

EDUCATION FOR ALL IN ZIMBABWE: A CRITICAL APPRAISAL

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Abstract

The policy of Education for all in Zimbabwe was noble when it was conceived. However, preoccupation with the need to redress the colonial imbalances in the provision of education created by the colonial administration foreshadowed the need for a well thought out programme of educational reform based on the philosophy of the African people. It was necessary that the policy of education for all be based on the philosophy of the people, be rooted or situated in the historical experiences of the people for the nation to claim ownership of any educational reform that was going to be implemented. Consequently, little effort was made to harness the rich African cultural heritage to create a viable foundation for the policy of education for all in Zimbabwe. This paper discusses the policy of education for all as it was implemented in Zimbabwe. Based on the belief that all education is rooted in the philosophy of the society which it serves; it is here proposed that the policy of education for all had no firm philosophical base that the indigenes could identify with. It is therefore suggested that any education policy that has to take root in Zimbabwe will necessarily have to be based on the philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu for it to appeal to the people of Zimbabwe. This would give the policy a firmer foundation placing the development of the individual and society at the centre of the educational process. The critique will therefore provide an analysis of some aspects of the Zimbabwean education system in line with the need to provide a holistic education.

Keywords: Education for all, *hunhu*, gender, special needs education, hot sitting

Introduction

The black population of Zimbabwe, from the very beginning of the advent of colonialism, was disenfranchised and relegated to the periphery of the political, economic and educational processes in Southern Rhodesia (later Rhodesia, and Zimbabwe). The education of Africans who were regarded as the insignificant other and yet the majority of the people in the country was neglected and left to depend on the philanthropic and humanitarian sensibilities of Christian missionaries who, in most cases were financially dependent on the very same colonial administration which had no interest in improving African education. This resulted in the underdevelopment of African education in terms of the philosophic foundations on which it was based, the goals which it was set to achieve and the content it sought to transmit and its availability to the indigenes of Zimbabwe. This inevitably meant that any African government that was going to take over political power in future was obligated to decolonise and democratise education by instituting educational reforms that would involve the transformation of the philosophic base, reconfiguration of the goals, and making the education system relevant to the needs of Africans who constituted the majority of the populace in Zimbabwe. Furthermore, education needed to be made more accessible to, and a right for all previously disadvantaged groups. Thus, at independence in 1980, Zimbabwe, through the policy of education for all sought to address the problem of an unstated philosophy of education, the bottleneck system of education, the problem of race, social class and gender access to education, the problem of providing a science based education, grounding the education in a relevant philosophy of education, making sure that those who were denied education even as adults had access to it and the availability of schooling all over the country. Inevitably, addressing these issues created problems for the new government that often frustrated the achievement of the policy of education for all and these challenges appear to continue to afflict the present day Zimbabwe. It is the attempts to address these issues and the attendant challenges that this discussion seeks to engage.

The Need for Educational Reform: A Brief Historical Background

During the colonial era, the government of Southern Rhodesia used education as an instrument of oppression designed to prepare children for their predetermined status in life (Colclough, Lofstedt, Manduvi-Moyo, Maravanyika & Ngwata, 1990). Since education was provided to keep Africans economically, socially and politically incapacitated, the regime ensured that Africans did not receive any education that would give them ideas of self worth and liberation. In line with this

thinking, the government pursued a dual policy of provision of education in which, while in the European Education system education for whites, from 1930, was free and compulsory up to the age of 15 years, in the African Education system education was not free and compulsory (Nyagura, 1989; Shizha & Kariwo, 2011). The European Education system which trained whites for key posts in the economic, political and social spheres was heavily funded by government accounting for a per capita cost nine times more than for the African Education system (Chung, 2008). The colonial regime also funded though at a lower level African education in urban areas. However, as observed by Chung (2008), less than 30% of Africans lived in urban areas. African migration to urban areas where services were better was severely curtailed by a strict pass law system which did not allow unemployed Africans, including the spouses and children of workers to go to urban areas. The African Education system was for subservience (Zvobgo, 1998), and servitude only to enable them to be 'hewers of wood and drawers of water' for the whites. Consequently, instruction in the three R's was rudimentary as in line with missionaries' goals as well as government policy, the education provided to Africans by the Christian missionaries was intended to make the Africans literate so they could read and comprehend the scriptures and convert to Christianity. Half the day was devoted to industrial work as was required by the colonial policy on African education. The trend was the same in all schools (Zvobgo, 1985; Randolph, 1974). Even reforms instituted by the colonial regime were intended to ensure the marginalisation of Africans in the education sector.

