

Examining the Transformative Changes Introduced in Educational Assessment: Implications on sustainable development goals in Higher Education

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Abstract: The introduction of the Competence-based Curriculum (CBC) in Zimbabwe meant a shift on the general aims and objectives of the education system as stipulated in the Curriculum Framework for Primary Secondary Education, 2015-2022. The framework quotes post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and other international conventions as drivers of the educational reforms. Agenda 2030 comprises 17 SDGs. This study focused on sustainable SDG 4.7 and the transformation of education from an academic oriented curriculum to one that is skills-based. The transformation meant changes in the way students were assessed and consequently change in expectations by higher education from the prospective students. However, the administration of public examinations remains a critical measure of the teaching and learning that is taking place in the schools. Advanced level examinations administered by Zimbabwe School Examinations Council (ZIMSEC) are the prime measure of learner success as they act as the chief benchmark for grading, selection and placement of learners into various stations of their destiny. The study qualitatively examined Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) ZIMSEC assessment framework documents and workshops held between (2017-2020) in which 3 977 stake holders participated. Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development (MHTEISTD) and MoPSE were in agreement with the ESD policies, desired outcomes and direction in which education in Zimbabwe should take. Both ministries introduced and adopted curriculum action plans for sustainable transformation of the education system and have made strides in this regard through Education 5.0 and CBC frameworks. However, MoPSE-ZIMSEC has not been able to fully implement CBC since its inception as a result A-level graduates are proceeding to higher education without some competencies and skills being assessed. There is need to propel coordinated approaches in transforming and implementing educational changes by both ministries to meet the targets for Agenda 2030. Higher education has to strategically position itself to receive the new student, so that efforts made at lower levels in preparing them for the future are not in vein at point of entry.

Key words: Competence-based Curriculum, Transformative change

I. INTRODUCTION

The government of Zimbabwe through the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) reviewed the school curriculum in 2015. This review saw the amendment of the assessment model that has been in existence in the country since 1944 at secondary level. When Zimbabwe School Examinations Council (ZIMSEC) was established in

1996, it adopted the same assessment model except for practical subjects. This was also done in a bid to fulfil the 2030 Agenda that requires education to empower people with the knowledge, skills and values to live in dignity, build their lives and contribute to their societies. The 2030 Agenda aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all by 2030. In this regard, governments hold the main responsibility for ensuring the right to quality education, the 2030 Agenda is a universal and collective commitment. It requires political will, global and regional collaboration and the engagement of all governments, civil society, the private sector, youth, UN and other multilateral agencies to tackle educational challenges and build systems that are inclusive, equitable and relevant to all learners (SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee Secretariat UNESCO). The roadmap to achieve the education goal was adopted in November 2015, influencing the educational reforms in Zimbabwe. MoPSE (2015) Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education 2015-2022, points out that, the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-economic Transformation (ZIM ASSET; 2013) calls for the development of a curriculum which is relevant to national needs while equipping learners with life skills for work and leisure. The curriculum framework also quotes post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals and other international conventions and agreements to which Zimbabwe is a signatory as drivers of the educational reforms. To this end MoPSE has developed a curriculum framework which provides a comprehensive plan for a rapid and sustainable transformation of the education system through to 2022. In the same context, the MoPSE-ZIMSEC assessment framework focuses on a multi-dimensional approach to assessment to ensure the holistic development of children by supporting them to acquire the knowledge, competencies and attitudes needed to succeed in the world of today and tomorrow (MoPSE Assessment framework, 2020).

The updated curriculum reformulated the model to a hybrid of Continuous Assessment (CA) and Summative Examinations (SE). These two complement each other for grading purposes and it is a shift from the academic orientated education to a competence based primary and secondary education system Zimbabwe. The introduction of CA was deliberate as it focuses on the development of the whole learner and the promotion of 21st Century skills and competences that

promote survival in any environment through completion of real-world activities (MoPSE Assessment framework, 2020). The inclusion of CA implies a change in the way students are assessed and as a result a change in the prospective student at higher education entry point. In other words, higher education anticipated a student with wider and relevant skills, competencies and attitudes. MoPSE (2015) purports that the decision to develop the Curriculum Framework was made in the context of the government's focus on preparing Zimbabwean learners for the needs of the 21st century, growing concerns amongst policy makers and key stakeholders regarding the relevance of the education system and the changes in global education standards. This is in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) including goal 4.7 that ensures all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles... (SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee Secretariat).

