Research indicates that learners not only come to the learning environment with certain history behind them that colours their opinions, interests and goals, but also with differences in their learning styles, development, abilities, feelings of efficacy and various other needs. Therefore, learner-centred methods play a pivotal role in catering for individual differences of learners (Lambert & McCombs, 1998).

A study conducted by Aspy (1983) in America, revealed that learners who are given the freedom to explore areas based on their personal interests, and who are accompanied in their striving for solutions by a supportive understanding facilitator not only achieve higher academic results but also experience an increase in personal values such as flexibility, self-confidence and social skills. Aspy (1983) asserts that learners achieve superior academic results and even personal growth in terms of higher self-confidence and openness to experience if they learn in an atmosphere or climate that can be characterised by three basic attitudinal conditions: realness, acceptance, and empathic understanding. According to research, when the focus of lesson delivery becomes learner-centred, learners in schools and colleges attain higher rates of retention and are better prepared graduates than those who were more traditionally trained (Matlin, 2002; Sternberg & Grigorenko, 2002). The research was done in America and it may be very difficult to generalise the findings to the Zambian context.

A study done by Steekol (2007) justifies the shift from teacher-centred methods to learner-centred methods. He assessed how using formative assessment, a component of learner-centred teaching, enhanced pupil learning. The formative assessment tools utilised and included one-minute paper to summarise class material and pupil-generated quizzes. Steekol (2007) noted that pupils in the learner-centred section of the class
scored significantly better on the final exam than those in the control group. This therefore, indicates that learner-centred methods are more effective than teacher-centered ones. However, the sample was too small to permit generalisation of these findings.

Changes in the understanding of how humans learn are supported by the use of learner-centred methods. Doyle (2008) indicates that new discoveries about how the human brain learns and subsequent recommendations for how to teach in harmony with these discoveries have guided the learner-centred approach to teaching and learning. For example, we want learners to do more firsthand learning, practicing, reflecting, teaching of others and presentations because all these learning activities require active learner engagement. Research from neuroscience indicates that dendrites of our brain cells only grow when the brain is actively engaged and the neuron-networks formed in our brains only stay connected when they are used repeatedly (Ratey, 2009). We need to continually reinforce to our learners that the learning tasks we are asking them to take on, which require them to adapt to new learning roles are done to optimise the development of neuron-networks they need to be successful at school. However, in terms of methodology, research from neuroscience does not show us exactly how dendrite cells grow and how the neuron networks stay connected when learner-centred methods are used.

Learner-centred methods encourage attention and cognitive processing in class. Research suggests that instructors have a tendency to overestimate their learners’ level of cognitive involvement in the classroom. For example, Fassinger (1996) surveyed more than 1,000 learners in over 50 classes from a wide range of disciplines that met at the same period. She discovered that learners perceive themselves as less involved in the classroom than faculty perceive them to be. While we would like to think that learners are engaging in reflective thinking while listening to lectures, research demonstrates that learners’ note-taking during learning is often performed in a reflexive, mindless manner.
Prolonged performance on any passive repetitive task such as continuous note-taking eventually results in that task being assumed by lower centres of the brain that control automatic behaviour, with limited involvement of higher (cortical) areas of the brain responsible for higher-level thinking. This finding is captured anecdotally in the old saying: “During lectures, information passes from the lecturer’s notes to the students’ notes and through the minds of neither” (Gibbs, 1995:123). The sample was too small to allow generalisation of these findings.

In studies of learner behaviour in classrooms, it has been found that about half of the time during lectures, learners are thinking about things unrelated to the lecture content and up to 15 percent of their class time is spent ‘fantasizing’ (Milton, Pollio & Eison, 1986). Student attention and concentration tend to drop off dramatically after 10-20 minutes of continuous instructor discourse. Thus, attention loss during lectures cannot be dismissed as a learner problem, such as lack of motivation, lack of effort, or an outbreak of attention deficit disorder among today’s learners; instead, the problem seems to lie with the lecture method itself (Milton et al., 1986). It may be that listening attentively to lectures for prolonged periods of time is simply not something that the human brain is particularly well equipped to do.

Some neurobiologists have argued that our brains may not be neurologically wired to process information for prolonged periods of time because it was more adaptive for our early ancestors to have shorter attention spans which enabled them to react quickly to a predator or prey and then shift their attention to the next life-preserving priority. This suggests that the human brain processes new information more effectively in shorter, focused sessions lasting no longer than 15 minutes, followed by opportunities to ‘act’ on that information via activities that involve personal engagement and reflection (Matlin, 2002). However, this research lacks empirical evidence as it does not explain very well how the brain processes information when learner-centred methods are used.

Pascarella and Terenzini’s (2005) study revealed that even if learners miraculously managed to maintain attention and concentration in a typical 40-minute lecture, important educational outcomes such as higher-level thinking skills and attitude change
are less likely to take place. This is when learners listen more to lectures than when they engage in more active forms of learning. For instance, McKeachie (1994:77) conducted an extensive review of the research literature on school teaching methods and concluded:

*If we want learners to become more effective in meaningful learning and thinking, they need to spend more time in active, meaningful learning and thinking not just sitting and passively receiving information.*

Pascalerella and Terenzini’s (2005) study does not explain exactly how important educational outcomes like higher-level thinking skills and attitude change are less likely to take place in a lecture method. In other words, it lacks a clear methodological approach.

Learner-centred methods lead to higher order thinking skills and attitude change. The studies conducted by Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) as well as McKeachie (1994) provides consistent evidence that the lecture method which continues to be the dominant instructional strategy in classrooms, is not the optimal vehicle for promoting learning, particularly learning that involves higher-level thinking and attitudinal change. Their motive is not to imply that lecturing (instructor-delivered information) should be totally exterminated from the classroom. However, the research reviewed here strongly suggests that the lecture method needs to be augmented and complemented by learner-centred strategies that empower learners to take a more active and responsible role in the learning process. These results may not be generalised to high schools because they were done on college students.

According to a study conducted by Bonwell and Eison (1991), the exclusive use of lecture in the classroom hinders pupils and student learning. Lectures in which audience members remain passive participants in the learning process yield disappointingly low retention rates of factual information. Based on nearly 200 studies, these authors asserted that students’ average achievement rose from the 50th to the 61st percentile.
Compared to those taught by traditional methods, students in the classrooms also learnt their lessons in two-thirds of the time. There is considerable evidence that learner-centred approach, aimed at fostering deep learning, including problem-based, self-directed study and reflective learning can be effective learning experiences if well designed and used by motivated students. More recently, Bligh (2000:68) concluded his comprehensive review of the literature with this recommendation:

*Use lectures to teach information. Do not rely on them to promote thought change attitudes, or develop behavioural skills if you can help it.*

However, Bonwell and Eison’s (1991) study lacks a concise methodological approach in the sense that it does not explain very well how the use of lectures hinders learning and how exactly passive participants yield low retention rates.

Barr and Tagg (1995) reported that occasional reference to traditional teaching methods (Teacher-centred) did not improve American high school students’ understanding of the related science concepts. They speculated that learner-centred methods may improve students’ long-term attitudes and beliefs. Barr and Tagg’s (1995) study only concentrated on American schools making it difficult to generalise its findings to the Zambian context. On the other hand, Dahncke, Behrendt and Reiska (2001) studied two groups of secondary school students in Germany and Estonia. One group followed traditional based science methods and the other followed learner-centred approaches. Their results show that the conceptual attainment of the latter group increased significantly. The students who were in the group which used learner-centred methods also had a greater competence in science-based decision-making. Dahncke, Behrendt and Reiska’s (2001) study cannot be generalised to the Zambian education system because it was conducted in Germany and Estonia. Furthermore, it was based on science and not history.

Tsai (1999) concluded from a randomised controlled trial in a Taiwanese high school that the use of learner-centred methods in science and technology improved students’
understanding of the nature of science and the way scientific knowledge is constructed. Tsai’s (1991) results may not be generalised to other countries and disciplines like history because it was conducted in Taiwan and was based on the subject of science.

Halpem and Hakel (1997) argue that the main reason for learner-centred learning is the transfer of learning, taking what has been learnt accurately and applying it at some point in future. In order to accomplish the transfer, students should be provided the opportunity to practice retrieval at many points and under various circumstances throughout their learning. Halpem and Hakel (1997) encourage maximising prior knowledge by using reflection and inquiry prior to each task. The goals for transfer and application should be clearly stated as part of the goals and outcomes for each course thereby setting the expectation of higher order thinking in both the process and outcomes.

Perceptual psychologists contend that learner-centred education is essential for healthy development. Combs' contemporary, Kelly (1962:118), says:

\[
\text{The growing self must feel that it is involved, that it is really part of what is going on, that in some degree it is helping shape its own destiny, together with the destiny of all.}
\]

These comments echo the very nature of learner-centred education, explaining the need to put the student in the centre of learning and in an active role, and furthermore as Kelly (1962:124) indicated: “when students are engaged in activities that nurture their development, they can even help shape the destiny of their classmates.” However, perceptual psychologists do not explain very well how essential learner-centred education lead to health development.

Learner-centred methods encourage higher participation in class and lead to academic satisfaction. Work in educational psychology most clearly shifts our focus from the teacher to the learner. What teachers do is important only in terms of how those actions address learning. Kember and Gow (1994) developed a questionnaire for faculty that
measures orientation towards one of two methods of teaching and learning namely Knowledge transmission and learner-centred. They tabulated the data for both individual faculty and departments and then they used an instrument developed by Kember (1994) to measure the extent to which students comprehend well between the lecture method and the learner-centred methods.

Kember and Gow’s (1994) results suggest that the methods of teaching adopted, the learning tasks set, the assessment demands made, and the workload specified are strongly influenced by the method of teaching. Departments where knowledge transmission was done using the lecture methods showed significantly undesirable influences on learning as opposed to those who used learner-centred ones. However, the sample of this study was too small to permit generalisation of the findings. Learner-centred methods are used to allow learners to take control of their learning. Dlamini, et al. (1996) found that learners using learner-centred approach increase their participation in class and help determining what is to be learned.

Keup and sax (2002) conducted a national survey on the use of “engaging pedagogy” (learner-centred methods) in American High Schools. Based on a survey data was collected from more than 60 High Schools and over 30 000 pupils. This national survey revealed that the use of engaging pedagogy like class discussions and group work was positively associated with pupils’ satisfaction. Similar findings emerge from a study conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) (2004) on first-year college students in general. Data gathered from almost 25,000 students at 110 institutions revealed that the pedagogy that emphasised involvement with peers and practical activities led to students’ satisfaction with the quality of instruction at their colleges. However, these results may not be generalised because the findings were based on American institutions.

Another salient study which shows the effectiveness of learner-centred approaches explored social studies teachers' views of learner-centred instruction and learning theories by employing the methods and procedures of the qualitative research tradition. In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participants. The
techniques and strategies of inductive qualitative data analysis were used to analyse the interview transcripts. The results showed that the participants had positive attitudes towards learner-centred instruction which they believed has the potential to make instruction engaging, enjoyable, involving, challenging, and relevant to students' learning. The teachers identified their teaching orientations more with the cognitive approach than with the constructivist and the behaviourist approach. This finding is in line with Elvis (2008) in the European Journal of Teacher Education (EJTE). However, these results may not be generalised to other disciplines like history.

Learner-centred methods promote autonomy in class. In a learner-centred environment, students become autonomous learners and this accelerates their learning process. This was illustrated by Nunan (1995) who conducted a study to evaluate the usefulness of learner-centred learning on activities with a questionnaire. The questionnaire had activities which were learner-centred. For instance, students were asked to give one another questions and then answer them in turn (information exchange). Students were told to write an original dialogue or narrative and then role-play it for the class. A pair presented their dialogue or narrative to another pair for them to summarise (information transfer).