Pursuing the restriction of provision of education to African, the government came up with the 1966 Plan for African education. Through this plan it became government policy to ensure that in African education, of those who entered Grade One, only 50% proceeded to Grade Seven while 11 % proceeded to Form One and of these only 6% could proceed to Form Four (Zvobgo, 1997). The 50% was broken down as follows: 12,5 % proceeded to Form One, that is, F1 secondary school and the F2 which were junior vocational secondary schools which catered for 37,5% of primary school graduates. The future of 50% of the pupils finishing Grade Seven was not provided for (Zvobgo 1987; Peresuh, 1998). The F2 schools were a poor version of the industrial school designed to give Africans vocational skills but not sufficient enough to make them compete with Europeans on the job market but deemed enough to enable them to survive in rural communities. Berman (1975. 30) describes this education as 'narrow vocationalism'. This was the bottleneck policy of educational provision to Africans. In contrast, in the European system, of those who entered Grade One, 88% proceeded to Form Four (Zvobgo, 1994; Peresuh, 1998). It is important to note that those covered under the European system were those deemed worthy of government assistance in education who were Whites, Coloureds and Asians. Thus, as observed by Dekker and Lemmer (1993) colonial education was divisive and elitist.

As already discussed above, the responsibility of providing education to Africans was left with the missionaries and district councils who were expected to inculcate appropriate values to Africans while the provision of education to Europeans was the responsibility of the government (Peresuh, 1998). While missionaries claimed to be giving relevant education that would not alienate Africans from their communities, no attempt was made to ground the school curricula in African philosophical and cultural values as the missionary societies were informed each by its own philosophy of education derived from its denominational doctrinal beliefs. If anything, the education was a complete negation of everything African as the focus of the missionaries was an evangelism based education for Africans. During the Federation years, from 1953 to 1963, African education was left to territorial governments while European education became the responsibility of the Federal government. This era was marked by the provision of education that had no discernible philosophical base as the state attempted to purge African education of the missionary thinking which the colonists perceived as dangerous. To ensure that access to education was restricted, in 1968 the colonial regime put a stop to the expansion of mission schools and the construction of schools that would benefit black children. Knowing very well that Africans did not have the necessary resources, the colonial regime made the decision that in rural areas only the parents, who were poor and lacked western education could construct schools for their children. Consequently, very few such schools were established.

That the philosophy of the colonial education system was white supremacy and the dominance of the ruling minority was clearly stated by Godfrey Huggins, later Lord Malvern when he was Prime Minister of Rhodesia:

I will go a little further and say that it is only by allowing our race the very best education and bringing out the latent talents there may be that we will enable our race to survive in Africa. I

will go even further and admit that although our youth may be able to play Rugby football and protect their skin with differential legislation, they will not be able to preserve their white brain and if they are to survive, it will be by nothing but by superior education. (Zvobgo, 1987, p.18).

In brief, the colonial policy on education was to ensure that as few Africans as possible had access to education. The quality of education to be given to Africans was not to be on par with the quality of education given to European children. It was therefore an education for subservience and dependence that the colonial regime provided to Africans. Thus, the Zimbabwean government had to revamp the education system in terms of accessibility, quality, equity, curricula and orientation.

The Policy of Education for All

The Chimurenga II (War of Liberation) in Zimbabwe was a result of inequality in the provision of education in as much as it was a result of social, economic and political inequalities. Thus Tongogara summed it:

My grievances were based on the question of oppression which I had seen myself, from my parents or from my own people, particularly in the deprivation of land. You know our people are naturally farmers. They like the soil. They know that everything is soil, and yet they are deprived of the rich soil in Zimbabwe. This and education, I used to listen to my parents talking about it. My elder brother failed to get a place for school, even other friends. (Martin & Johnson, 1982, p. 56).

Indeed, Chung (2008, p. 7) observed that "educational deprivation was one of the worst forms of colonial oppression." Thus, at independence the Zimbabwean government adopted scientific socialism as its guiding philosophy in educational reforms. The option for a socialist philosophy had implications on the education policy of the new government. As is pointed out by Chung and Ngara (1985, p. 87) the conviction then was that: "While material conditions determine the education system, education can also have far-reaching consequences on, and help to change the material conditions of a people." In other words, education was perceived as critical to political and socio-economic development.