In this regard, the first examinations in the updated curriculum were written in 2018 with the intention of including continuous assessment on candidates' profile. However, the assessment system could not take off with a complete package of assessment for the learner as anticipated. This was due to a number of logistical and technical challenges that were experienced by all stakeholders involved. Since then students have been channelled into higher education without the continuous assessment component for three consecutive years. That translates to four A level examinations for both November and June sessions. This study assesses the implication of the changes made by MoPSE-ZIMSEC on its assessment model to higher education entry point. This is in view of sustainable development goal 4.7 that continuous assessment was intended to address directly. If higher education had prepared for this learner what changes were put in place at entry point to fulfil sustainable development this goal? If the higher education had not prepared for this learner how are they adjusting now in preparation for imminent changes? It is upon this background that this paper sort to interrogate the implications of the assessment changes on sustainable development goal 4.7 at the entry point in Higher Education and university in particular. The following research questions guided this study:

- What changes were made to the Zimbabwean School High Stake Examinations for sustainable development?
- What are the implications of the changes to high stakes assessments on sustainable development at the point of entry in higher education?
- How has higher education especially university, contributed to the development of MoPSE-ZIMSEC assessment framework?
- What preparations were put in place by university to receive the new student from the school for continuity of sustainable development goal?

It is envisaged that the study will establish the measures put in place at entry point by higher education in preparation for different student. Support continuity of sustainable development goal 4.7 or expose gaps thereof that may exist between higher education and MoPSE. Since the introduction of CBC there has been any literature that traces and addresses directly the relationship between MHTEISTD and MoPSE-ZIMSEC in curriculum transformation. There is need to understand CBC demands in order to create the basis for extended communication and cooperation between higher education and MoPSE-ZIMSEC, increase the quality and equity of assessment, increase accountability at different levels, and inform system performance for sustainable development.

Conceptual Framework

Transformative change as seen in the updated MoPSE-ZIMSEC assessment model guided this study. The model embraces holistic approaches to assessment of competencies on a continuum of knowledge, skills, abilities, values and traits. (Mersmann et al. 2014) defines transformational change as a structural change that alters the interplay of institutional, cultural, technological, economic and ecological dimensions of a given system. It will unlock new development paths, including social practices and worldviews.

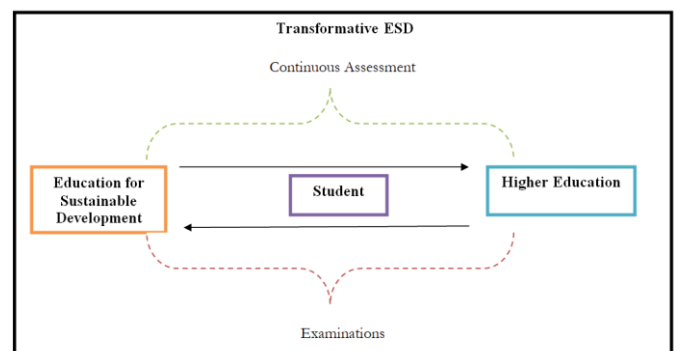


Fig 1: Transformative change in MoPSE –ZIMSEC assessment

When interpreted from transformative education point of view, the purpose of education is to empower learners to see the social world differently and through an ethical lens, so that they will challenge and change the status quo as agents of change. The function of ESD is to fuel the natural passion and genius of the student, rather than be the protectors of knowledge, forcing students down a pre-constructed road built for the masses. Students have to be encouraged to question the knowledge and methods taught by teachers and to find new innovative insights. In other words it is intended to encourage students, to become active participants in building new and better societies even before they leave school (Rüfenacht, 2017; Mogren, 2019 and Ng S et al 2018). In this endeavour, the 4.7 goal is set to ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and