Students discussed freely a topic provided by the teacher. Lastly, students reported individually to the class on a topic they knew very well and they worked in groups to come up with a solution to a particular problem posed by the teacher. These activities were rated by the following scale: I always like this activity, I seldom like this activity and I never like this activity. The questionnaire results revealed that 80 percent of the students always liked learning through these activities and only 2 percent never liked to learn through these activities. It was concluded that most of these students felt that learner-centred methods accelerated their learning process (Nunan, 1995). The results of this study are difficult to prove because they do not exactly show how learners’ learning is accelerated.

Weimar (2002) reviewed extensive literature on learner-centred teaching and learning and she summarised her findings as follows: Pupils and students are capable learners
who will blossom as power shifts to a more egalitarian classroom. The role of a teacher has changed from a sole authoritarian to a fellow traveler in search of knowledge. Returning the responsibility for learning to learners so that they can understand their learning strengths and weaknesses and feel self-directed in their knowledge quest. To utilise assessment measures so as not just to assign grades, but as our most effective tools to promote learning. Her research also indicates that the emphasis from teacher-centred to learner-centred is not always initially welcomed by students who often prefer passive learning but those who find the experience interesting. Such does involve a reallocation of power in the classroom, although it is clear that the ultimate control still remains with the instructor. Her research concludes that student learning becomes even more effective when students are teaching students and are involved in subsequent evaluation. However, it is not always that learning becomes effective when students teach one another and get involved in evaluation.

Barbara McCombs has published extensively on the topic of learner-centred teaching (McCombs, 1997, 1999, 2000). Her work emphasises the role of positive feedback between student and instructor and the importance of encouraging good climate of learning both in and outside the classroom. Her work also found significant value of better understanding an individual student’s perspective on the learning experience and having diverse approaches that allow all students to be better invested in their learning experience. Parker Palmer’s “The Courage to Teach” eloquently addresses the paradox of teaching-versus learning-centred education practices. His view is that if we separate teaching from learning, the result is “teachers who talk but do not listen and students who listen but do not talk.”

In his book, “What the Best Teachers Do” Ken Bain (2004) offers several characteristics of teachers who embrace the learner-centred instruction. They touch the lives of their students and place strong emphasis on learning and outcomes through varied forms of assessments. Bain’s study also led to the conclusion that these teachers regardless of where they teach, know their subject material extremely well, and are active and accomplished scholars, and value critical thinking, problem solving and creativity. Bain (2004) further concluded that these teachers value teaching and consider
it as demanding as their research and scholarship, that they seek to create a critical learning environment and aspire to challenge students to confront important problems.

Bain (2004) asserts that such teachers have a strong trust in students, believe that students want to systematically collect feedback on teaching, readily assess outcomes, and make appropriate changes. These teachers work to create a safe learning environment which allows students to try, fail, and try again. Bain’s (2004) findings also concluded that these teachers have a great faith in students ability and offer students ownership of class objectives. Perhaps the ultimate conclusion of Bain’s (2004) study is that learner-centred teachers view teaching as beginning with the student and appreciate the individual value of each student. In his words “They don’t teach a class. They teach a student”.

Boud (1981) describes how education makes pupils dependant learners. They depend on their teachers to identify what needs to be learnt, to prescribe the learning methods to be learnt, to prescribe the learning methods and finally to assess what and how well they have learnt. In recent years, work on learner-centred learning has advanced, with Boud and others proposing that the goal of education ought to be the creation of independent, autonomous learners who assume responsibility for their own learning. Boud (1981) further asserts that because we so seldom see independent, autonomous learners and function in mostly teacher-centred environments, we forget how effectively some individuals assume responsibility for their own learning.

According to Biggs (1999), the goal of teaching is to promote learning, and then the role of the teacher takes to accomplish that goal. Teachers no longer function as exclusive content experts or authoritarian classroom managers and no longer work to improve teaching by developing sophisticated presentation skills. They will lecture less and much more around their classroom than in front of it. Learner-centred teachers make essential contributions to the learning process. Therefore, meaningful approaches to learning are discouraged when teachers believe that their role is restricted to transferring the accumulated knowledge of their discipline to the minds of their students.
Learning is an active process by which learners construct concepts and ideas on the basis of their existing knowledge, ideations, attitudes, emotions and prejudices (Barnes, 1999). This is done by asking questions, interpreting events and solving problems. The learner-centred approach promotes active involvement in exploring events and concepts, the learner constructs and develops his or her own understanding of the world and so learns new things, becomes more independent, participates more and becomes more creative. In contrast, Engelbrecht (2000) states that the traditional approach is seen as being content-driven, with little involvement required from learners who are expected to be passive and receptive. In this kind of traditional teacher-centred learning, teachers deliver their received wisdom and certified information to passive recipients, and the main emphasis is on practising rote learning rather than acquiring any problem solving skills.

Learning is a constructive process, learners construct knowledge most effectively if the content concerned is relevant and personally meaningful to the learner. The learner connects with what is being learnt because of his or her prior knowledge and experience. A friendly and encouraging social environment in which the learner feels appreciated, respected and valued creates a situation in which learning occurs best. Learning is a natural process because learners who are respected are naturally curious and therefore want to learn and improve their situations. Although negative feelings and thoughts may interfere with the learning process, they must somehow be dealt with and neutralised (Lambert & McCombs, 1998).

The learner-centred paradigm has become the new ‘buzzword’ in the field of education. Empirical support is needed to move the paradigm from a passing trend to a conceptual pillar of scholarship of teaching and learning. Several researchers have explored learner-centred paradigm with promising results. For instance, Wells and Jones (2005) examined how teaching information systems to learners were improved by using more collaborative classrooms. They found out that learners were able to learn less measurably, but still important skills such as the ability to work collaboratively and taking responsibility for learning were maintained. This study focused on information
systems in America and therefore its findings cannot be generalised to other countries and other disciplines like history.

Learner-centred methods prepare learners for their careers. The justification for teaching many of the learning skills, behaviours, attitudes and critical thinking strategies now a part of learner-centred methods is that learners will need these skills for their careers. For instance, learners are put into small groups not only to promote a deeper level of learning, but because learning to talk with or listen to others is perhaps the single most important skill needed to be successful in any career field (Doyle, 2008).

The underlying principle for asking learners to make presentations before the whole class is that learning to speak in front of others is crucial to career success. One of the reasons learners are being asked to take on more responsibility for their own learning is because they will be responsible for it the rest of their lives. The responsibility we have to develop our learners’ lifelong learning skills is justification for many of the changes we are asking our learners to maintain in a learner-centred classroom. When we ask them to manage their time, work well with others, listen attentively, defend a position or find a proper source; accept and give feedback and criticism, express ideas in clear concise ways, we do so because they will have to do these things the rest of their lives (Ratey, 2009). However, not every learner is likely to use critical thinking strategies in their careers. It should be pointed out that not everyone who is successful in their careers used learner-centred methods. For instance, not all careers may require presentation skills and not all students who used learner-centred methods may become responsible and manage their time well, work well with others, listen attentively, and accept criticism.

2.5 Teachers’ views of learner-centred methods

Macgregor, Smith and Robinson (2000) address several questions or concerns that teachers have raised about learner-centred methods like smaller group learning. The first question that they raised is about content coverage. The teachers who were interviewed expressed consistent satisfaction that students in their classes are demonstrating one or more of these indicators of increased learning, much greater conceptual understanding,
more complex critical-thinking skills, better class attendance, and greater confidence. About two-thirds of teachers who were interviewed said that they covered fewer topics in class when they used group work, but that students learnt and retained more of the ‘big ideas’ that they chose to address relative to using lecture formats. Macgregor, et al.’s (2000) study lacks a clear and concise methodological approach in terms of the sample size used and therefore it lacks merit to permit its generalisation to the Zambian context.

According to Cooper (2000) teachers may find learner-centred learning approaches to be more enjoyable and lead to improved student learning, but they still have questions about the amount of content that can be covered using these approaches. Content coverage is still high priority for teachers and answers as to whether teachers can cover the same content with learner-centred learning approaches as can be covered with traditional lecture–based approaches depends on individual teachers. Although some teachers indicate that they cover as much or most content with learner-centred learning approaches, some adopters of learner-centred learning approaches indicate that they cover less content with the same methods. For example, as indicated in the research summaries of Active Learning Site, Costin (1997) showed that students in courses in which teachers paused at intervals and talked six minutes less performed significantly better on the same exam than students in courses where teachers lectured the entire time. However, Costin (1997) does not show very well how students in courses in which teachers paused at intervals and talked six minutes less performed better in exams and whether this was the reason for their better performance or not.

It is often challenging for teachers to focus on different ways of teaching. Robertson (1999) addresses a developmental model for teaching which describes Egocentrism, Aliocentrism and Systemocentrism. He contends that a teacher masters egocentrism by mastering the course content, then progresses into aliocentrism by considering diverse teaching strategies to try and engage the student and finally reaches systemocentrism where the teacher critically reflects on his or her teaching and acknowledges it as part of the growth process.
Robertson (1999) further postulates that as a teacher progresses into the rigors of learner-centred approaches to teaching, the course programme is likely to reflect these changes and define the role of the instructor in various ways. However, Robertson (1999) does not show how teachers progress into the rigors of learner-centred approaches. Diamond (1998) admonishes clear statements of goals and student learning outcomes as part of the teaching and learning process. These goals and outcomes must strive to create a learner-centred atmosphere in which positive personal relationships are created, student ideas and opinions are honoured, higher-order thinking is facilitated, and student individual needs and beliefs are addressed.

2.6 Learner-centred methods in History

There are many examples of learner-centred methods used in the teaching and learning of history. Some of the learner-centred methods used are as follows:

2.6.1 Project-based learning

According to Katz and Chard (1990) project-based method is a technique where learners can be given a topic to do some studies on. It is a dynamic approach to teaching in which learners explore real life-world problems and challenges simultaneously developing skills while working in small collaborative groups. It inspires students to obtain a deeper knowledge of the topic they are studying. The topic can be selected by the learners depending on the subject or the needed issue. In the case of history, a teacher can ask pupils to choose a topic then do an investigation or research using different sources. This method is learner-centred as learners would use their own initiative to collect and analyse data and demonstrate their writing skills in the learning process through the project they would carry out. Project work can be done individually and can also be done in groups.

The main objective of doing projects in history is to foster better learning and encourage active learner participation. Using projects to generate learning experiences is one of the ways which is used to confront the learner with the context that facilitates learning. Wiggins and McTighe (1998) assert that learning best takes place when the learner is the
one who looks deeper to create meaning and develop understanding when doing his or her own project. Understanding, Perkins and Blythe (2000) explain, is deep learning that goes well beyond simply ‘knowing’ such as being able to do thought demanding topics like finding evidence and interpreting information in a new way. Research also indicates that learners are more likely to retain the knowledge gained through this approach far more readily than through traditional teacher-centred approach. In addition, project based learning helps learners develop confidence and self direction. Project based learning also helps learners apply what they learn to real-life experiences and provides an all-around enriching education (Perkins & Blythe, 2000). Research however, does not explain exactly how projects help the learners retain knowledge. Perkins and Blythe (2000) do not show exactly how projects develop confidence in learners.

**2.6.2 Cooperative and Collaborative learning**

Cooperative and collaborative learning are some of the learner centred-methods used in the teaching and learning of history. Cooper (2000) points out that cooperative learning is more concerned with the product of the learning process while collaborative learning concentrates on the interaction of the learners and the process of learning. According to research, cooperative learning produces better academic performance, enhanced short and long-term memory, improved self esteem, improved intrinsic motivation and emotional involvement, more pro-social behaviour and better interpersonal relationships with the peer group and enhanced aspirations to achieve good academic results. Therefore, cooperative and collaborative learning are part of the learner centred learning environment (Cooper, 2000). However, Cooper (2000) does not explain exactly how cooperative learning produce better academic performance and how it, enhanced short and long-term memory, improved self esteem, improved intrinsic motivation and emotional involvement, more pro-social behaviour and better interpersonal relationships.
2.6.3 Group work

Group work is also one of the learner-centred methods used in the teaching and learning of history. This method uses interaction between learners as part of the learning process. It involves the assigning of learners in groups depending on the size of the classroom. The groups are given specific tasks to perform under the supervision of a teacher. Group work gives pupils the opportunity to work together and thereby developing essential social skills (Kagan, 1995). Teachers can use this learner-centred method to share their understanding about an issue while learners would seek help or information from each other. Many teachers use group work to help learners learn from each other, build a sense of oneness and teach cooperation.