Thus, the policy of education for all enunciated in the first policy statement made immediately after independence, *Growth with Equity* (Chung, 2008, p. 88) was based on the belief in the ability of education to bring people to a higher level of consciousness and social change, "for by making people aware of their conditions of existence you release that power that is in them, the power to change society." Consequently, education was viewed as a prerequisite to social, political and economic transformation (Mhundwa, 1983; Gwarinda, 1983) leading to social justice and racial equality. This was based on the understanding that the underdevelopment of African education was a deliberate policy systematically pursued by the colonial government (Zvobgo, 1998). Thus the philosophy of education that informed the new government was reconstructionism. Consequently, the Zimbabwean government education policy required that pupils should be able to access a primary school within a radius of five kilometres from their homes. In addition, for every five primary schools, a secondary school (which started off as an upper top at a primary school in most rural areas) had to be established. To demonstrate its commitment to the provision of secondary education the Ministry of Education constructed a government secondary school in every district (Chung, 2008). This resulted in unprecedented development in education in Zimbabwe (Mubika & Bukaliya, 2011).

The above notwithstanding, it must be noted that the adoption of socialism itself was based on the mistaken view that since African communities were communo-feudal at the point of colonization, they would embrace socialism as a system that was not radically different from the pre-colonial system. Thus, the Zimbabwean government failed to come to terms with the inroads the capitalist system had carved for itself in African culture. They forgot that African communities did not remain static but were undergoing change and had been initiated into the capitalistic mode of production and all its attendant tastes. As such, socialism as an ideology would be regarded as an imposed philosophy and would not have a buy in among the majority of the black Africans in Zimbabwe.

In a bid to provide education for all, education was made a right for all Zimbabweans, regardless of race, colour, religion or creed (Zvobgo, 1998; 1997; 1994; Chung & Ngara, 1985;

Bwerazuva, 1982; Mhundwa, 1983). At the same time, the government of Zimbabwe unified the previously racially divided education systems including coming up with unitary curricular by 1983 (Chung, 2008). The result of this policy was phenomenal expansion in enrolments in all sectors of education as well as the number of schools built as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1 - Number of Primary and Secondary Schools, 1979-1996

Year	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1995	1996
Primary	2401	3160	3700	3880	3960	4160	4230	4300	4440	4470	4510	4530	4633	4659
Secondary	177	200	690	740	790	1180	1220	1280	1400	1480	1510	1520	1526	1528
Total	1578	3360	4390	4620	4750	5340	5450	5580	5840	5950	6020	6050	6159	6187

Source: Peresuh, 1998, p. 131

With the increase in the number of schools, enrolment increased at all levels. Primary school enrolment rose from 1 235 994 in 1980 to 2 510 605 in 1997, while secondary school enrolment increased from less than 25 000 in 1980 to more than 800 000 in 1997. After 1991 the increase in primary school enrolment became marginal as shown in Table 2. However, the strides made in the provision of education were phenomenal and laudable as more marginalised people could now access the education they were denied during the colonial era.

Table 2: Primary and Secondary Enrolment: 1980-1997

YEAR	PRIMARY		SECONDARY	
1980	1 235 994	-	74 32	-
1985	2 229 396	80,0	497 766	570
1990	2 119 865	-0,4	672 656	35
1991	2 294 934	8,0	710 619	6
1992	2 305 765	0,5	657 344	-7
1993	2 436 671	6,0	635 202	-3
1994	2 476 575	2,0	679 416	7
1995	2 482 508	0,2	711 094	5
1996	2 499 381	1,0	760 576	7
1997	2 510 605	0,4	806 126	6

Source: The Nziramasanga Commission of Inquiry Report, 1999, p 37

After 1990, the Zimbabwean government believed it had done enough in the provision of schools. The focus shifted from quantitative increase to improving the quality of education offered in these schools, yet the provision of education to all remained elusive as Table 3 shows. The table clearly shows that not all children of school going age were in school. This is supported by the Education for All (EFA) 2000 Assessment Country Report which notes that the net enrolment ratio in 1992 was 80% while in 1998 it had risen to 87% instead of the projected 100%. The phenomenon of street children is a clear testimony to this, whatever reasons have led them there.

That tertiary education also expanded as a result of the policy of education for all is reflected in the fact that while in 1980 there were eight teacher- training colleges, by 1994 there were fifteen colleges eleven of which trained primary school teachers while four trained secondary school teachers. In the eleven primary school teacher training colleges, pre-service teacher training was combined with short residential training with extended teaching practice in the schools. This was the Zimbabwe Integrated Teacher Education Course (ZINTEC) model meant to alleviate the problem of teacher shortage in schools resulting from massive enrolments in schools. The ZINTEC programme involved student teachers staying longer on teaching practice than in residential sessions. This went a long way in reducing the number of untrained teachers in schools.