nonviolence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development (SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee Secretariat). In this context, change aims to change not only practices, but outcomes, thereby disrupting the status quo. CBC with a CA component was adopted as, shift from a transmissive to a transformative learning model (Berner et al 2013). The transformative assessment model which moves away from a singular final examination to a system of assessments where multiple forms of assessment become an integral part of the teaching-learning process, placement and certification. CA was brought about after the realization that testing skills exhibited in a summative examination did not measure life skills. The former education system trained students to pass the examinations and not to have critical thinking skills. It was unsuitable to teach sustainability, as it was very transmissive, teacher-centered approach with an emphasis on cognitive learning and memorization. However, the updated curriculum emphasises on ICT, STEM, Education for Sustainable Development and provision of life skills and advocates for the introduction of industrial attachment for students after their Ordinary Level studies (UNESCO, 2019; UN & Government of Zimbabwe, 2018). Hence, the authors believe that transformative education is a very valuable approach to educating for sustainable development. It goes into the depth of things and brings about a paradigmatic shift.

On the higher education side, the teaching aspect now requires that theory be blended with practice in teaching. As a result, the Minimum Bodies of Knowledge and Skills (MBK/S) that were introduced to the university curriculum influence teaching. These require similar programs in different Zimbabwean institutions of higher education to teach 80% of similar content and the difference should be only 20% (MBK/S strategic plan document). This harmonizes the higher education sector in Zimbabwe, thereby allowing easy transfer of students from one institution to the other within the country (Muzira and Maupa, 2020). At the same time prospective students meet more or less the same expectations and standards at point of entry in higher education. This shift reflects the perceived need for continuous engagement on sustainability in higher education and the need for sustainable development. A full-fledged ESD requires the integration of primary, secondary, tertiary education and industrial dimensions. However, Berner et al (2013) observes that there have been few attempts made to guide the effort of designing transformative ESD programs, with a strategic, whole-systems approach that has a scientifically robust definition of sustainability. The Framework for Strategic Sustainable Development (FSSD) is a scientifically rigorous tool with a whole-systems approach for planning within the complex realms of sustainability.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW: TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is an educational response to the need to empower students to deal with the complex challenges associated with sustainable

development of current and future society. ESD describes the practice of teaching for sustainability (Mogren, 2019; Wals and Kieft, 2010; Berner et al 2013). ESD for 2030 aims to build a more just and sustainable world through strengthening ESD and contributing to the achievement of the 17 SDGs. ESD is a key element of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Its aims form one of the targets of the Sustainable Development Goal on education SDG 4.7 and it is considered a driver for the achievements of all 17 SDGs (UNESCO, in the article; Sustainable Development Goals - Resources for educators, 2020; Berner et al 2013). Begashaw in the Foresight Africa 2020 report, acknowledges that one-third of the 2030 Agenda journey is already complete, it is an opportune time to examine Africa's progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) so far as well as assess what adjustments to strategies are needed to overcome the remaining obstacles. In the same context, One planet (2021) reports that the new ESD framework for the period 2020 – 2030 (ESD for 2030) was developed through broad consultations with various stakeholders from 2016 to 2018. It focuses on strengthening ESD's contribution to the achievement of all 17 SDGs, focusing on policies, learning environments, teachers and educators, youth as well as communities. It has a particular focus on placing greater emphasis on the contribution of learning content to the survival and prosperity of humanity.