According to Caruso and Wooley (2008) group work can be an effective method to motivate learners, encourage active learning and develop key critical-thinking, communication, and decision making skills. The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) (2006) states that positive group experiences have been shown to contribute to student learning, retention and good results. Astin (1997) asserts that group work can also help learners develop skills specific to collaborative efforts, allowing students to tackle more complex problems than they could on their own, share diverse perspectives, delegate roles and responsibilities. Maloch (1999) also echoes that group work helps learners to receive social support and encouragement, to take risks, develop new approaches to resolving differences and to establish shared identity with group members. The teacher takes the role of a facilitator either as a participant in the group or as an outsider almost in a consultant’s role (Brandes & Ginnis, 1996).

Engelbrecht (2000) asserts that group work is a substantial pillar of learner-centred education, with balancing efficiencies and inefficiencies in preparation and presentation, but there is no question of their potential contribution to more effective learning and more confident learners and teachers if it can be done well. Group work promotes logical and rational thinking leading to systematic solutions. Responsibilities are shared among members of the group and as such, students become accountable for their own learning and for each others’ learning. Engelbrecht (2000) further points out that group
tasks must include both goals for the whole group and individual responsibility if the progress of the group work is to be effective. It is said that: “more hands for lighter work” “two heads are better than one” “the more the merrier. Engelbrecht’s (2000) assertion that group work promotes logical and rational thinking leading to systematic solutions lacks merit because it does not elucidate on how this is achieved by group work.

2.6.4 Class discussion

Another cardinal and most common learner-centred method used in the teaching and learning of history is class discussion. According to Larson (1997), class discussion is a structured conversation among participants who present, examine, compare and understand similar and diverse ideas about issues. This method can take place before, during and after the lesson. A class discussion can also be triggered spontaneously at any time by the teacher or the learner by means of stimulating questions. Larson (1997) further states that class discussion encourages student involvement, higher participation and is effective for developing learners’ cognitive skills, such as evaluation and synthesis and it is easy to organise, needing less resources. (Kagan, 1995). Larson (1997) states that class discussion is an effective way to promote higher level thinking, develop learner attitudes and advance learners’ capability for moral questioning. Townsend (1993) stated that genuine classroom discussion which is the exchange of questions and perspectives among all participants seems most likely to nurture expressions of wondering.

In a study done by Eilean Francis (2000) in collaboration with the Discussion Development Group (DDG) encouraged teachers to become engaged in small scale action research projects which promote a model of classroom discussion. Their study came up with the following recommendations: more than one point of view should be put forward, participants should be responsive to different points of view and that participants should be willing to understand or to be affected by opinions other than their own. Their study also recommended that participants should have an obligation to offer opinions and to examine the opinions of others and should realise that while
listening and observing are important, being a silent member of the group fulfils only half the contract in discussion. Discussion as a teaching method therefore provides the opportunity for learning in innovative, creative and interesting ways for both learners and teachers. The study conducted by Eileen Francis (2000) in collaboration with the Discussion Development Group (DDG) lacks a clear methodological approach in terms of the study population and the sample size making it difficult for its findings to be validated and applied to the Zambian context.

2.6.5 Problem solving and discovery learning

Problem-solving and discovery learning are learner-centred approaches which are used in the teaching and learning of history. They engage a process whereby learners are actively involved either as individuals or in groups finding and determining the answer to questions or solving problems. In discovery learning, learners are actively seeking new knowledge. Learners are engaged in hands-on-activities that are real problems needing solutions. Learners have a purpose for finding answers and learning more (Musca & Howard, 1997). According to Bonwell (1998), the focus of discovery learning is learning how to analyse and interpret information so as to understand what is being learnt rather than just giving the correct answer from rote memorisation. Discovery learning pushes learners to a deeper level of understanding and the emphasis is placed on masterly and application of overarching skills.

Through exploring and problem solving, learners take an active role to create, integrate and generalise knowledge. Instead of engaging in passively accepting information through lectures, learners establish broader applications for skills through activities that encourage risk-taking, problem solving and an examination of unique experiences. In this sense, learners rather than teachers drive their learning. Discovery learning and problem solving promote deep learning, meta cognitive skills, develop problem solving skills, creativity and learner engagement (Davis, 2001).

Problem-solving and discovery learning are effective methods, promoting the understanding of content as well as the thinking processes involved in leaning. Creative
and significant thinking skills can be developed in finding a solution to a problem or discovering the answer by oneself while the teacher acts as a facilitator. The problem solving method has a high motivational value for learners since history knowledge can be applied to real life problems (Glasgow, 1996). According to Slavin (2009), these methods also help learners to think about their thinking skills, enhance depth of understanding, increase their comprehension level and retention of the learning content because learners are required to work with everyday problems and to apply theory to practice.

2.6.6 Debate

Another important learner-centred method which is used in the teaching and learning of history is debate. Kagan (1995) states that debate involves a situation whereby the teacher gives a motion to two groups and one of them opposes the motion while the other group proposes the motion. Afterwards the class discussion/learning discussion can follow. Darby (2007) further states that debate is a powerful pedagogical instructional strategy that forces learners to become immersed in research to support their arguments. It is one of the many different ways to impart a lesson to the class. Since the ancient Greeks, debate has long been a favourite method of teaching because of its benefits. Darby (2007) asserts that debate dependently maintains learners’ attention for longer times than lecturing. By engaging the learners directly they become part of the discussion and they hold the information or lesson they are taught much better. Debate also provides a platform for learners to express themselves and can boost learners’ confidence and public speaking skills.

According to Darby (2007) debate is an effective pedagogical strategy because of the responsibility for learning and active involvement required by all debaters. It provides an experience by which learners can develop competencies in researching current issues; preparing logical arguments, actively listening to various perspectives, differentiating between subjective and evidence based information, asking cogent questions, integrating relevant information and formulating their own opinions based on evidence. This method increases learners’ motivation, language use and improves the vocabulary of
learners. Debate also promotes self-confidence, self-efficacy and positive attitudes to the learners. Debate as a learner-centred method however has a limitation in the sense that not all learners participate at a time making it not inclusive.

### 2.6.7 Field trips

The logical extension of bringing part of the world into the classroom is taking the class into the ‘real’ world. This can be done by using one of the most salient yet interesting learner-centred method called excursion or field trip, which is also known as school trip or school tour. Maloch (1999) states that the purpose of the field trip is usually observation for education, non expert research or to provide learners with experiences outside the everyday activities. The aim is to observe the subject in its natural state and if possible even to collect samples. Field trips are an interactive method of teaching because they give learners opportunities to widen their practical and cultural experience by varying their learning environments. Field trips can also be used as a chance to collect data for later analysis, to generate artwork and stimulate discussions both on site and back in class (Maloch, 1999). Field trips therefore connect schoolwork with the world making learning more tangible and memorable.

According to McCombs and Whistler (1997), field trips are useful not only because they give learners firsthand knowledge and enable them to see how a number of skills and processes blend into a whole, but also because they can be used to provide students with cultural experiences available in their own environments. Learner involvement during each step of planning a field trip helps generate interest and makes trips more worthwhile. Learning using field trips gives learners the zeal and enthusiasm to learn history as they are accorded an opportunity to see actual historical remains and artefacts. It is said that ‘one lesson outdoors is worth seven inside.’

### 2.6.8 Brainstorming

Brainstorming is one of the most important and commonly used methods in the teaching and learning of history. According to Townsend (1993), brainstorming is the name given to a number of techniques used for generating and gathering ideas. It is a large or small
group activity that encourages learners to focus on a topic and contribute to the free flow of ideas. Contributions from brainstorming activities are accepted without criticism or judgement and are usually summarised on a whiteboard by the teacher. The basic principle is that learners suggest ideas which may be collected. Davis (2001) states that brainstorming encourages learners to speak out and share ideas. Brainstorming helps promote thinking skills when learners are asked to think of all things related to a concept they are really being asked as it stretches their thinking skills. Brainstorming is vital because it taps into prior knowledge, give all students ideas, eliminate fear of failure, show respect for each other, try something without fear, tap into individuality and creativity and eliminate fear of risk taking (Osborne, 1998).

According to Osborne (1998), by expressing and listening to what others say during brainstorming, learners adjust their previous knowledge or understanding, accommodate new information and increase their levels of awareness. The main purpose of brainstorming is to focus learners’ attention on a particular topic, generate a quantity of ideas, teach acceptance and respect for individual differences, encourage learners to take risks in sharing their ideas and opinions, demonstrate to learners that their knowledge and their language abilities are valued and accepted, introduce the practice of idea collection prior to beginning tasks such as writing or solving problems and to provide an opportunity for learners to share ideas and expand their existing knowledge by building on each other’s contributions.

2.6.9 Role play

Role play is one of the learner-centred methods used in the teaching and learning of history. Role playing refers to the changing of one’s behaviour to assume a role, either unconsciously to feel a social role, or consciously to act an adopted role. Maloch (1999) states that when learners engage in role play, it helps them to develop their way of thinking and feelings of empathy. Role play helps learners to cope with real life situations which support their social and emotional growth. Ratey (2009) further indicates that it is a vital activity for the learners, stimulating their imagination and enhancing their social development. Role play encourages friendship through
cooperation, listening and turn taking. It can improve learners’ language skills and helps them to understand different points of view, go into the future or the past and travel anywhere in the world and beyond. Thus role play can be easily utilised to illuminate themes across the curriculum (Maloch, 1999).

2.6.10 Drama

Drama requires impersonation, personification and involvement. It is an ideal methodology for teaching history, as the involvement of children in drama means they will empathise with characters in the past and come to defend their actions against the arguments of others. Drama aims to re-create human experience. The pupil-actor is personally affected by the experience and this motivates him or her to know and understand more. Drama mitigates against a simplistic approach to a topic. All points of view are articulated so that situations are no longer viewed in ‘black and white’ terms. Drama-based history lessons aim to enable the child to speak or act as their character would have done. Almost any topic, story or event can become the basis of a drama experience for learners (Maloch, 1999). Drama as a learner-centred method has a limitation in the sense that only few learners can participate at a time thereby making it not an inclusive method for all learners.

2.7 Conclusion

This review of literature has shown that learner-centred education has been developing for over a thousand years, and it continues to take on different shapes. Yet, many of the dispositions that are embedded in this education model tend to endure. The nature of all theory is to guide thinking, therefore, learner-centred education should guide teachers’ thoughts which will inevitably shape their behaviour. Because the nature of all knowledge is fluid and temporary, responsible use of this model requires educators to commit to a life-long pursuit of improving their understanding of learner-centred education and of the broader processes called teaching and learning.
CHAPTER THREE

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design

This study used a descriptive design. A descriptive design was used because it was aimed at getting pupils’ and teachers’ perceptions of learner-centred methods. According to Orodho and Kombo (2002), a descriptive design is used when collecting information about people’s attitudes, opinions, habits or any of the variety of education or social issues. Since the study focused on pupils’ and teachers’ perceptions, a descriptive design was suitable in accordance with Orodho and Kombo (2002). The study used both qualitative and quantitative methods (triangulation). According to Weiss and Bucuvala (1998), triangulation results in a stronger research design and more valid and reliable findings. In triangulation, the advantage of one method compensates for disadvantages in another and that studying from different perspectives gives a fuller picture.

3.2 Study population

The population consisted of all grade 12 pupils who took history and teachers who taught history in high schools in Mongu district.