Table 3 Age Specific Enrolment Ratios: School Age Population (6-18 years): 1992 Ratio of Children in school as a percentage of all the eligible children in each age- group

Years	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Male	36,42	75,56	89,14	93,57	94,53	94,95	93,07	90,62	84,96	77,28	70,03	59,77	42,93
Female	39,81	77,74	90,05	93,96	94,86	95,19	93,02	88,81	78,82	65,41	53,48	39,00	21,52
Average	38,12	76,65	89,60	93,77	94,7	95,07	93,05	89,72	81,89	71,35	61,76	49,39	32,23

Source: The Nziramasanga Commission Report 1999, p 58

In 1980 there was one state university in Zimbabwe, the University of Zimbabwe. Presently there are fourteen universities, eight state universities and six private universities. Enrolment in teachers colleges rose from 4 000 in 1980 to 17 900 in 1994. There were only three vocational training centres in 1990. By 1999 there were fifteen with projections for a further twenty-two by year 2000. While for technical vocational colleges enrolment rose from 3 600 in 1980 to 27 000 in 1994, at university level, it increased from 2 200 in 1980 to 10 800 in 1994 (Peresuh, 1998). Thus, in quantitative terms, there was a major improvement in the provision of education to the majority of the people in Zimbabwe and the removal of the bottleneck system of education. To improve the quality of higher education a separate Ministry of Higher Education and Technology was set up in 1988. However, this has been constrained by poor funding as a result of economic hardships experienced by Zimbabwe as from the year 2000 to the present.

From the onset, there were criticisms from those who believed that the policy of education for all was going to compromise the quality of education provided by the state since the policy was aimed at quantitative change (Zvobgo, 1994). However, it is essential to take cognisance of the fact that the quality of education could not have been lower than when it was provided to Africans by the colonial government whose aim was to provide education for servitude. Nevertheless, some of the criticisms, on the envisaged large classes that would result from the policy of education for all, shortage of qualified teachers and lack of financial resources were to some extent justified. The concerns were vindicated by the 1995 survey that showed that Zimbabwe had made only marginal qualitative gains in the improvement of primary school teaching and learning environment and in pupil achievement in reading (EFA, 2000). This is clearly the case if one looks at Table 4 shows trends in the pass rates at O' level between 1985 and 1990.

Table 4: O level numbers and percentage passes

	1985		1986		1987		1988		1989		1990	
	Number	%	Number.	%	Number.	%	Numbers.	%	Numbers.	%	Numbers.	%
Passed 5 or more subjects	14 762	13.1	14 566	11.5	18 124	11.9	18 647	12.5	22 430	13.5	25 651	13.2

Source: Chung 2008, p. 33

In fact, Mubika and Bukaliya (2011) quote the Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture as reporting that the national pass rate had declined from between 60% and 70% to less than 40% in 2010. There are secondary and primary schools which now record zero percent pass rate (Gumede, 2009; Zimdiaspora, 2011).

However, proponents of mass education argued that quality could still be achieved from quantity. They argue that it would have been futile for the new government to pursue policies that would have been deemed discriminatory as was the case during the colonial era. If Advanced level passes and the quality of those admitted to universities is anything to go by, these have been vindicated. At the University of Zimbabwe, those who had two points used to be able to secure places. In recent years, the cut off points have been fluctuating between eight to nine points for girls and ten to eleven for boys. Points for girls are lower in conformity with affirmative action policy that takes cognisance of the fact that during the colonial era and at present, girls were and are among the most disadvantaged groups of people in terms of access to education.

The provision of education for all between 1980 and 1990 as is pointed out by the EFA 2000 report was largely based on general declarations and statement of intend. The report further points out that the policy formulation process was hurried and highly centralised. As a result, such problems as lack of control of the expansion process, skewed allocation of resources in favour of urban schools, shortage of manpower and equipment arose (Colclough et al. 1990). At the same time no time frame was provided for the goals and targets stated. The main concern was making education available to the previously disadvantaged groups. Yet, Colclough et al argue that the policy of education for all succeeded in making education cheaper but not free. This compromised the effectiveness of the policy of education for all as some pupils could not pay school levies, fees and teacher incentives.