The UNESCO (2019) article for Inclusion of ESD in Zimbabwean schools reported that there was progress towards the inclusion of ESD in school curricula and activities. However, there were many practical challenges in implementing an ideal or normative concept of ESD, and to make it institutionalised in educational systems. The fostering of lifelong education and inter-departmental engagement and communication within the institutions was not clearly brought to light in most project presentations (Mogren, 2019; UNESCO, 2019). In the same context, Begashaw (2020) notes that while progress in some areas and countries is encouraging, overall, the region will need to redouble its efforts if it is to achieve the SDGs by 2030. In the same vein, Tikly (2019) urges that, if education in Africa is to play a role in transformative change then it will need to be fundamentally re-oriented away from its current path dependency which it has inherited since colonial times and which has proved remarkably resilient to change. UNESCO (2019) urged stakeholders and participants of the Capacity Building Programme on Education for Sustainable Development (CAP-ESD) to build evidence towards their projects so as to approach examination and education assessment boards for policy changes on assessment types and to also encourage ESD inclusion in the curriculum. It was noted in the presentations of Change Projects that education assessment does not assess the day to day skills and abilities of students for 21st century competencies. Most of the examinations are about learning a set type of questions with the aim of just passing the examinations, yet no real life competencies are examined (UNESCO, 2019).

The world has moved into the fourth revolution, which is characterised by innovation and high end or cutting-edge industrial advancement. It is fair to say that the dramatic changes in the world of work and employment means that the foundation of a new world of education must have the values of sustainability and adaptability embedded at the very core (Chihota, 2021; Rüfenacht, 2017) Zimbabwe is no exception as the country has adopted a new education curriculum which is inclined towards modern technological trends. In this respect, the adopted model, Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development (MHTEISTD) 5.0 focuses on innovation and industrialisation. The country adopted Education 5.0 in order to retool and revive industry using the latest technology. Furthermore, Tagwira (2018) acknowledges that the National Skills Audit conducted by this MHTEISTD in 2017 showed that although Zimbabwe boasts of over 95% literacy rate, the critical skills availability is 38%; which means that there is need to realign and reconfigure higher and tertiary education system. Increasing the literacy rate will not be enough to create a sustainable society (Berner et Al 2013). To this end, higher education, in its obligations to meet the needs of the country, was guided by the Transitional Stabilisation Programme (TSP). TSP was aimed at reconfiguring the Zimbabwe's educational system to make it more relevant to the demands of the economy and markets. That is, graduates are to be equipped with skills acquisitions that empower them to become innovative towards societal development, rather than acquiring, in universities and colleges, skills that leave them in need of prescriptions on what they should do after college (UN & Government of Zimbabwe, 2018). This was more aligned to Education 3.0, an education system that focused more on teaching, research and community service.

Conversely, Education 5.0 is a development from the previous higher and tertiary education system. This kind of education was simply unfit to equip students with the knowledge necessary to solve issues so complex and deeply challenging as is the case with sustainability (Berner et Al 2013). Hence, it is vital to foster the kind of learning that provides students with new competencies and a new way of acquiring knowledge to approach the challenges of sustainability. It is now demanded of the nation's higher and tertiary education sector to not only: teach, research and community serve but innovate and industrialise Zimbabwe (Muzira, and Maupa, 2020; Jonathan, 2021). In pursuit of the 2030 vision, the Government released funds for the setting up of innovation hubs at State universities. The first beneficiary universities were the National University of Science and Technology (NUST), the Midlands State University (MSU), the University of Zimbabwe (UZ), the Harare Institute of Technology (HIT), Zimbabwe Defence University and Chinhoyi University of Technology (CUT). The Education 5.0 is centred on the Heritage-based philosophy in shaping future technology through innovation and industrialisation (Chihota, 2021; Muzira, and Maupa, 2020). It reaffirms the primacy of universities, polytechnics, teachers' colleges and industrial

training colleges in economic growth, technology transfer and generation of new knowledge.

It can be noted that policy documents are generally based on compromises and negotiations about how to introduce something new. In practice, an implementation plan usually follows documents stating relevant policy. Practical implementation of ESD is therefore sometimes said to be political or incongruent with research findings regarding measures that support ESD implementation (Mogren, 2019). Although both the challenge of sustainable development and the call for ESD is worldwide, there is a general understanding that the local realities and manifestations of 'unsustainability' are often quite different and deeply rooted in local histories and political and cultural traditions (Wals and Kieft, 2010). Admittedly, designing a transformative ESD program with a whole-systems approach is clearly a complex task, and there is little theory or research on how to develop or implement a sustainability pedagogical design that is systemic and connective (Berner et Al 2013). Begashaw (2020) observes that, even with Africa's enthusiasm, without a robust global and localized governance structure the SDG agenda will falter. Therefore, the implementation of Education 5.0 and the 4.7 goal may not be smooth. Major capacity gaps exist for the achievement of sustainable development, and this capacity deficit presents a significant obstacle to achieving sustainable development in Africa. There is lack of trained academics that have the capacity to approve new ESD courses and concepts which resulted in institutional barriers when it comes to approval and the long period or length of time for program to be approved. Lack of policy and strategy relating to achieving ESD, lack of coordinated institutional effort that seeks to enhance ESD in different faculties, total lack of awareness about ESD among academics across disciplines and Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education failure to provide adequate support to the universities (Wals and Kieft, 2010; Shava, 2020).