3.3 Sample size

The sample size comprised 100 grade 12 pupils who took history, and 20 teachers who taught history from the four selected high schools in Mongu district namely: Sefula High School, Kambule Technical High School, Namushakende High School and Limulunga Day High School.
Figure 1 shows the location of the schools where the research was conducted. As can be seen from the figure, more pupils (43.0%) classified the location of their school as Rural, 39 (39.0%) Peri-Urban and only 8 (8.0%) indicated Urban.

3.4 Sampling techniques

The study employed purposive sampling and stratified random sampling techniques. Purposive sampling was used so as to select classes which took history and teachers who taught history. Orodho and Kombo (2002) state that the power of purposive sampling lies in selecting information rich cases for in-depth analysis related to the central issues being studied. Black (1999) observes that purposive sampling ensures that those people who are unsuitable for the sampling study are already eliminated, so only the most suitable candidates remain. Black (1999) further states that with purposive sampling, the most appropriate people for the study are selected. This process becomes less time consuming. With fewer time constraints and a more accurate subject, the costs for carrying out the sampling project are greatly reduced. The results of purposeful sampling are usually expected to be more accurate than those achieved with an alternative form of sampling. The type of purposive sampling that was used in this study was an extreme case sampling because it focused on special cases that were rich in
information and in this case pupils who took the subject of history and teachers who taught the subject of history. After classes which took history were selected, stratified random sampling was used so as to get perceptions from both girls and boys.

According to Black (1999) stratified random sampling technique ensures that specific groups are represented, even proportionally in the sample(s) (for example, by gender), by selecting individuals from strata list. Therefore, in this study stratified random sampling was used so as to have an even proportional representation of both boys and girls (by gender). This was in line with Black (1999)’s assertion. According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), stratified random sampling involves dividing the population into homogeneous subgroups and then taking a simple random sample in each group so as to ensure that certain subgroups in the population are represented in the sample in proportion to their number in the population. Stratified random sampling was not used with teachers because History being an optional subject at high school level, all the selected schools had very few teachers of History in terms of gender and hence the use of purposeful sampling alone.

3.5 Research instruments

The research instruments used were focus group discussion guides, Likert scale questionnaires and semi-structured interview schedules. Subjective responses from pupils were collected using focus group discussions. Focus group discussions are open ended and therefore collected subjective views of respondents. According to Black (1999), a focus group discussion is a group discussion of 5-12 persons guided by a facilitator during which members talk freely and spontaneously about a certain topic. The purpose was to obtain in-depth information on concepts, perceptions and ideas of the group. Objective responses from pupils were collected using Likert scale questionnaires because they are closed ended. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from teachers. Tromp and Kombo (2006) state that semi-structured interviews are based on the use of an interview guide which is a list of questions or topics to be covered by the interview. Semi-structured interviews are flexible because they consist of both open and closed-ended questions. They are important because
they gather in-depth information which gives the researcher a complete and detailed understanding from both closed and open ended questions. Therefore using focus group discussions, Likert scale questionnaires and semi-structured interviews enabled the study to get the perceptions of pupils and teachers holistically.

3.6 Pilot study

Prior to the collection of data, a pilot study was conducted so as to test the validity of the research instruments which were used. According to Weis and Bucuvala (1998), pre-testing or pilot work to test questions or methodology is very vital for the success of any research. A pilot study was conducted from the four sampled schools in Mongu district. Ten (10) pupils from each of the sampled schools were given a Likert scale questionnaire to answer after which the researcher analysed their responses. The researcher observed some of the following problems on the questionnaire: Pupils were not able to understand some of the sentences on the questionnaires implying that the language was not simple so as to suit their level. Another observation was that pupils could not understand some of the words indicating that probably the wording was not clear. Some of the phrases and sentences were not very clear to pupils while some were too long making it boring for some respondents.

After this, the researcher made some amendments to some parts of the questionnaire which were not very clear to respondents.

3.7 Data collection procedure

In the first place, permission to conduct the research was sought from the District Education Board Secretary (DEBS) as well as the respective School managers of the four schools. After the researcher was given permission to conduct the research, he went to the selected schools and administered Likert scale questionnaires and conducted focus group discussions as well as semi-structured interviews on different days.
The researcher went and distributed Likert scale questionnaires to pupils taking history. Each school was given 25 Likert scale questionnaires thereby making the total number of 100. Thereafter, pupils were given enough time to answer the questionnaires and when they completed answering, questionnaires were collected. Subsequent to that, 5 pupils from each of the selected schools were randomly sampled to take part in a focus group discussion. Afterwards, teachers organised a conducive venue where focus group discussions took place. Discussions were facilitated by structuring appropriate questions and exploring the topic. A voice recorder was used to record the conversations. Opinions and views of the respondents were captured. When this was done, the researcher then categorised the statements and summarised them in a narrative form. Key statements were quoted and thereafter a report was written.

The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with teachers teaching history at the four selected schools on different days. History being an optional subject at senior level, only 5 teachers from each of the four selected schools were purposively sampled to be part of the semi-structured interviews. This brought the total number of teachers who were interviewed to 20. Five teachers at the same school were interviewed using semi-structured interview guides separately. While each respondent was being interviewed, the conversation was recorded using a voice recorder. Thereafter, the researcher wrote a report on each of the 20 individual teachers interviewed from the four selected schools in Mongu district.

3.8 Data analysis

Subjective responses from focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews were analysed qualitatively using thematic analysis. According to Valsiner (2006) thematic analysis involves the researcher asking broad questions and collecting word data from participants and he or she then looks for related themes and describes the information in themes and patterns exclusive to that set of participants. Data was put into identified themes and categories after which interpretations and discussions were done (thematic analysis). Objective responses from Likert scale questionnaires were
analysed quantitatively using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics were then used and this involved the use of frequencies and cross tabulations. Data was then presented in form of graphs, tables and statistical figures so as to give meaning to the findings.

### 3.9 Ethical consideration

Ethical issues were taken into consideration in this study. In the first place, consent as shown in appendix 4 was sought from the respondents to find out whether they were willing to participate in the study or not. The researcher ensured that names and personal details of the respondents were not revealed or published. The data which was collected was kept confidential and was only used for research purposes.
CHAPTER FOUR

4. PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Overview

In this chapter, the findings of the study are presented. Findings are divided into quantitative and qualitative. The findings are presented according to the objectives of the study. The objectives of the study were to: determine the extent to which learner-centred methods were used in the teaching and learning of history, establish pupils’ and teachers’ perceptions of the learner-centred methods of teaching and learning in history, and to identify which learner-centred methods were mostly preferred by pupils and teachers in the teaching and learning of history.

4.2 Quantitative findings

This subdivision presents quantitative findings of pupils obtained from the Likert scale questionnaire in accordance with the objectives of the study.

4.3 Extent to which learner-centred methods were used in the teaching and learning of History

This objective presents the extent to which teachers used quizzes, field trips, debate brainstorming, class discussion, projects, role play and discovery learning in the teaching and learning process of history.

4.3.1 Extent to which teachers used quizzes

Pupils were asked to indicate how often their teachers taught them history using quizzes. Their responses were as shown in Table 1.
Table 1: Frequency with which teachers used quizzes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>5 (5.0%)</td>
<td>2 (2.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>7 (7.0%)</td>
<td>1 (1.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>13 (13.0%)</td>
<td>16 (16.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>15 (15.0%)</td>
<td>16 (16.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very rarely</td>
<td>10 (10.0%)</td>
<td>15 (15.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen from Table 1, many pupils, 31 (31.0%) indicated that teachers rarely used quizzes to teach history while 29 (29.0%) said that teachers sometimes used quizzes as a teaching method and 25 (25.0%) of them said that teachers very rarely used quizzes to teach history. The least, eight pupils said that teachers often used quizzes to teach history.

4.3.2 The rate at which teachers used field trips

Pupils were asked to state how often their teachers took them on field trips to learn more of history. Their responses were as shown in table 2.

Table 2: Frequency with which teachers used field trips

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>1 (1.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>3 (3.0%)</td>
<td>4 (4.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>19 (19.0%)</td>
<td>14 (14.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very rarely</td>
<td>27 (27.0%)</td>
<td>32 (32.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Most of the pupils, 59 (59.0%) indicated that teachers very rarely took them on field trips to learn more of history where as 33 (33.0%) of them pointed out that teachers rarely took them on field trips as shown in table 2.

4.3.3 The incidence at which teachers allowed pupils to debate topics

Pupils were asked to indicate how often their teachers allowed them to debate certain topics in History. Their responses were as shown in table 3.

Table 3: Frequency with which teachers allowed pupils to debate topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>1 (1.0%)</td>
<td>1 (1.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>5 (5.0%)</td>
<td>7 (7.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>18 (18.0%)</td>
<td>18 (18.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>7 (7.0%)</td>
<td>8 (8.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very rarely</td>
<td>19 (19.0%)</td>
<td>16 (16.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen from table 3, many pupils, 36 (36.0%) indicated that teachers sometimes allowed them to debate certain topics in history while 35 (35.0%) said that teachers very rarely allowed them.

4.3.4 The degree at which teachers brainstormed topics

Pupils were asked to state how often their teachers brainstormed on topics in history before they learnt them. Their responses were as shown in table 4.
Table 4: Frequency with which teachers brainstormed topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>13 (13.0%)</td>
<td>10 (10.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>17 (17.0%)</td>
<td>14 (14.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>9 (9.0%)</td>
<td>13 (13.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>7 (7.0%)</td>
<td>6 (6.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very rarely</td>
<td>4 (4.0%)</td>
<td>7 (7.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More pupils (31.0%) pointed out that their teachers often brainstormed certain topics in history before they learnt them where as 23(23.0%) of the respondents indicated that teachers very often brainstormed certain topics. The findings also revealed that only 11(11.0%) of the pupils indicated that teachers very rarely brainstormed on certain topics before they taught them.

4.3.5 The prevalence at which teachers allowed pupils to discuss topics

Pupils were asked to state how often teachers allowed them to discuss topics in history in class. Their responses were as shown in table 5.
Table 5: Frequency with which teachers allowed pupils to discuss topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very often</td>
<td></td>
<td>15 (15.0%)</td>
<td>15 (15.0%)</td>
<td>30 (30.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td></td>
<td>10 (10.0%)</td>
<td>7 (7.0%)</td>
<td>17 (17.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td></td>
<td>16 (16.0%)</td>
<td>16 (16.0%)</td>
<td>32 (32.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 (3.0%)</td>
<td>6 (6.0%)</td>
<td>9 (9.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very rarely</td>
<td></td>
<td>6 (6.0%)</td>
<td>5 (5.0%)</td>
<td>11 (11.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td></td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>1 (1.0%)</td>
<td>1 (1.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
<td>100 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many pupils, 32(32.0%) pointed out that teachers sometimes allowed pupils to discuss certain topics in history while 30 (30.0%) of the pupils indicated that teachers very often allowed them to discuss. However, only 9 (9.0%) and 11(11.0%) of them indicated that teachers rarely and very rarely allowed them to discuss topics in history respectively.

4.3.6 The occurrence at which teachers engaged pupils in projects

Pupils were asked to state how often their teachers engaged them in projects to learn more of history. Their responses were as shown in table 6.
Table 6: Frequency with which teachers engaged pupils in projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>2 (2.0%)</td>
<td>1 (1.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>2 (2.0%)</td>
<td>3 (3.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>10 (10.0%)</td>
<td>13 (13.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>10 (10.0%)</td>
<td>15 (15.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very rarely</td>
<td>25 (25.0%)</td>
<td>18 (18.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>1 (1.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More pupils, 43 (43.0%) indicated that their teachers very rarely engaged them in projects whereas 25 (25.0%) of them pointed out that they were rarely engaged in projects as can be seen from table 6. 23 (23.0%) of the respondents indicated that sometimes their teachers engaged them in projects while only 5 (5.0%) and 3 (3.0%) said that teachers often and very often engaged them in projects to learn more of history respectively.