It is ironic that it was in 1990 that the Jomtien Declaration which was in tandem with the policy of education for all in Zimbabwe was pronounced while the government of Zimbabwe through the adoption of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP, 1990-1995) opted to abandon the policy of education for all. ESAP and its successor, ZIMPREST emphasised cost recovery and cost sharing with the parents. The government also committed itself to cutting expenditure on social services including education. It can therefore be surmised that from 1990, government's commitment to EFA was nominal. This reasoning is justified since the government now focused on assisting only those who were regarded as being in difficult circumstances, such as rural women, girls, orphans, AIDS child victims, children of the poor, street children, disabled children and refugee children. Yet the 2000 EFA assessment Country Report by UNESCO in collaboration with the Zimbabwean government argue that Zimbabwe reformulated its programmes and strategies in the context of the Jomtien Declaration. The same goals and strategies were expanded and reconfirmed through the Dakar Declaration of 1994 to which the Zimbabwean government is signatory. The Dakar Declaration culminated in the National Programme of Action which became the reference point for EFA programmes in Zimbabwe. Yet the above policies call into question Zimbabwe's commitment to education for all.

Indeed, it is quite clear that not all children of school going age are in school, hence the need for such programmes as The Second Chance Education Programme run by World Education in collaboration with the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education which seeks to reintegrate 40 000 into the formal education system by 2015 (World Education, 2014). The situation was exacerbated by the socio-economic crisis experienced by Zimbabwe from 2000 to 2008. The crisis resulted in "massive exodus of qualified human resources – all leading to the deterioration of the education system." (Mkhosi, 2012, p. 1). The crisis rendered such intervention as the Basic Education Assistance Module meant to assist the poor with tuition fees ineffective. It is essential to observe that the focus on education for all, notwithstanding accompanying challenges discussed above resulted in Zimbabwe achieving the highest literacy rate in Africa, around 92% by 2008 (Shizha & Kariwo, 2011). More young people had access to education at all levels than during the colonial era. Consequently, the education system produced a huge pool of school leavers who were absorbed into industry, commerce and the civil service sectors of the country. In other words, manpower shortages in these areas were reduced as a result of the policy of education for all. Furthermore, through the Education Policy enunciated through the Education Act of 1982 and 1987 which abolished all forms of racial discrimination in education, created a unitary education system, abolished tuition fees at primary school level, made mandatory the use of the mother tongue in the first three years of education, and instituted other reforms aimed at democratising education (Chung, 2008).

Race, Gender, Class and Education

Other important issues which education for all sought to redress were social class, racial and gender imbalances in education (Zvobgo, 1990). The policy of education for all in this respect was based on the belief in the equality of all people regardless of social class, race or gender in line with the socialist philosophy that Zimbabwe had adopted. It was also a result of the realization that Africans in general and women in particular were discriminated against in the provision of education during the colonial era. According to the *Gender Review of Education in Zimbabwe Report* (2010), women and girls of African descent experienced double discrimination during the colonial era, that is, first because they were Africans and second because they were female. Consequently, gender gaps in literacy and all levels of education were very wide. These imbalances had to be redressed through the policy of education for all. While access to education by most groups in society has improved, economic inequalities have militated against the attainment of social class, racial and gender equality in education. The rich who were mostly white have been largely replaced by a black elite while the remaining whites, joined by some black elites have retained their institutions or have established new ones as private schools to which the poor have no access. Initially, to avoid going to the same schools with blacks, whites sent their children to South African white only schools. White teachers left formerly white schools for South Africa (Zvobgo, 1998). Zvobgo further points out that within two years of independence in Zimbabwe, tertiary institutions were characterized by a total absence of white students. This was an attempt to avoid racial integration, which can also mean a rejection of the policy of racial reconciliation adopted by the new government of Zimbabwe in 1980. At the same time, middle-income Africans who had moved into areas previously reserved for whites had their

children replace white pupils. This, coupled with the zoning system meant that inequality in the provision of education was now a result of social and economic inequalities (Zindi, 1996).