Nonetheless, Begashaw (2020) argues that to be successful, there is need for effective and coordinated partnerships to domesticate the SDGs that is to fully transpose the SDG ecosystem into national and regional planning and implementation mechanisms, as well as the African Union's (AU) Agenda 2063, and to bridge the large financing and data gaps. Tikly (2019) is of the view that, understanding the tensions and contradictions inherent in regional policy in relation to an analysis of wider processes of change can assist in comprehending the nature and scale of the challenges and possibilities for implementing transformative education for sustainable development. In this regard, Begashaw (2020) notes that, one major reason to be hopeful for Africa's progress is that the SDGs are in direct alignment with the African Union's Agenda 2063 the continent's long-term social and economic transformational blueprint for a prosperous continent. The re-orientation towards sustainable development of education in Africa requires strengthening and boosting the quality and the efficiency of human capacity development initiatives (education, training, community development and

public awareness programmes) to address governance efficacy and the relevance of education to development and poverty alleviation objectives. ESD has the potential to contribute significantly to the quality of educational programmes, and this contribution needs to be pro-actively explored in Africa (Wals and Kieft, 2010).

Begashaw (2020) observes that there are many weak links in the SDGs and not much has been done in changing mindsets; we are continuing to do new things the old way. Like in decades past, key stakeholders continue to work in silos, duplicating interventions with little coordination. Solely educating people for sustainability does not necessarily scrutinize dominant mechanistic paradigms anchored in the mindset of our society. Furthermore, it does not deeply explore what qualities the individual learner contributes to the learning experience, as this learning approach still reinforces the old, prescriptive, transmissive, teacher-centered learning model (Berner et Al 2013). One planet (2021) urges that ESD for 2030 could be achieved through a threefold approach to promote ESD as a key element of quality education and a key enabler of all 17 Sustainable Development Goals, with special attention to: individual transformation, societal transformation and technological advances. In other words, there has to be more attention to individuals and how they are transformed. Fundamental changes required for a sustainable future start with individuals and their change of behaviour, attitude and lifestyle, while the contextual factors and institutional support provide an enabling environment and can bulwark individual contributions. Wals and Kieft, (2010) suggests the kinds of capacities people need to develop in order to be able to contribute to sustainable development. The concept of 'sustainability competence' refers to those qualities people need to have to be able to act when confronted with a sustainability challenge. That is, competence to think in a forward-looking manner, to deal with uncertainty, and with predictions, expectations and plans for the future. Competence to work in an interdisciplinary manner. Competence to achieve open-minded perception, trans-cultural understanding and cooperation. Participatory competence. Planning and implementation competence. Ability to feel empathy, sympathy and solidarity. Competence to motivate oneself and others and competence to reflect in a distanced manner on individual and cultural concepts. These are also known as elements of *Gestaltungskompetenz* in the context of sustainability. In his article titled, 'Quality Education for Sustainable Development in Zimbabwean Higher Education Towards UNDP 2030 SDG' Shava (2020) observed that higher education needs to update its curricula, pedagogy, and educational resources to address the twenty-first-century challenges and achieve Agenda 2030 Global Goals.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study followed the qualitative constructivist-phenomenology philosophy. The constructivist philosophy values people's subjective interpretation and understanding of their experiences and circumstances while the phenomenology focuses on how people experience a particular phenomenon