4.3.7 The rate at which teachers allowed pupils to role play topics

Pupils were asked to indicate how often teachers allowed them to role play topics in class as they were learning history. Pupils’ responses were as indicated in table 7.
Table 7: Frequency with which teachers allowed pupils to role play topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>1 (1.0%)</td>
<td>2 (2.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>12 (12.0%)</td>
<td>4 (4.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>14 (14.0%)</td>
<td>14 (14.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>10 (10.0%)</td>
<td>19 (19.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very rarely</td>
<td>13 (13.0%)</td>
<td>11 (11.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7 above, shows that many pupils, 29 (29.0%) said that teachers rarely allowed them to role play topics in history while 28 (28.0%) of them indicated that sometimes teachers allowed them. It can also be seen from table 7 that 24 (24.0%) of the respondents pointed out that teachers very rarely allowed them to role play topics in history whereby only 16 (16.0%) and 3 (3.0%) of them indicated that teachers often and very often allowed them to role play certain activities in history.

4.3.8 The degree at which teachers allowed pupils to discover things

Pupils were asked to state how often teachers allowed them to discover certain things in history in class. Their responses were as shown in table 8.
Table 8: Frequency with which teachers allowed pupils to discover things

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>8 (8.0%)</td>
<td>6 (6.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>12 (12.0%)</td>
<td>9 (9.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>15 (15.0%)</td>
<td>22 (22.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>5 (5.0%)</td>
<td>6 (6.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very rarely</td>
<td>10 (10.0%)</td>
<td>6 (6.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>1 (1.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More respondents, 37 (37.0%) pointed out that sometimes teachers allowed them to discover certain things in History while 21(21.0%) of them indicated that teachers often allowed them as shown in table 8. As can be seen from table 8, 16 (16.0%) of the pupils said that teachers very rarely allowed them to discover certain things on their own. 14 (14.0%) of the respondents indicated that teachers very often allowed them to discover certain things in history on their own where as 11(11.0%) of them said that teachers rarely allow them.

4.4 Pupils’ perception of the learner-centred methods of teaching and learning History

This objective presents pupils’ level of interest in group work, class discussion, field trips and projects.

4.4.1 Pupils’ perception of group work

Pupils were asked to indicate how they perceived group work as a method of learning history in class. Their responses were as shown in Figure 2.
Figure 2: Pupils' views on group work (n =100)

Figure 2 shows that the majority, 65 (65.0%) of the pupils said that group work was very interesting while 30 (30.0%) indicated that it was interesting and only five (5.0%) pupils were of the view that it was boring.

4.4.2 Pupils’ perception of class discussion

Pupils were asked to state how they perceived class discussion as a method of learning history in class.

Figure 3: Pupils’ views on class discussion (n=100)

Most of the pupils, 54 (54.0%) indicated that class discussion was very interesting to learn history with whereas 39 (39.0%) of them said that it was interesting as shown in figure 3. Figure 3 also shows that 4 (4.0%) of the pupils pointed out that they found class discussion boring whereas 3 (3.0%) stated that it was very boring.
4.4.3 Pupils’ perception of field trips

Pupils were asked to indicate how they perceived field trips as a method of learning history. Figure 4 shows their responses.

Figure 4: Pupils’ views on field trips (n=100)

As can be seen from figure 4, more pupils, 46(46.0%) indicated that they would find field trips very interesting to learn history with whereby 36 (36.0%) said they would find it interesting. However, 10 (10.0%) of the pupils pointed out that they would find field trips boring while 7 (7.0%) of them stated that they would find field trips very boring.

4.4.4 Pupils’ perception of projects

Pupils were asked to state how they perceived learning history using projects. Their responses were as shown in figure 5.
Figure 5: Pupils’ views on projects (n = 100)

Figure 5 shows that more pupils, 47 (47.0%) said that they found learning using projects interesting whereas 34 (34.0%) indicated that they found it very interesting. However, 15 (15.0%) and 4 (4.0%) of the respondents respectively pointed out that they found learning using projects boring and very boring respectively.

4.5  Pupils’ rate of preference for learner-centred methods

The objective presents pupils’ rate of preference for quizzes, debates, field trips, brainstorming, class discussion, discovery learning, drama, role play, projects and textbook study.

4.5.1  Pupils’ preference for quizzes

Pupils were asked to state the rate of preference for teachers’ use of quizzes in teaching history. Table 9 shows their reactions.
Many pupils, 34 (34.0%) said that their preference for quizzes was average whereas 25 (25.0%) of them pointed out that their preference was high as seen from table 9. The findings also revealed that 21(21.0%) of the respondents stated that their preference for quizzes was very high. However, 11(11.0%) and 9 (9.0%) of the respondents indicated that their preference for quizzes was very low and low respectively.

4.5.2 Pupils’ preference for debates

Pupils were asked to indicate their rate of preference for debating certain topics in history in class. Table 10 shows their responses.

Table 9: Pupils’ rated preference for quizzes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>14 (14.0%)</td>
<td>7 (7.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>7 (7.0%)</td>
<td>18 (18.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>16 (16.0%)</td>
<td>18 (18.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>3 (3.0%)</td>
<td>6 (6.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very low</td>
<td>10 (10.0%)</td>
<td>1 (1.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10: Pupils’ rated preference for debates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>16 (16.0%)</td>
<td>15 (15.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>11 (11.0%)</td>
<td>28 (28.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>10 (10.0%)</td>
<td>3 (3.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>6 (6.0%)</td>
<td>3 (3.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very low</td>
<td>7 (7.0%)</td>
<td>1 (1.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Many pupils, 39 (39.0%) indicated that their preference for debate was high while 31 (31.0%) of them stated that their preference for debates was very high as shown in table 10. 13 (13.0%) of the respondents indicated that their preference for debate was average. Table 10 shows that 9 (9.0%) of the respondents stated that their preference for debate was low while 8 (8.0%) indicated that their preference was very low.

4.5.3 Pupils’ preference for field trips

Pupils were asked to state their preference for field trips. Table 11 shows their reactions.

Table 11: Pupils’ rated preference for field trips

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>12 (12.0%)</td>
<td>23 (23.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>10 (10.0%)</td>
<td>21 (21.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>5 (5.0%)</td>
<td>2 (2.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>7 (7.0%)</td>
<td>3 (3.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very low</td>
<td>15 (15.0%)</td>
<td>1 (1.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>1 (1.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More pupils, 35 (35.0%) stated that their rate of preference for field trips was very high while 31 (31.0%) of them indicated that their preference was high as shown in table 11. The results indicate that 16 (16.0%) and 10 (10.0%) of the respondents respectively said that their preference for field trips was very low and low respectively while only 7 of them stated that their preference was average.

4.5.4 Pupils’ preference for brainstorming activities

Pupils were asked to indicate their preference for teachers’ use of brainstorming activities in the teaching of history. Table 12 shows their responses.
Table 12: Pupils’ rated preference for brainstorming

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>15 (15.0%)</td>
<td>12 (12.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>15 (15.0%)</td>
<td>15 (15.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>11 (11.0%)</td>
<td>13 (13.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>5 (5.0%)</td>
<td>5 (5.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very low</td>
<td>3 (3.0%)</td>
<td>5 (5.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>1 (1.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12 shows that many respondents, 30 (30.0%) stated that their preference for teachers’ use of brainstorming activities was very high whereas 27 (27.0%) of them pointed out that their preference was very high. 24 (24.0%) of the pupils indicated that their preference for teacher’s use of brainstorming activities was average. The findings equally show that 10 (10.0%) of the pupils stated that their preference for teachers’ use of brainstorming activities was low while 8 (8.0%) of them pointed out that their preference was low.

4.5.5 Pupils’ preference for class discussion

Pupils were asked to state their preference for class and group discussion. Their reactions were as shown in table 13.
### Table 13: Pupils’ rated preference for class discussion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>19 (19.0%)</td>
<td>22 (22.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>19 (19.0%)</td>
<td>19 (19.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>10 (10.0%)</td>
<td>6 (6.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>2 (2.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very low</td>
<td>2 (2.0%)</td>
<td>1 (1.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More pupils, 41 (41.0%) indicated that their preference for class and group discussion was very high while 38 (38.0%) of them stated that their preference was high as shown in figure 13. The results from table 13 also shows that 16 (16.0%) of the respondents pointed out that their preference for class and group discussion was average.

#### 4.5.6 Pupils’ preference for discovery learning

Pupils were asked to indicate their rate of preference for discovery learning. Table 14 shows their reactions.

### Table 14: Pupils’ rated preference for discovery learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>15 (15.0%)</td>
<td>9 (9.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>15 (15.0%)</td>
<td>19 (19.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>17 (17.0%)</td>
<td>20 (20.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>3 (3.0%)</td>
<td>1 (1.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very low</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>1 (1.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Many respondents, 37 (37.0%) said that their preference for discovery learning was average whereas 34 (34.0%) of them stated that their preference was high as can be seen in table 14. The findings also revealed that 24 (24.0%) of the pupils indicated that their preference for discovery learning was very high while 4 (4.0%) and 1 (1.0%) of them said that their preference for discovery learning was low and very low respectively.

4.5.7 Pupils’ preference for drama

Pupils were asked to state their preference for drama. Figure 15 shows their responses.

Table 15: Pupils’ rated preference for drama

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>8 (8.0%)</td>
<td>8 (8.0%)</td>
<td>16 (16.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>14 (14.0%)</td>
<td>16 (16.0%)</td>
<td>30 (30.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>11 (11.0%)</td>
<td>15 (15.0%)</td>
<td>26 (26.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>11 (11.0%)</td>
<td>4 (4.0%)</td>
<td>15 (15.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very low</td>
<td>6 (6.0%)</td>
<td>7 (7.0%)</td>
<td>13 (13.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
<td>100 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen from table 15, the majority of pupils, 30 (30.0%) stated that their preference for drama was high while 26 (26.0%) of them stated that their preference for drama was average. 16 (16.0%) of the respondents pointed out that their preference for drama was very high whereas 15 (15%) and 13 (13.0%) of them stated that their preference was low and very low respectively.

4.5.8 Pupils’ preference for role play

Pupils were asked to state their preference for the use of role play in the teaching and learning of history. Their responses are shown in table 16.
Table 16: Pupils’ rated preference for role play

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>12 (12.0%)</td>
<td>6 (6.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>11 (11.0%)</td>
<td>11 (11.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>10 (10.0%)</td>
<td>18 (18.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>11 (11.0%)</td>
<td>9 (9.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very low</td>
<td>6 (6.0%)</td>
<td>6 (6.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many pupils, 28 (28.0%) indicated that their preference for role play was average whereas 22 (22.0%) of them stated that their preference was high. Table 16 also shows that 18 (18.0%) of the respondents indicated that their preference for role play was very high. 20 (20.0%) of the pupils stated that their preference for role play activities was low while 12 (12.0%) of them said their preference was very low.

4.5.9 Pupils’ preference for projects

Pupils were asked to state their preference for using projects in the learning of history. Table 17 shows their responses.

Table 17: Pupils’ rated preference for projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>9 (9.0%)</td>
<td>4 (4.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>11 (11.0%)</td>
<td>16 (16.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>7 (7.0%)</td>
<td>11 (11.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>11 (11.0%)</td>
<td>10 (10.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very low</td>
<td>12 (12.0%)</td>
<td>9 (9.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Many respondents, 27 (27.0%) stated that their preference for using projects in learning history was high whereas 21 (21.0%) indicated that their preference was low and very low respectively, as seen in table 17. Findings also indicate that 18 (18.0%) of the respondents stated that their preference for using projects was average whereas 13 (13.0%) of the pupils stated that their preference was very high.

4.5.10 Pupils’ preference for textbook study

Pupils were asked to state their preference for textbook study as they learnt history. Their responses were as shown in table 18.

Table 18: Pupils’ rated preference for textbook study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>19 (19.0%)</td>
<td>18 (18.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>16 (16.0%)</td>
<td>25 (25.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>13 (13.0%)</td>
<td>7 (7.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>2 (2.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
<td>50 (50.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 18 shows that more pupils (41.0%) indicated that their preference for textbook study was very high whereas 37 (37.0%) of them said that their preference for textbook study was very high.