It would appear that the policy of education for all addressed racial imbalances more than gender disparities. Due to economic difficulties, faced with the option of who to educate, most poor parents opted to educate boys while encouraging girls to get married (Zindi, 1996). This was the case especially at secondary school level. At the primary level, a lot of progress was made as is indicated by the fact that the gender gap in enrolment is almost non-existent. For females, primary enrolment increased from 588 233 in 1980 to 1 231 473 in 1997 while for males it rose from 647 761 to 1 259 888 (*National Population Policy, 1998*). There has been gender parity at school completion at primary school level since 2001. Girls are also doing better in Grade 7 examinations than boys (*Gender Review of Education in Zimbabwe Report, 2010*). Some of these positive developments in the education of girls can be attributed to the *National Gender Policy* of 2004 that criminalised gender discrimination by emphasising equality and equity of sexes. At the secondary school level, the gap is still quite evident. Thus in spite of the policy of education for all, girls remain disadvantaged. According to the World Bank Report, cited in Zvobgo (1997) girls are less likely to attend school than boys; their dropout rate is higher than that of boys. The introduction of school fees as a result of the Economic Structural Adjustment Program reversed the gains made by the policy of education for all (Zvobgo, 1997). As indicated above, this was because the policy required the reduction of government expenditure on education. This meant that parents had to foot the expenses of educating their children. Thus, in the long run the removal of the barriers against the education of girls in terms of legislation was compromised.

Science Education for All

In line with the policy of education for all, secondary schools known as 'Upper Tops' were built in rural areas. These schools had no modern laboratory facilities. Yet, as pointed out by Ndawi (1983), education for all also meant science education for all. Realizing the need for science education for all and the lack of laboratory facilities in rural areas as well as the lack of electricity and equipment, books and manpower, the government introduced the Zimbabwe Science project, popularly known as Zim-Science. The Zim-Science project emanated from the government's belief in the use of the environment and the idea of appropriate technology. The intention was to establish a Zimbabwean based Science Curriculum. Science was regarded as important because of the qualities of mind it develops in children. Among these qualities are a heightened sense of curiosity, intellectual honesty, and open-mindedness (Ndawi, 1983).

In spite of the noble intentions behind the project, Zim-Science has been criticized for offering inferior science education to pupils. Those who studied Zim-science did not compare favourably with those who studied conventional science. However, it must be realized that this project achieved international recognition (Takundwa, 1988). It also enabled the teaching at least of some science to pupils who otherwise would have had no access to any science education at all. Though the development of the mental dispositions and qualities mentioned above is difficult to assess, that all pupils needed them must be acknowledged. Had the policy of education for all not been abandoned, it would have been fruitful now to focus on a more enriched science education for all.

Education with Production

The education system that the Zimbabwean government inherited from the colonial government was characterized by a sharp distinction between intellectual education preserved for white people and vocational education in its worst form designed to make blacks 'hewers of wood and drawers of water for the colonists'. At best, as was observed by Chung (2008, p. 14), it was intended to produce workers able to follow instructions in English and "sufficiently numerate to work at the lower levels in factories and commercial enterprises." As pointed out earlier, there were two types of secondary schools during the colonial era, the F1 which was academic but not comparable to white academic institutions, and F2 secondary school which was technical but again inferior to technically oriented education provided to white pupils. The F2 secondary schools were meant for the less intellectually gifted African pupils. The distinction between the two types of African education is what the policy of Education with Production adopted after 1980 aimed to rectify so that there was a balance between academic and technical education in all schools.

Thus Education with Production was intended to link theory with practice in education and to restore the dignity of manual labour. According to Chung, the focus of education with production was a graduate who was able to create self – employment through the skills acquired at school. The learners at the eleven pilot schools were able to construct buildings at the schools, produce agricultural products from school farms and theatre arts. So it was intended to enable learners to participate in the productive processes (Mhundwa, 1983). Mhundwa (1982, pp. 34-35) argues that it was a result of the realization that:

Without academic training, the individual's ability to produce can be handicapped, without the ability to produce, his academic training would cease to be of value to the individual and to his society, and without a good character, academic and productive pursuits can be thwarted by the unstable, inconsistent and unreliable nature of his general behaviour.

Thus Education with Production was intended to be skills based. It was also intended to make education responsive to the needs of the nation by relating it to the economic and social needs of the people.

As indicated above, it must be noted that the idea of linking academic education with practical education was not new. The greatest problem that arose is that the government failed to clearly elucidate to Zimbabweans what Education with Production really meant. So, there was lack of conceptual clarity on Education with Production. In the end it was reduced to each school offering at least one technical subject to its pupils (Gwarinda, 1983). In some schools technical subjects were set aside for the less able students, an indication that the educators had not been liberated from stigmatisation associated with the F2 secondary education of the colonial era. In other words, there was no paradigm shift to facilitate the success of Education with Production. Consequently, in some schools Education with Production was reduced to income generating projects. Because of the lack of appreciation of the concept of Education with Production, the philosophy remained confined to the eleven pilot schools set aside for trial of the philosophy by the government. Thus the implementation of the philosophy and its extension to other schools was a failure. Indeed Chung (2008, p. 16) agrees that technical education in Zimbabwe “did not provide a high level of technical competence” but a “good orientation to modern technology.”