(Vanderstoeps et al, 2009; Creswell, 2014). As a Technical Coordinator for the MoPSE-ZIMSEC technical team one of the researchers participated in the Assessment Framework all stakeholder workshops that took place between 2017 - 2020. The Refinement of the Assessment Framework for the Competence-Based Curriculum held in August, 2019 with 43 participants and Stakeholder Engagements on Assessment Framework held between February–March 2020, with 3 934 participants taking part. The stakeholders were purposively sampled for the workshops, of the 3 977 total participants 52 were MHTEISTD representatives including Universities Departments of Education. Prior to these two activities, universities were represented in the development of the school curriculum, syllabuses and other related activities. The researcher also attended two University of Zimbabwe Department of Teacher Education curriculum review workshops. Data was gathered using workshop discussions, presentations and document analysis as research instruments. The general procedure that the technical team followed to conduct the workshops was to; first of all present the contents of the draft Assessment Framework to the stakeholders, there after participants were given the opportunity to scrutinise issues as individuals or clusters, do specific activities and then present to the house. Finally, the technical team analysed data, produced reports and made necessary adjustments to the Assessment Framework document. In this study, inductive analysis was employed on data from the workshop outcomes, this was triangulated with analysis of the reports, Assessment Framework and related documents. This helped to achieve a richer understanding and insights on high stakes assessment changes and the implications on sustainable development goals at point of entry in higher education.

IV. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

ZIMSEC Assessment framework (2017)

In the first assessment draft, the former ZIMSEC executive director in his foreword noted that, MoPSE embarked on curriculum development that witnessed a marked departure from the curriculum that Zimbabwean learners experienced for the three and half decades. The former curriculum had, for years, been criticised for being too academic, allowing learners to exit the education system without practical, life and work or soft skills. The decision to develop a new curriculum framework was made in the context of the government's focus on preparing Zimbabwean learners for the needs of the 21st century, growing concerns among policy makers and key stakeholders regarding the relevance of the education system and the changes in global education standards. The remark focuses on the education for sustainable development and the desire and motivation to transform education in Zimbabwe. However, when the updated school curriculum was finally implemented in 2017, it was realized that there was no harmony between the syllabuses and the assessment framework. For instance, the perm-secretary circular on CA was in conflict with the development of CA tasks by ZIMSEC, instead teachers were supposed to develop and assess the learners' tasks in schools.

There was little or no coordination amongst all the stakeholders involved. As a result, the inaugural A-level graduates proceeded to higher education without this important aspect of assessment on their certificates.

Assessment Framework Refinement Workshop

At the workshop a university representative indicated the need to teach what is valued and to shift from content-based to competence-based. Knowledge, skill and attitude equals competence, the three must be underpinned by values of the assessment framework. Inquiry-based approach could be used these include problem solving methods, project based, learners and design based learning and guided discovery. Learners should be prepared for the world outside the classroom and teaching should start with a problem. Another presenter representing the Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries (CZI) emphasised that industry and schools should collaborate to produce a relevant worker. There should be constant review of the curriculum to meet current country and industry needs. There is a link between primary, secondary, tertiary education and industry. The industry requires the following competencies and should be reflected in the framework; emotional intelligence, digital skills, innovative mind, strategic thinking, ability to work in teams, multi-skilled individual, great oral and written communication skills, high level of honesty and integrity, embrace gender, flexibility, global skills, leadership qualities etc. The industry looks for hard and soft skills in the following; Category 1 - critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration. Category 2 - information literacy, media literacy, technology literacy and Category 3 - flexibility, leadership, initiative, productivity and social skills. Apparently, the two presentations highlighted the skills, competencies, knowledge and methods that continuous assessment had to be introduced to take care of. It is also clear that higher education and industry were in agreement with the direction in which transformative education in Zimbabwe was taking to achieve education for sustainable development goals. However, Shava (2020) lamented the absence of up-to-date curricula, pedagogy and educational resources to address the twenty-first-century challenges in teaching and learning in universities. This may suggest the ill preparedness on the part of higher education to receive the new student needs.

