

Heritage-based education and what it means to private universities in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

The study on Heritage-based education and what it means to private universities in Zimbabwe was informed by the Transformative Continuity theory. A mixed methods approach was used to gather data from four lecturers in three private universities. An intense open-ended questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection from a convenient sample of lecturer-participants. Two research questions were formulated: How are private universities aligning themselves for value addition as local industry solution providers? What interventions can be implemented to ensure Zimbabwean private universities are capacitated to subscribe fully to Education 5.0? Thematic data analysis techniques were used and it was found that private universities are not aligning themselves for value addition as local industry solution providers. Private universities are fully aware of what is to be done as far as Heritage Based Education 5.0 is concerned, however, resources and lack of motivation impact negatively. Availability of resources, further awareness of the heritage-based education philosophy, and a futuristic culture bias towards technology are some of the interventions that can be put in place to ensure that Zimbabwean private universities are capacitated to subscribe fully to Education 5.0. As informed by the transformative continuity theoretical model as a lens to our study, we concluded that by applying Heritage Based Education, private universities have the potential for carrying out innovative research, leading to the production of goods and services; therefore, having the potential to transform Zimbabwe's disturbed economic system.

Keywords

Education 5.0, heritage, heritage education, heritage-based education, private university.

INTRODUCTION

Zimbabwe's education system has taken a major paradigm shift from a focus on 'speaking good English and caps and gowns' [to] 'heritage-based innovation for rapid socio-economic transformation' [1], for the country to achieve a middle-income economy by 2030. In order for Zimbabwe to realize this vision, the Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education (ZIMCHE)

recommended the establishment of institutional quality assurance standards, the development of curricula as well as the preparation and amendment of university charters and statutes to enhance Heritage-based Education 5.0. Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education Science and Technology Development (MHTESTD) [2] in response, observes that Education 5.0 is a bold



statement to the effect that Zimbabwe's modernization and industrialization champions must be the State Universities. Zimbabwe has 18 (eighteen) registered universities [3], and seven of these are private universities. For the purpose of this study, private universities are viewed as institutions of higher education including a university or university college that is not established by the state. A public or state institution will be understood in this study as an institution, including a university or university college, established by the State. This study focuses on Heritage based Education and what it means to private universities in Zimbabwe. The paper argues that the challenges of state and private universities cannot be the same in subscribing to Education 5.0 philosophy.

Background and context

Philosophy plays a critical role in shaping mindsets. In education, its applied or practical form concerns itself with the nature and aims of education and the philosophical problems arising from educational theory and practice [4]. Western educational philosophy has impacted theory and practice in education in Africa. In Zimbabwe, the 'curriculum reform journey is shaped by the weight of cultural technologies of domination employed in the country during British imperial rule (1890–1980) [5]. The inherited education curricula were theoretically and pedagogically disengaged from the lifeworlds of the learners they intended to educate [5]. 'The indigenous people were, as of necessity, mandated to adopt the supposedly superior colonial paradigm. By denying them a philosophy, the indigenous people of Zimbabwe were also considered as people without reason because reason is part of philosophy [6]. Given this background, education in Zimbabwe was reformed to rise from a pulverized existence to focus on heritage-based Education with a view to extricate learners from inferiority and galvanize them into self-determination.

The study would benefit from a conceptualization of heritage, heritage education and heritage-based education. University of Massachusetts Amherst [7] describes Heritage as the full range of our inherited traditions, monuments, objects, and culture. Most important, it is the range of contemporary activities, meanings, and behaviour that we draw from them. University of Massachusetts Amherst [7] also notes that Heritage includes, but is much

more than preserving, excavating, displaying, or restoring a collection of old things. It is both tangible and intangible, in the sense that ideas and memories—of songs, recipes, language, dances, and many other elements of who we are and how we identify ourselves—are as important as historical buildings and archaeological sites. The Oxford English Dictionary defines heritage as property that is or may be inherited, an inheritance of valued things such as historic buildings that have been passed down from previous generations and relating to things of historical or cultural value that are worthy of preservation.

Van Boxtel et al. [8] argues that heritage Education is a teaching approach based on cultural heritage, incorporating active educational methods, cross-curricular approaches and partnerships between professionals from the fields of education and culture, and employing the widest variety of methods of communication and expression that seek to raise young people's awareness of their cultural environment and the necessity of protecting it and to promote mutual understanding and tolerance. Heritage education refers to educational practices in which heritage is a primary instructional resource for teaching and learning with the aim to improve students' understanding of history and culture.

In the context of Zimbabwe, Heritage-based education is an educational philosophy that underpins Education 5.0. The insights that are drawn from an examination of heritage, heritage education and heritage-based education is that the inheritance that surrounds a nation, tangible or intangible, is critical for its development as it seeks to understand its identity and what it can do with this inheritance. This entails examining its problems, scrutinizing what nature and previous generations have bestowed on it and solving its problems for posterity in a sustainable way. In the process goods and services are produced.

Education 5.0 as a design focuses on the modernization and industrialization of Zimbabwe through education, science and technology to achieve vision 2030 of Zimbabwe being a middle-income economy through the delivery of goods and services. Innovation Hubs, technology and industrial parks were viewed as requisite infrastructure for the pursuance of Education 5.0. The Education 5.0 design seeks to impart knowledge which is suitable for the exploitation of locally available resources. It entails that graduates should be equipped with skills

acquisition that empowers them to become innovative towards societal development through transformative science and technology application that delivers goods and services. This entails structuring the higher and tertiary education sector to deliver university and college training institutions focused on five missions that are teaching, research, community services, innovation and industrialization.