Hot Sitting and composite classes

The policy of education for all necessitated the construction of new schools and the reconstruction of schools destroyed during the war of liberation. The policy of education for all ensured that no child of school going age was barred from going to school. This resulted in a large number of pupils in schools that did not have enough space resulting in the problem of double sessions or 'hot sitting'. In rural and urban areas, some pupils learnt under trees, barns, workshops or even in the open as construction of classrooms could not match the increase in pupil enrolment levels. Naturally, the learning environment affected the quality of education provided under such harsh conditions. However, it would appear the Zimbabwe was not concerned much with the quality of education available to the pupils during the first decade of independence. More focus was on access to education for all children. But over 30 years after independence, hot sitting has not disappeared from many schools. This phenomenon seems to have become a permanent feature of the Zimbabwean education system.

In newly resettled areas, the challenge is a different one. In these areas there are no adequate classrooms as well as teachers. The numbers of pupils are also low resulting in teachers teaching composite classes. In some schools a teacher can have as many as three classes in the same classroom (Hapanyengwi & Chataika, 2013). This can hardly be regarded as creating conducive learning environments for the learners. What creates such scenarios is the policy of allocating teachers to schools on the basis of school enrolment where the ratio has to be one teacher to forty pupils. This may need to be revised if the concern is that every child must have access to quality education.

Special Needs Education

During the colonial era, the provision of special needs education to Africans was left entirely to missionaries with Margareta Hugo of Dutch Reformed Church establishing the first, school for the

visually impaired at Chibi in 1927 and the Methodist at Waddilove introducing a teacher training course for teachers of visually impaired in 1959 (Zindi, 1997).

After independence in 1980, government became more involved in the provision of special needs education. The government took over the training of specialist teachers at Waddilove and moved it to the United College of Education in Bulawayo in 1983 (Zindi, 1997). It then initiated vocational courses for specialist teachers of the blind. The government also established a Braille Printing Press and adopted a sign language for Zimbabwe which culminated in the putting together of a sign language dictionary. The government also opted for the policy of the integration of the pupils with disability into society in line with the Jomtien Declaration. In spite of this, the 1996 Ministry of Education Sport and Culture statistics reflect that the government had only three special schools while the charitable organisations had twenty-seven (Nziramanga, 1999).

In higher education, at the University of Zimbabwe, a Bachelor of Education in Special Education degree was introduced in 1994. Other universities like the Zimbabwe Open University and the Reformed Church University were later to followed suit. However, while reference is often made to the Education Act of 1982 and 1987 and the Disabled Persons Acts that they made educational available to persons with disability, no legal instruments were put in place to ensure that pupils with special educational needs received appropriate education. Indeed the Nziramanga Commission Report (1999, p. 41) notes that, "Despite the efforts being made, Zimbabwe is still far from adequately catering for all the children with special needs." This remains the major weakness in the Zimbabwean government's endeavour to provide education to people with special educational needs.

Adult Education

Among a number of programmes necessitated by the policy of education for all was the adult literacy programme that was embarked upon in 1982 with the assistance of such charitable organisations as the Adult Literacy Organisation of Zimbabwe (ALoz). A number of adults in both rural and urban centres needed literacy, numeracy and computational skills. Sigauke (2001, p. 53) argues that literacy, among other things was understood to prepare "the individual for his/her social, civic and economic role that goes far beyond the rudiments of literacy training." The National Population Policy reports that in 1982, the adult literacy rate was 62%. It was therefore aimed at empowering the non-literate so they could participate meaningfully in the development of their communities. For those in rural areas, reading and conceptual skills were important in their agricultural and pastoral activities. Those in urban areas also needed to communicate functionally in the second language as they interacted with people from other countries and from within Zimbabwe (Mhundwa, 1983). Evening classes were also organized for those who would be at work during the day. It was also realized that if parents were to appreciate the education of their child, they also had to be aware of what it entailed. A lot of progress was made in this regard as is indicated by the fact that while in 1982, 37.2 % of the adult population were non-literate (UNESCO puts the figure at 31.2%) by 1992 the figure had dropped to 19.62% (Sigauke, 2001). The problem was that this programme was largely donor-funded. It tended to lapse with the drying up of donor funding when there was still a lot to be done. Non literacy remained high in rural areas especially among women. Yet women form the labour force responsible for rural development. If women form the majority of workers in the rural areas, such a useful endeavour needs to be resuscitated.