4.6 Qualitative findings

This segment presents qualitative findings of both pupils and teachers from focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews. The segment brings out pupils’ responses from focus group discussions and teachers’ responses from semi-structured interviews according to the objectives of the study namely; extent to which learner-centred methods were used in the teaching and learning of history, pupils’ and teachers’ perceptions of the learner-centred methods of teaching and learning history and learner-centred methods mostly preferred by pupils and teachers.
4.7 Extent to which learner-centred methods were used in the teaching and learning of History

This objective presents findings of pupils from focus group discussions and findings of teachers from semi-structured interviews for teachers. It starts by presenting pupils’ responses and thereafter teachers’ responses.

4.7.1 Pupils’ responses

Pupils were asked to explain how often learner-centred methods were used during the teaching and learning of history. Most of them indicated that their teachers rarely used quizzes, debates, discovery learning, drama, role play and projects. Many respondents also indicated that teachers did not use field trips during their teaching. One of the pupils echoed that:

*Our teacher gave us a topic to debate only once since grade ten, he has never given us a quiz before and he has never taken us on a field trip before and once in a while he puts us in groups to discuss certain topics.*

Another respondent observed: “*My teacher rarely puts us in groups to imitate some of the important characters in history.*” One of them equally stated that:

*When it comes to projects, our teacher has never given us any project in history and this deprives us the opportunity to develop research and better communication skills.*

Another pupil also stated that:

*Field trips though not used, but if used can help me learn history very well because Iam able to see exactly where historical events happened or where historical sites are.*
However, some pupils revealed that brainstorming activities, class discussions and group discussions are sometimes used by the teachers. One of the pupils said that:

When our teacher introduces a new topic in history, he always asks us questions on the topic so that we can come up with answers and solutions on the particular topic he has asked. This helps us to generate many ideas about the topic.

Another respondent said that:

Our teacher sometimes puts us in groups of five or four to discuss topics like Adolph Hitler and Shaka Zulu and sometimes he gives us topics to present and discuss as a class.

4.7.2 Teachers’ responses

The majority of the teachers indicated that they did not frequently use quizzes, debates, discovery learning, drama, projects role play and drama. As regards field trips, all the teachers said that they had never used field trips in their teaching. One of the respondents said, “I rarely use learner-centred methods, may be once or twice in a term.” Another respondent indicated that: “May be only 30 percent of my teaching is learner-centred.” This indicates that teachers did not frequently use learner-centred methods. However some of them indicated that they sometimes used brainstorming activities, class discussions and group discussions. One of the teachers stated that: “I sometimes brainstormed new topics with my pupils before I went further into the topic so that they gained insight of what they were going to learn.” Another teacher also echoed that:

Most of the time I engaged my pupils in class and group discussions because it made them participate fully in the lesson and thereby ensuring that the class had no passengers.
4.8 Pupils’ and teachers’ perceptions of the learner-centred methods of teaching and learning History

This objective presents both pupils and teachers views in terms of levels of interest and other benefits as well as challenges associated with the learner-centred methods. Pupils’ perceptions are addressed first and thereafter teachers’ perceptions.

4.8.1 Pupils’ perceptions

Pupils were asked to state whether they found learner-centred methods easier and interesting to learn history with and the benefits of using such methods. Many pupils were of the view that learner-centred methods were interesting because they helped them share ideas. Many respondents further indicated that they got more information from each other when a teacher used learner-centred methods. One pupil stated that:

*When learner-centred methods are used, one can benefit a lot and understand more from fellow pupils because each and every member will come up with his or her own ideas.*

Respondents also stated that problems or projects are more understandable when solved or worked on in groups. One of them said that:

*Learning in groups or as a team is easier and interesting because you are able to share ideas together and you may even learn from others what you did not know.*

Another learner observed:

*If given an opportunity, I would find Project based learning easier and interesting to learn history with because it helps me to develop writing and research skills, problem solving skills, decision making and it can give me the desire to explore and investigate a lot of topics in history.*
Most of the participants indicated that learner-centred methods are easier and interesting because learners can easily assist each other to solve problems because they are free with one another as opposed to teacher-centred where a teacher dominates the teaching and learning process. Pupils stated that learner-centred methods helped them to participate and become active in class. One respondent indicated that: “the more I participate, the more I concentrate and understand”. One of the pupils observed: “class discussion is interesting because it gives me the opportunity to learn with others.” Some learners indicated that learner-centred methods helped them acquire more knowledge, concentrate more in class, and boost their memory. Furthermore, some of the subjects stated that learner-centred methods are interesting because they created and promoted self-confidence and self-esteem in learners. One of the participants indicated that:

*When I discuss with my friends, it becomes easy for me to concentrate more on the topic and this helps me not to easily forget what we discussed and thereby acquiring more knowledge and boosting my memory.*

Another pupil stated that:

*When we discuss in a group with my friends, I am free and not intimidated as when the teacher stands in front to teach us, this gives me the opportunity to learn freely in a criticism-free learning environment and thereby giving me the confidence and zeal to learn well.*

Other respondents were of the view that learner-centred methods are interesting because sometimes teachers do not give them chances and opportunities to ask questions in class. They also stated that some of the teachers’ explanations are not clear enough for them to understand very well and hence learner-centred methods are preferred. One of the respondents said that:
Because teachers’ explanations once in a while sound confusing but one can learn better from a fellow pupil and sometimes teachers may not be in class but the group can still discuss certain topics hence giving slow learners a chance to understand.

More respondents indicated that learner-centred methods make it easy for them to retain the material they learnt. One respondent said that:

Because when you use these methods, it helps you not to forget easily what you have practised, because the mind easily remembers what the eyes see and you can easily recall what you saw.

Another learner echoed that:

Field trips would be very interesting to learn history with because to be a good pupil, it is better you learn from experience. It is easier to recall or even write better essays when you have a feel of the actual situation.

Another pupil observed: “something discovered on your own cannot easily be forgotten and so it stays for a longer time than something which was taught.” Another pupil stated: “History is an information subject and so the teacher can sometimes not give the whole information and hence learners need to discover information on their own.” Furthermore, many learners were of the view that practical activities helped them not to forget what had been taught. One respondent echoed that “practice makes things perfect.” Many pupils indicated that learner-centred methods avoids boredom and promotes hard work among them. They indicated that teacher-centred methods promoted laziness. One of the respondents said:
I find the lesson boring when I am not participating and pupil participation in class makes the lesson interesting and I cannot easily forget what I learnt and in that way I can benefit through participation in class.

4.8.2 Teacher’s perceptions

Teachers were also asked to state whether their pupils found learner-centred methods easier and more interesting to learn history with and the benefits of using such methods. Most of them indicated that pupils found learning interesting using learner-centred methods. One of the respondents observed: “They find learner-centred methods interesting because it gives them a chance to be the actual drivers of their own learning process.” Another teacher observed that:

Using learner-centred methods is interesting because pupils are involved in finding solutions to their own problems not where we treat them like empty containers.

Respondents also pointed out that pupils found learning interesting using learner-centred methods because it gave them initiative and constructive ideas, helped them to cover more content as they were given an opportunity to research more, and get more information in history. One teacher said: “They even want to show how much content they have gone through.” Some of the respondents indicated that pupils like learner-centred methods because they got involved in the teaching and learning process, thus reducing boredom. Respondents further stated that learner-centred methods are enjoyed by pupils because even those who were passive had an opportunity to participate and felt free to learn. The findings from the teachers also revealed that learner-centred methods motivated pupils to learn.

4.8.2.1 Whether teachers attended in-service training programmes on learner-centred methods

Teachers were asked to state whether they had attended in-service programmes on learner-centred methods in teaching history. The majority of the teachers said that they
rarely attended in-service training programmes on learner-centred methods. One of the teachers stated that:

Once in a while one of the history teachers goes to attend teacher-group meetings where a lot of things concerning the teaching and learning of history including issues to do with learner-centred methods are shared.

4.8.2.2 Whether the paradigm shift from teacher-centred to learner-centred is justified

Teachers were asked to state whether the paradigm shift from teacher-centred to learner-centred was justified. The majority of the teachers indicated that the paradigm shift from teacher-centred to learner-centred was justified because it made pupils learn much easier and faster. One respondent indicated that: “It is always easy for pupils to remember what they had done and it is easier for them to recall it in exams.” Another teacher stated that: “when learner-centred methods are used in class, most of the pupils seem to participate and enjoy the lesson.”

4.8.2.3 Challenges teachers faced when using learner-centred methods

Teachers were asked to mention some of the challenges they faced when using learner-centred methods. Many indicated that the challenges they faced were shortage of learning materials and financial constraints which made it difficult to use some of the learner-centred methods such as field trips. One of the teachers observed:

The problem we have in implementing learner-centred methods is that we don’t have funds and resources to use especially with methods which require funds and other necessary logistics such as field trips and projects.

Some respondents said that at times classroom control and management became a problem when pupils were given an opportunity to learn on their own. One teacher said: “some pupils became passive and could not express themselves freely even when they
were with others.” However, many respondents felt that the Ministry of Education, Science Vocation Training and Early Education had not put enough measures to successfully implement the use of learner-centred methods in the teaching and learning process.

4.9 Learner-centred methods mostly preferred by pupils and teachers in the teaching and learning of History

The objective presents learner-centred methods mostly preferred by both pupils and teachers. It starts with pupils’ preferences and then teachers’ preferences.

4.9.1 Pupils’ preferences

Pupils were asked to state the learner-centred methods they preferred to learn history with. Most of them indicated that they preferred to learn history using class and group discussions, brainstorming, debate, quiz, project, field trips and discovery learning. One of the respondents said:

I prefer class discussion because there are sometimes when a teacher is fast, and sometimes you need to contribute, or you have discovered something a teacher has missed, class discussion becomes ideal, it is tiresome and boring if this is not done.

Another learner indicated that: “I prefer debate because it helps me to have a view of what other people think about a particular topic.” One of the pupils also echoed that:

I prefer to learn history using field trips because it is much easier to know the background and history of a place when you have actually been there. When someone learns in a specific context, it is easier to remember.
4.9.2 Teachers’ preferences

Teachers were asked to state the learner-centred methods they preferred to teach history with. Most of them indicated that they preferred to teach history using role play, drama, class discussion, group discussion, and brainstorming. One of the teachers observed:

*I prefer role play and drama because when pupils role play or imitate certain characters in history, they will not easily forget the role they played. It makes them have the view and feel of what actually happened.*

Another respondent stated that: “*I prefer brainstorming because it encourages pupils to come up with wonderful ideas.*”
CHAPTER FIVE

5. DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1 Overview

In this chapter, the research findings are discussed according to the objectives of the study namely: the extent to which learner-centred methods were used in the teaching and learning of History, pupils’ and teachers’ perceptions of the learner-centred methods of teaching and learning History and pupils’ and teachers’ preferred learner-centred methods. Findings from pupils and teachers are discussed separately. Objective responses from the Likert scale questionnaire for pupils and subjective responses from the focus group discussions for pupils are combined and discussed together at the same time, while subjective responses from semi-structured interviews for teachers are discussed separately.

5.2 Extent to which learner-centred methods were used in the teaching and learning of History.

This segment discusses both quantitative findings for pupils from the Likert scale questionnaires and qualitative findings from focus group discussion for pupils and semi-structured interviews for teachers in accordance with the objective. It discusses responses from pupils and thereafter teachers’ responses.

5.2.1 Responses from pupils

The results of the study revealed that 31(31%) percent of the pupils indicated that teachers rarely used quizzes to teach history in class. These findings generally show that teachers did not often use quizzes during their teaching of history. This could have been due to the fact that most of the teachers are not aware of how quizzes can promote effective learning in pupils.

