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## Shona Teachers' Experiences on the Use of Shangani as the Medium of Instruction in Selected Chiredzi District Primary Schools in Zimbabwe

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### Abstract

Mother Tongue Education (MTE) has been identified as the surest way of making learners access education. Language policies that support MTE have been enacted in many African countries but research has shown that MTE policy implementation is still problematic in most of these countries. The current study focused on the experiences of teachers in implementing the use of Shangani as the medium of instruction in three selected Chiredzi District schools in Zimbabwe. The case study research design was used and data were gathered through interview, observation and focus group discussions. Fifteen teachers participated in the study. Findings from the study indicated that Shona speaking teachers were the majority in the schools and they lack proficiency in the Shangani Language to an extent that their learners have become their teachers of the language. The teachers lack confidence in using the Shangani Language as the medium of instruction due to their limited knowledge of the language. In addition, teachers feel humiliated when their learners laugh at them after making mistakes. All these experiences negatively affect the implementation of Shangani as the medium of instruction in the selected schools. The research recommends that the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education considers deploying Shangani speaking teachers to predominantly Shangani schools to facilitate the use of the language in education. At school level, school heads should make Shangani speaking teachers teach elementary level classes to facilitate mastery of educational knowledge by these young learners through their L1.

**Key words:** Implementation, Language policy, Mother Tongue Education