Education for Hunhu

As early as 1980, Samkange & Samkange (1980) observed that there was need for a philosophy to guide the new nation of Zimbabwe. They subsequently recommended that the education system of Zimbabwe be grounded in the philosophy of *hunhu*. The philosophy of *hunhu*, they argued was the philosophy espoused and shared by the people of Zimbabwe, hence:

Hunhuism or ubuntuism is therefore, a philosophy that is the experience of thirty five thousand years of living in Africa. It is a philosophy that sets premium on human relations. In a world increasingly dominated by machines and with personal relationships becoming ever more mechanical, Africa's major contribution in the world today may well be in her sense of *hunhu* or *ubuntu* which her people have developed over the centuries. (Samkange & Samkange 1980, p. 34).

Confirming the centrality of *hunhu* in African philosophy, Ramose (1999, p. 49) also wrote:

Ubuntu is the root of African philosophy. The being of an African in the universe is inseparably anchored' on ubuntu. Similarly, the African tree of knowledge stems from ubuntu with which it is connected indivisibly. Ubuntu then is the wellspring flowing with African ontology and epistemology. If these latter are the basis of philosophy then African philosophy has long been established in and through ubuntu.

Because its focus is the preservation of human life and human dignity, the philosophy of *hunhu* demands empathy and an option for life in relating to the different other regardless of race, gender, or ability or disability. The philosophy of *hunhu*, demands human solidarity, fraternity, responsibility, honesty, justice, trustworthiness, hard work, integrity, hospitality self sacrifice for the benefit of others, humility and gentleness. Hence it is our belief that the appreciation of the philosophy of *hunhu* leads to the realization of the singleness of humanity and the need to have a common vision as a people that will guide Zimbabwe's education systems. Also:

The attitude one human being gives to another, the kindness, courtesy, consideration and friendliness in the relationship between people: a code of behaviour, an attitude to other people and to life, is embodied in *hunhu* (Samkange & Samkange, 1980, p. 39).

In agreement with Samkange and Samkange, Hapanyengwi and Makuvaza (2014) argue that if these are the qualities that the philosophy of *hunhu* cherishes, it is important that the philosophy be made the basis of the Zimbabwean education system. The argument is being reinforced that the philosophy of *hunhu* be adopted as the foundation of Zimbabwean education in concurrence with Luthuli who argues that every education is based on some philosophy of life. It is also the philosophy that is recommended by the Nziramasanga Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training. The focus of an education based on *hunhu* will be the production of a person with all the above stated qualities - *munhu ane hunhu* (a complete being). This philosophy is being advocated because it emphasises on those values that according to the Nziramasanga Commission Report (1998), the people of Zimbabwe Cherish.

That the so-called new education in Zimbabwe was in fact the glorified colonial education system divorced from the philosophy of the majority of the people was recognized by the government which proceeded to commission a committee headed by Nziramasanga to investigate the possibility of coming up with relevant education system informed by the philosophical, cultural values of the people of Zimbabwe. But it took nearly twenty years for the government to realise its failure to provide appropriate philosophy of education for the people in Zimbabwe. The philosophy of *hunhu* makes it imperative that all pupils be treated as equal human beings receiving equal educational opportunities and treatment. If *hunhu* takes root as the foundation of the Zimbabwean education and there is adequate commitment to it, then efforts will need to be made to ensure that all children including those who live on the streets are in school. Concrete steps will need to be taken to ensure that all schools produce *vanhu vane hunhu* (complete human beings).

Conclusion

The policy of education for all has to some extent failed because it was not grounded in the philosophy of the people who were supposed to benefit from it. The people did not view it as their own as it came clothed in an alien philosophy of education. It could not mature because it was not grounded in a philosophy germane to the African people in Zimbabwe and those other races hated the ideology that informed it. The policy also failed because of the introduction of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme that reduced government expenditure on education and also the effects of the economic challenges experienced from the year 2000 to the present. Naturally these led to the reversal of some of the gains achieved in the field of education. It is our view that the philosophy of *hunhu* has the greatest potential to contribute towards making education socially, politically, economically and culturally relevant. It is this philosophy that can guide us as we ponder the appropriate foundation of the policy of education for all. It is this philosophy that we propose to provide guidance in resuscitating adult education, affirmative action in education as well as special needs education programmes. It is our view that this philosophy obviates the problem of relevance in the provision of education for all in Zimbabwe.

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