The study reviewed that 59 (59.0%) percent of the pupils said that teachers very rarely took them on field trips. These findings generally indicate that most of the teachers do not use field trips as a method of teaching. This could be as a result of lack of funds and
other resources needed to facilitate field trips. These findings are in line with Rickinson (2004), who observed that despite field trips being valuable in improving academic standards in most western schools, they are very difficult to undertake in most African schools due to financial constraints.

The study showed that many pupils (31.0%) stated that their teachers often brainstormed certain topics in history before they taught them. These findings imply that many teachers brainstormed their topics before they taught them. This could be as a result of the possible benefits which are associated with brainstorming activities in the teaching and learning process of history. These findings are similar to Osborne (1998)’s study which revealed that brainstorming helps to promote thinking skills which learners are asked to think of all things related to a concept they are really being asked so as to stretch their thinking skills. The study also found out that brainstorming taps into prior knowledge; gives all students a chance to express their ideas; and eliminates fear of failure; shows respect for each other; try something without fear; and tap into individuality and eliminating the fear of risk taking.

The findings of the study indicated that 32 (32.0%) percent of the pupils pointed out that teachers sometimes allowed them to discuss certain topics in history in class. These findings generally entail that teachers frequently used class discussion as a teaching method when teaching history in class. This is because class discussions help teachers to know their learners and the skills and perspectives they bring to the class as they discuss with their fellow pupils. These findings are related to Brookfield (2005)’s assertion that understanding your learners’ skills and perspectives can help you to develop specific ways of challenging each of them to think critically and express ideas clearly. Brookfield (2005) further states that participation by all class members helps them to stay on topic, and explores issues in depth and from a variety of perspectives.

The results of the study showed that most of the pupils (43.0%) indicated that their teachers very rarely engaged them in projects. These findings indicate that teachers did not frequently engage pupils in projects as they taught history in class. This could be as a result of projects demanding more time, dedication and resources. These findings are similar to Davis (2004)’s study which revealed that for teachers, project based learning
might create some problems because it requires more preparation time, and raises new questions about what to assess and how to assess.

The results of the study showed that most of the pupils (29.0%) said that teachers rarely allowed them to role play topics in history. One of the participants observed that: “My teacher rarely puts us in groups to imitate some of the important characters in history. These findings generally showed that teachers did not frequently allow their pupils to role play certain topics in history. This could be as a result of the problems associated with role playing. These findings are in harmony with McKeachie (2007)’s observation that some learners are embarrassed and thus hesitant about acting. McKeachie (2007) states that this situation may cause role play to be awkward and unproductive because one or more learners will not be able to participate. When a learner feels self-conscious, he will be more likely to be worried about what others will think of him rather than how the situation can be solved.

5.2.2 Responses from teachers

The findings showed that the majority of teachers indicated that they did not frequently use quizzes, debates, discovery learning, projects role play and drama. One of the respondents said, “I rarely use learner-centred methods, may be once or twice in a term.” Another teacher indicated that: “May be only 30 percent of my teaching is learner-centred.” This indicates that teachers did not frequently use learner-centred methods. In terms of field trips, most of the teachers indicated that they had never used them. Teachers did not frequently use role play and drama may be because of the negative connotations associated with them. In a larger class, role play and drama cannot be effective because not all students have the option to participate. This finding is similar to Maloch (1999)’s study which revealed that many role play and drama scenarios use only two or three individuals in a situation, so the rest of students just have to watch. This causes them to become disinterested and lose their attention.

However, most of the teachers indicated that they sometimes brainstormed some of the topics in history especially when they were introducing new topics and frequently used class and group discussions as they taught history. One of the teachers stated that: “I
sometimes brainstormed new topics with my pupils before I went further into the topic so that they gained insight of what they were going to learn.” This could be as a result of the benefits associated with brainstorming activities. These results are similar to Osborne (1998) study which revealed that brainstorming sessions provides teachers with great deal of information regarding what the learner may or may not know. This is because teachers have observed that class and group discussions are easy to organise and do not need a lot of funds and resources to undertake. Furthermore, teachers could have seen the benefits to learners associated with class and group discussion. This finding is similar to Larson (1997) who found that class discussion encourages student involvement, higher participation and is effective for developing learners’ cognitive skills, such as evaluation and synthesis and it easy to organise needing less resources.

5.3 Pupils’ and Teachers’ perceptions of the learner-centred methods of teaching and learning History

This part discusses both quantitative findings for pupils from the Likert scale questionnaires and qualitative findings from focus group discussion for pupils as well as semi-structured interviews for teachers in line with the objective. Firstly, pupils’ perceptions are discussed and then teachers’ perceptions.

5.3.1 Pupils’ perceptions

The results of the study showed that the majority of the pupils (65%) said that group work was very interesting. This implies that many pupils found group work as a very interesting method of learning History. These findings are in conformity with Astin (1997)’s study which revealed that positive group experiences have been shown to contribute to student learning, retention and overall academic success. Tinto (1998), states that if properly structured, group work can reinforce skills that are relevant to both group and individual work including the ability to break complex tasks into parts and steps, plan and manage time, refine understanding through discussions and explanations, give and receive feedback on performance and develop stronger communication skills.

The findings of the study showed that most of the pupils (54%) indicated that class discussion was very interesting to learn history with. One of the pupils observed: “class
discussion is interesting because it gives me the opportunity to learn with others.” This finding generally showed that most of the pupils found class discussion very interesting to learn history with. These findings are in line with Larson (1997) who stated that class discussion is an effective way to promote higher-level thinking, develop student attitudes, and advance student capability for moral questioning. Newman (1998) further asserts that class discussion provides opportunities for student thoughtfulness about information received in class.

The study showed that many pupils (46%) indicated that they would find field trips very interesting to learn history with if given an opportunity. The results generally imply that the majority of pupils would find learning using field trips very interesting despite teachers very rarely using them as a teaching method. This finding is related to the revelations of the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) (2008) which stated that field trips are an essential part of history as they make history come to life. According to OFSTED (2008), schools should recognise the value of field trips for improving standards and achievement in schools. OFSTED (2008) further states that field trips gives learners direct experience, opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills, are vital for forming relationships that are cardinal for forming relationships in class, gives them confidence through shared experiences and gives an opportunity for learners to be creative.

Findings of the study indicated that more pupils (47%) said that they would find learning using projects interesting. These findings generally showed that more pupils would find learning History using projects interesting. These findings are in harmony with Maloch (1999) who found that typically students find project based learning more enjoyable and satisfying and that it encourages greater understanding and develops life skills. Davis (1993) asserts that the project approach fosters not only academic knowledge and skills but also provides learners with opportunities to apply the skills they acquire through systematic instruction by building on the individual needs, interests, and strengths of all learners and allowing them to work where appropriate at their own pace, giving them a sense of purpose and fostering self esteem. Maloch (1999) further states that project based learning improves research skills in learners by helping
them not only to use print and electronic resources, but also field work, surveys, interviews, consultations with experts and firsthand observations and experiences.

5.3.2 Teachers’ perceptions

The results of the study showed that most of the teachers were of the view that many pupils found learner-centred methods easier and more interesting to learn History with. One of the teachers observed “they find learner-centred methods interesting because it gives them a chance to be the actual drivers of their own learning process.” Some of the respondents indicated that pupils like learner-centred methods because they got involved in the teaching and learning process thus reducing boredom. Respondents further stated that learner-centred methods are enjoyed by pupils because even those who were passive had an opportunity to participate and felt free to learn. Teachers could have indicated that their learners were interested in learner-centred methods may be as a result of the possible benefits which pupils got from learner-centred methods like creativity, participation in class, problem solving skills and autonomy. This finding is in conformity with Barnes’s (1999) study which revealed that the learner-centred approach promotes active involvement in exploring events and concepts, the learner constructs and develops his or her own understanding of the world and so learns new things, become more independent, participates more and becomes more creative.

The study showed that the majority of teachers said that they rarely attended in-service training programmes on learner-centred methods. This could have been due to the fact that the government was not aware of the vital contribution played by in-service programmes in improving the value of the teaching and learning process of history. This finding does not conform to Epstein (2007) who found out that in-service training programmes provides opportunities for teachers to develop their practical teaching, coaching and or management skills. Epstein (2007) further states that in-service programmes improves the delivery and methodology of teachers.

The results of the study revealed that most of the teachers indicated that the paradigm shift from teacher-centred to learner-centred was justified. One respondent indicated that: “It is always easy for pupils to remember what they had done and it is easier for
them to recall it in exams.” Another teacher stated that: “when learner-centred methods are used in class, most of the pupils seem to participate and enjoy the lesson.” Many teachers justified the paradigm shift because of the supposed benefits associated with learner-centred methods which includes good retention of the taught material, motivation and higher participation in class. These findings are in line with Dlamini et al. (1996) who found out that learners using learner-centred approaches increase their participation in class and help in determining what is to be learnt.

The study also revealed that most of the teachers indicated that the challenges they faced were: shortage of learning materials and financial constraints which made it difficult to use some of the learner-centred methods like field trips. Some respondents said that at times classroom control and management became a problem when pupils were given an opportunity to learn on their own as well as when they were seemingly given more autonomy and control. One teacher said: “some pupils became passive and could not express themselves freely even when they were with others.” This finding showed that teachers had some challenges which made them not to use some of the learner-centred methods. This is similar to Blumberg’s (2004) observation that some instructors find problems in using learner-centred methods because some of the methods require a lot of resources to be well executed. Blumberg (2004) further states that some teachers do not like learner-centred methods because it appears to have a consumer focus and seems to encourage learners to be more empowered and appears to take the teacher out of the critical role.

However, most of the teachers felt that the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocation Training and Early Education had not put enough measures to successfully implement the use of learner-centred methods in the teaching and learning process. This could be as a result of the government not being aware of the possible benefits of learner-centred methods to pupils and lack of adequate resources to fund such activities.
5.4 Pupils’ and teachers’ preferred learner-centred methods in the teaching and learning of History.

This subdivision discusses both quantitative findings for pupils from the Likert scale questionnaires and qualitative findings from focus group discussions for pupils and semi-structured interviews for teachers in harmony with the objective. Preferences for pupils are discussed first, and thereafter teachers’ preferences.

5.4.1 Pupils’ preferences

The findings of the study showed that the most preferred learner-centred methods by pupils were: class discussion (frequency of very high of 41%, high 38%); textbook study (very high 37%, high 41%); debate (very high 30%, high 30%) field trips (very high 35%, high 30%) discovery learning (very high 24%, high 34) and brainstorming (very high 27%, high 30%). This implied that the most preferred learner-centred methods by pupils from both focus group discussions and the Likert scale questionnaires were: class discussion, debate, field trips, discovery learning and brainstorming activities. Pupils could have preferred these learner-centred methods because of the possible benefits derived from such methods like participation in class, presentation skills, masterly and application of overarching skills as well as promoting thinking skills.

These findings are similar to Francis (2005) who stated that learners prefer class discussion because it provides them with an opportunity for learning in innovative, creative and interesting ways. Francis (2005) further found out that class discussion is divergent from the norm which helps learners to learn more than what they usually are capable of by drawing their interests. Townsend (1993) points out that class discussion is mainly preferred by learners because it builds upon a learner’s knowledge in a structured manner, allowing for genuine learning to take place. Osborne (1998) asserts that debate is preferred by learners because it provides an experience by which learners develop competencies in researching current issues, preparing logical arguments, actively listening to various perspectives, differentiating between subjective and evidence-based information, asking cogent questions, integrating relevant information and formulating their own opinions based on evidence. Osborn (1998) further states that
after the debate is over, learners report that the experience is fun and that it improves verbal communication and critical-thinking skills.

