

# Review of: "Examining Water Use and Sanitation Practices in Rural Schools of Chegutu District, Mashonaland West Province, Zimbabwe"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Title: Examining Water Use and Sanitation Practices in Rural Schools of Chegutu District, Mashonaland West Province, Zimbabwe

Comments:

Abstract:

Clarity and Context:

The abstract clearly defines the focus of the study, which is the examination of water use and sanitation practices in selected rural secondary schools in Ward 11 and 29 of Chegutu District in Zimbabwe. It establishes the importance of WASH in schools for children's well-being and quality education.

The abstract outlines the methodology concisely, stating that data were collected using questionnaires, interviews, and published data.

It is good that the abstract mentions the tools used for data analysis, like tables, graphs, pie charts, and descriptive statistics. This gives an insight into the thoroughness of the analysis. The findings are clearly stated – the current WASH practices in many of the schools were found to be inadequate. The abstract also identifies the key reasons for the inadequacy, which provides valuable insight into the systemic issues affecting WASH practices in the studied regions. The abstract concludes with the implications of the findings, mentioning the need for further support to meet international recommendations for healthy and gender-equitable schools.

Suggestions for improvement:

The abstract could provide a brief context of the WASH situation in Zimbabwean rural schools to set the stage for the reader. Overall, the abstract is informative and sets a clear direction for the paper. With a few enhancements to provide additional context, specificity, and potential recommendations, it would provide a strong and compelling overview of the study.

INTRODUCTION

Reviewers comments:

#### Relevance and Significance:

The introduction effectively establishes the importance of WASH in schools, linking it to health, educational outcomes, and broader development goals. It sets a solid foundation for the study by highlighting the critical nature of water, sanitation, and hygiene not only as a human right but also as a catalyst for national development and poverty reduction.

#### Contextual Background:

The introduction provides a comprehensive background on the state of WASH globally and specifically in Southern Africa. The inclusion of statistics and references to reports adds credibility and depth to the narrative.

#### Literature Review:

There is a good synthesis of existing literature and reports, which helps to frame the problem and the need for the study. The references to studies conducted in Sub-Saharan African countries and the situation in Zimbabwe provide a necessary contextual understanding.

#### Problem Statement:

The introduction clearly identifies the gap in research, particularly in rural secondary schools, and the need for the current study.

#### Objectives and Rationale:

The objectives of the study are well-articulated, explaining what the research seeks to achieve and its significance.

#### Suggestions for Improvement:

**Structure and Flow:** The introduction could be organized better. It might help to start with a global overview, then narrow down to the regional context in Southern Africa, and finally focus on Zimbabwe. This would provide a logical flow from the broader context to the specific study area.

**Current Data:** Some of the data cited is quite dated (e.g., WHO Report, 2014). Including more recent data, if available, would make the introduction more relevant and impactful.

Overall, the introduction is well-written, informative, and establishes a strong rationale for the study. With some reorganization for better flow, clarification of scope, and potentially more recent data, it would provide a compelling argument for the importance and timeliness of this research.