MoPSE-ZIMSEC Assessment Framework Stakeholder Consultation Workshops

Observation from the stakeholder engagement workshops, the assessment framework was generally accepted by the participants but they indicated the need for more rigorous and meaningful engagement with stakeholders before implementation. The Assessment framework was appreciated for presenting an opportunity for learners to identify and express their competencies. It was however evident that some participants at the point of stakeholder engagement were not familiar with the competence-based curriculum and assessment, while some teachers had not yet grasped the concept. The stakeholders confirmed the need for a pilot test

and a powerful teacher capacitation programme before the full roll out of the Assessment Framework. There was also a critical need to review school departmental policies and other Ministry policies to align with the Competence-Based Curriculum and Assessment demands (MoPSE, 2020). Therefore, there were a number of loose ends to tie up before the competence based curriculum was embraced fully by all stakeholders including higher education. This had implications on the achievement of set targets for agenda 2030 and resources thereof. This also implied that students were still joining higher education without the requisite skills and competencies being assessed.

Teacher Education Curriculum Review Workshops

The University of Zimbabwe department of Teacher Education initiated a plan to harmonize the education system in Zimbabwe through Teacher Education Curriculum Review. This came after a realisation that, MHTEISTD and MoPSE were in conflict, and hence a need to standardise application whereby educators and implementers work together. In this regard, MHTEISTD in 2015 set up a committee and produced a comprehensive report to this effect. Consequently, sub committees in research, assessment, in-service teacher education, languages and inclusive education were the set up in 2017 to scrutinize the recommendations and suggest how they were to be implemented. The communities had representatives from MHTEISTD, MoPSE, Universities, Technical, Vocational and Polytechnics. The work was to be consolidated in February 2018. This can be seen as an attempt to sync the two sister ministries for continuity in educational goals. However, the two ministries were yet to be harmonised in time to achieve sustainable development goals otherwise the 2030 agenda might not be achieved holistically. More so, activities in the different universities and other departments may not move at the same pace to achieve a common goal. Shava (2020) observed from the findings in the universities, that there are certain institutional specific factors related to the implementation of Agenda 2030. Such challenges include the lack of institutional ESD policies or strategies, and that institutions lack coordinated efforts that incorporate all faculties in an effort to ensure the implementation of ESD and the key challenges of resisting to change.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Drawn from the findings it can be concluded that;

- MHTEISTD and MoPSE were in agreement with the ESD policies, inputs, outcomes and direction in which education in Zimbabwe should take, both ministries introduced and adopted action plans for sustainable transformation of the education system.
- MHTEISTD and MoPSE have made strides in curriculum transformation since 2017 towards sustainable development goal 4.7 in form of Education 5.0 and CBC frameworks.

- The educational reforms in MHTEISTD and MoPSE are not the same but comparable and can complement each other in every aspect to achieve common results.
- MoPSE-ZIMSEC has not been able to fully implement CBC since its inception. Continuous assessment component is still outstanding as a result A-level graduates proceed to higher education without some competencies and skills being assessed.
- Some set targets for agenda 2030 may not be attainable due to a number of factors chief among them is lack of coordinated activities that incorporate all interested parties. Similarly, Tikly (2019) notes that if education is to play a genuinely transformative role then it cannot do this alone but must be linked to processes of wider structural change across each of these three domains of the economy, culture and polity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Drawn from the conclusions the following recommendations were made;

- There is need to propel coordinated approaches in transforming and implementing educational changes by MHTEISTD and MoPSE to meet the sustainable development goal 4.7 and other targets for agenda 2030.
- There is need for comprehensive and interconnected activities that incorporate all interested parties within MHTEISTD and MoPSE to fully implement Education 5.0 and CBC paradigms.
- MoPSE-ZIMSEC should move from rhetoric to a full-fledged implementation of the assessment framework so that A-Level graduates are not disadvantaged as they enter higher education.
- In the wake of the CBC, Higher Education has to position itself to receive the new student, create the basis for extended communication and cooperation between Higher Education and MoPSE-ZIMSEC, so that efforts made at lower level in preparing the student for the future are not in vein.

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