These findings are similar to Koushik (1996) who asserted that Learners preferred field trips because they connect schoolwork with the world, making it tangible and memorable to learn. Koushik further states that field trips stimulate questions and ideas at the beginning and end of the lesson as well as providing an experiential text for learners to study. Mckeachie (2001) observed that with field trips, learners are able to see the concepts learnt in class in the real world and upon returning to the classroom, the experiences on the trip provide educational material. Holmes and Hoffman (2000) points out that learner prefer discovery learning because it makes them learn at their own pace, it gives them some degree of flexibility in sequencing and frequency with learning activities thereby encouraging motivation and ownership of their learning. Holmes and Hoffman (2000) further states that scenarios with which learners are familiar allow them to build on their existing knowledge by extending what they already know to invent new ideas.

Learners stated that they preferred to learn history when their teachers brainstormed topics in History. Osborne (1998) states that by expressing ideas and listening to others, learners adjust their previous knowledge or understanding, accommodate new information and increase their levels of awareness. Osborne (1998) further states that brainstorming helps learners focus their attention on a particular topic, generate a quantity of ideas, teaches them acceptance and respect for individual differences, demonstrate to learners that their knowledge and language abilities are valued and accepted, introduces the practice of idea collection prior to beginning of tasks such as writing or solving problems and provides an opportunity for learners to share ideas and expand their existing knowledge by building on each other’s contributions.
5.4.2 Teachers’ preferences

The results of the study showed that the preferred learner-centred methods by teachers were: role play, drama, class discussion and brainstorming. One of the respondents stated that: “I prefer brainstorming because it encourages pupils to come up with wonderful ideas.” Teachers could have preferred these learner-centred methods above because of the value they add in the teaching and learning process. This is in line with McGregor et al. (2000)’s finding that teachers who were interviewed in the research indicated that learner-methods enabled students in their classes to demonstrate one or more of these indicators of increased learning, much greater conceptual understanding, more complex critical thinking skills, better class attendance and greater confidence.
CHAPTER SIX

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Overview

In this chapter, the conclusion is drawn on the basis of the findings of the study and thereafter recommendations based on the findings and literature implications of the study are made. Finally the chapter ends by suggesting areas for further research based on the findings and literature implications of the study.

6.2 Conclusion

On the basis of the findings of this study, it could be concluded that teachers did not frequently use learner-centred methods during the teaching and learning process of History. The study concluded that learners were interested in learner-centred methods. The study further concluded that the preferred learner-centred methods by pupils were: class discussion, debate, field trips, discovery learning and brainstorming. Learner-centred preferred by teachers were: role play, drama, class discussion and brainstorming.

6.3 Recommendations

The following are the recommendations:

1. The government should fund some learner-centred methods such as field trips and projects. This is in accordance with a finding from teachers which stated that learner-centred methods such as field trips and projects are difficult to undertake because they require a lot funds to be implemented effectively.

2. The Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education through their school managers should encourage teachers to use the preferred learner-centred methods which do not need the use of a lot of resources such as class discussion, drama, role play, debate, and brainstorming activities. This can be done through organising teacher group meetings and workshops. In these teacher group meetings and workshops facilitators and teachers who have used such methods can demonstrate and show others how such learner-centred
methods can be done and implemented. This is because one of the findings of the study stated that the preferred learner-centred methods by both pupils and teachers were: class discussion, debate, field trips, discovery learning brainstorming, role play and drama.

3. The Ministry of Education, Science Vocational Training and Early Education should provide in-service training programmes for teachers so that they learn current trends in teaching like learner-centred methods. This is in line with one of the findings of the study which stated that teachers rarely attended in-service programmes despite their positive contributions to the teaching and learning process of history.

4. Schools should provide and arrange activities in line with learners’ interests. This can be done through schools organising activities which can captivate pupils’ interest like picnics, debates and video shows depicting certain interesting topics in history. This is in line with one of the findings of the study which indicated that pupils were interested in learner-centred methods.

5. School managers and teachers should give learners choice in determining what to learn and when to learn. This should be done by teachers consulting learners what and when particular activities should be done. This is in harmony with the findings of the study and the assumptions of the learner-centred education.

6. Schools should ensure that learners are not given absolute freedom as classroom management and control may become a problem. Teachers should ensure that they monitor all learner-centred activities like class discussions, group discussions and debates so as to make sure that learners are not given a lot of freedom as others may abuse it. This is in accordance with one of the findings of the study where most of the teachers indicated that when pupils are given a lot of freedom, classroom management and control becomes a problem.

7. School managers and teachers should establish a safe learning atmosphere. This can be done by school managers encouraging teachers to make sure that learners are respected, given autonomy and avoiding using discouraging remarks which can de-motivate learners.
8. Teachers should ensure that they foster learner-engagement. This can be done by teachers giving pupils practical activities like drama, role play and projects as stated by the assumptions of the learner-centred paradigm and the theoretical implications.

6.4 Areas for further research

Arising from the research findings of this study, some other aspects of this study area may not have been studied and these areas may need to be studied. The areas of the study which may be studied include:

1. Research into learner-centred methods in other subjects other than history.
2. Research into the negative aspects of learner-centred methods.
REFERENCES


APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Focus Group Discussion Topic for Pupils

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

Focus Group Discussion Topic

I would like to have a discussion with you on your perception of learner-centred methods in the teaching and learning of his history at your school. There are no right or wrong answers. Please share your true feelings and opinions with me. The discussion will be kept confidential. Please feel free to participate.

1. Let’s start by talking about the ways (methods) which your teacher uses in the teaching and learning of history in your class.
2. Does your teachers includes quizzes, debates, projects, field trips, drama, class discussions and role plays whenever you are learning history? Give your comments.
3. Do you enjoy lessons where your teacher does most of the talking while you do most of the listening? Give your views
4. Discuss the methods which you find easier and interesting to learn history with. Give reasons for your answers.
5. Of the methods discussed above, which ones do you prefer to learn with? Give reasons for your answers.
6. Suggest ways in which you think you can learn history better in your class.
Appendix 2. Likert Scale Questionnaire for pupils

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

Questionnaire for pupils

Dear Respondent

I am a postgraduate student at the University of Zambia collecting information on pupils’ and teachers’ perceptions of learner-centred methodologies in the teaching and learning of history in schools. The information collected is strictly for academic purposes and will be helpful to the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education in assessing how best learner-centred methodologies can be applied and implemented in schools.

Kindly answer all the questions in this questionnaire freely, correctly and honestly. All the answers you give will be treated confidentially.

Thanking you in advance

Namangolwa Simasiku

Section A: Bio data (please tick or cross against your choice)

1. What is your Gender?
   a) Male [ ] b) Female [ ]

2. Age
   a) 15-20 [ ] b) 21-25 [ ]
3. How do classify the location of your school?
   a) Urban [ ] b) Per-Urban [ ] c) Rural [ ]

Section B: Respondent’s views on the extent to which teachers use learner-centred methodologies.

4. How often does your teacher use quizzes to teach history in class?
   a) Very often [ ] b) Often [ ] c) Sometimes [ ] d) Rarely [ ] e) Very Rarely [ ]

5. How often does your teacher take you on field trips to learn more of history?
   a) Very often [ ] b) Often [ ] c) Sometimes [ ] d) Rarely [ ] e) Very rarely [ ]

6. How often does your teacher allow you to debate certain topics in class?
   a) Very often [ ] b) Often [ ] c) Sometimes [ ] d) Rarely [ ] e) Very Rarely [ ]

7. How often does your teacher brainstorm on topics before you learn them?
   a) Very often [ ] b) Often [ ] c) Sometimes [ ] d) Rarely [ ] e) Very Rarely [ ]

8. How often does your teacher allow you to discuss certain topics in class?
   a) Very often [ ] b) Often [ ] c) Sometimes [ ] d) Rarely [ ] e) Very Rarely [ ]

9. How often does your teacher engage you in projects?
   a) Very often [ ] b) Often [ ] c) Sometimes [ ] d) Rarely [ ] e) Very Rarely [ ]

10. How often does your teacher allow you to role play certain topics in class?
     a) Very often [ ] b) Often [ ] c) Sometimes [ ] d) Rarely [ ] e) Very Rarely [ ]

11. How often does your teacher allow you to learn history by discovering certain things on your Own?
     a) Very often [ ] b) Often [ ] c) Sometimes [ ] d) Rarely [ ] e) Very Rarely [ ]

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Section C. Respondents’ level of interest in learner-centred methodologies.

12. How do you find group work in class?
   a) Very Interesting [ ] b) Interesting [ ] c) Boring [ ] d) Very Boring [ ]

13. How do you find learning when your teacher allows you to discuss certain topics in class?
   a) Very Interesting [ ] b) Interesting [ ] c) Boring [ ] d) Very Boring [ ]

14. How do you find learning using field trips?
   a) Very Interesting [ ] b) Interesting [ ] c) Boring [ ] d) Very Boring [ ]

15. How do you find learning using projects?
   a) Very Interesting [ ] b) Interesting [ ] c) Boring [ ] d) Very Boring [ ]

Section D: Respondents’ rate of preference for learner-centred methodologies

16. How would you rate your preference for quizzes?
   a) Very High [ ] b) High [ ] c) Average [ ] d) Low [ ] e) Very Low [ ]

17. How would you rate your preference for debates?
   a) Very High [ ] b) High [ ] c) Average [ ] d) Low [ ] e) Very Low [ ]

18. How would you rate your preference for field trips?
   a) Very High [ ] b) High [ ] c) Average [ ] d) Low [ ] e) Very Low [ ]

19. How would you rate your preference for brainstorming activities?
   a) Very High [ ] b) High [ ] c) Average [ ] d) Low [ ] e) Very Low [ ]

20. How would you rate your preference for class and group discussions?
   a) Very High [ ] b) High [ ] c) Average [ ] d) Low [ ] e) Very Low [ ]
21. How would you rate your preference for discovery learning?
   a) Very High [ ] b) High [ ] c) Average [ ] d) Low [ ] e) Very Low [ ]

22. How would you rate your preference for drama?
   a) Very High [ ] b) High [ ] c) Average [ ] d) Low [ ] e) Very Low [ ]

23. How would you rate your preference for role play?
   a) Very High [ ] b) High [ ] c) Average [ ] d) Low [ ] e) Very Low [ ]

24. How would you rate your preference for Projects?
   a) Very High [ ] b) High [ ] c) Average [ ] d) Low [ ] e) Very Low [ ]

25. How would you rate your preference for textbook study?
   a) Very High [ ] b) High [ ] c) Average [ ] d) Low [ ] e) Very Low [ ]

Thanks for finding time to answer this questionnaire
Appendix 3. Semi-Structured Interview Schedule for teachers

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

Semi-Structured Interview Schedule for Teachers

I would like to have an interview with you on your perception of learner-centred methodologies in the teaching and learning of history at your school. There are no right or wrong answers. Please share your true feelings and opinions with me. The discussion will be kept confidential. Please feel free to participate.

1. What are your professional qualifications?

2. How many years have you served in the Ministry?

3. Let’s talk about the different teaching methodologies which you employ in teaching history in your classes.

4. In your own opinion, what are learner-centred methodologies? Give examples.

5. How frequently do you use learner-centred methodologies in your teaching?

6. Do you think your pupils find learning easier and interesting when learner-centred methodologies are used?

7. Which learner-centred methods do you prefer to teach history with? Give reasons for your answers.

8. How often have you gone for in-service training and attending workshops to learn current trends in teaching?

9. What challenges do you face when using learner-centred methodologies in class?

10. In your own view, do you think the paradigm shift from teacher-centred to learner-centred is justified?
Appendix 4. Consent form for participants

Consent Form

I am a postgraduate student at the University of Zambia pursuing a Master of Education Degree in Educational Psychology. I am conducting a research on pupils’ and teachers’ perception of learner-centred methodologies in the teaching and learning of history. I need to get your sincere opinion in order for me to accurately write on the above topic. The Ministry of Education Science Vocational Training and Early Education has given me the permission to conduct the study. I am assuring you that the information you are going to give will be kept confidential. If you are willing to take part in this study, please write your name in the spaces provided below. Should you fill at any point of the study, like during a discussion, interview or answering a questionnaire that you cannot continue, you are free to withdraw.

Participant

Name………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Signature…………………………...