Review of related literature

Heritage-based Education has attracted the attention of Bhurekeni [5], Nhamo and Katsamudanga [9], Muzira and Bondai [10], Chirume [11], Wuta [12], Munikwa and Mapara [13]. The focus of the studies varies and none has focused on Heritage based Education and what it means to private universities in Zimbabwe. For Chirume [11], the focus of the research is on the practical aspects of linking heritage, in particular, archaeological heritage, with both individual and community economic development. Though the research is not situated in the field of education, what is interesting in the study is the growing realization that culture, inclusive of cultural heritage, can be both a driver and an enabler of economic development, especially in developing countries. This realization cannot be operationalized outside an educational philosophical trajectory that speaks to it.

Focusing on primary education, Bhurekeni [5] traces the curriculum reform journey and observes that curricula were theoretically and pedagogically disengaged from the lifeworlds of the learners they intended to educate arguing that curricula debased and negated the values of colonial people that undermined their ways of thinking. Primary education plays a complementary role to secondary and tertiary education and this study focuses on higher education particularly private universities and their role in correcting the eschewed colonial education. Muzira and Bondai [10] explore educators' perceptions towards the adoption of Education 5.0. They observe that for curriculum reform to take effect, there is a need for buy-in from educators. Their findings are that Education 5.0 is an improvement from Education 3.0 (teaching, research and community service).

The buy-in is there but the achievement of Education 5.0 is constrained by a lack of infrastructure and financial resources for proper implementation. Unfortunately, the study excludes private universities which are a key

component of higher education in Zimbabwe and focuses on state universities. The history of education in Zimbabwe cannot be complete without reference to private institutions right from primary to tertiary education. Zvobgo [14] reports of evangelisation of Africans from 1890 to 1939 in his book "A History of Christian Missions in Zimbabwe, 1890-1939." The development of private institutions, particularly primary and secondary schools in the form of missionary schools dates back to this time. The current Zimbabwean education landscape has not changed and there is a proliferation of private primary and secondary schools that are associated with evangelisation missions. Private universities which are the focus of this study have risen to seven. Insight into the development of private institutions in Zimbabwe is gained from Mhandu and Dambudzo [15] as encapsulated in Table 1.

Most private universities in Zimbabwe fall into the religious type category and regulated by ZIMCHE but do not receive public subsidies.

Wuta [12] explores the extendibility of the Education 5.0 concept to Zimbabwe's Secondary School System as encapsulated in Curriculum Framework 2015-2022. Wuta [12] argues that Education 5.0 seems germane to higher education and the nexus between it and education in the secondary school sector is characterized by taciturnity. Considering the fact that higher education products are also absorbed by the secondary education school system, it would be interesting to establish how heritage-based education as encapsulated in Education 5.0 is being translated. Chirume [11] situates Education 5.0 in the context of sustainable professional development of primary school Mathematics teachers. The training of teachers is the obligation of higher education and private universities in Zimbabwe contribute immensely to this mandate. Teachers who are being trained at Zimbabwe's colleges and universities will be required to acquire skills and knowledge to produce goods, services and ideas and also to impart such knowledge and skills to their learners [11]. It would be interesting to establish how private universities through quality assurance standards, the development of curricula as well as the preparation and amendment of university charters and statutes enhance Heritage-based Education 5.0.

It is against this background that this study focuses on Heritage based Education and what it

means to private universities in Zimbabwe. We argue in this paper that the challenges of state and private universities cannot be the same in subscribing to the Education 5.0 philosophy.

Table 1 provides a classification of private colleges or universities to help differentiate private universities from state or public universities.

Table 1. Classification of private colleges

Type	Origin	Context
Community	The majority emerged when communities wished to complement insufficient provision of public education, while some developed from missionary institutions.	These colleges are normally registered by public authorities. They are regulated under public legislation and receiving public subsidies.
Religious	Developed for historical reasons, often appearing before the arrival of public education.	These colleges are normally registered by public authorities. They are also regulated under public legislation and receiving public subsidies.
Spontaneous	Arose in specific learning conditions to meet particular demands of the rural and urban poor.	Normally not approved or registered and they do not receive public funding. Funds accrued from minimal fees levied by the community.
Profit Making	Arose as a result of diversification /unmet rising demand for education. Usually, but not always, urban based and serving the middle and upper class in society. Volume of the fee payment varies considerably from class to class.	Conformity to registration process varies. The well-established colleges are the most likely enterprises for adherence to the system. The less established evade rules and regulations set by state authorities.

In exploring this phenomenon, we stand guided by the following theoretical framework that acts as a lens through which we draw meaning to the findings of our study.

Theoretical framework: Transformative continuity

This study is informed by transformative continuity. Seecamp and Jo [16] explain that transformative continuity is a seldom used, but apt, concept within the heritage field, emerging out of historical-ethnographic studies of indigenous social structures and cosmologies in relation to the relative dynamism and power of interacting local and global forces. Seecamp and Jo [16] conceptualize transformative continuity as the ability to carry forth aspects of cultural landscapes—in particular, tangible and intangible heritage, cultural values and relationships to places, and societal benefits—regardless of whether or not they are restored through persistent adaptation or if they are rearranged through anticipatory or autonomous adaptation into new cultural landscapes following disturbances. They provide a model (Figure 1) that focuses on the following concepts, discovering a future system from reflecting on the

disturbed system to achieve an intact system through the process of reflection leading to persistent, anticipatory and autonomous adaptations.

This study benefits from an adaptation of transformative continuity, moving away from just a focus on heritage sites for a holistic focus on the tangible and intangible heritage that include flora and fauna, water, minerals and human resources. As earlier stated, heritage is ‘the full range of our inherited traditions, monuments, objects, and culture’. Most important, it is the range of contemporary activities, meanings, and behaviours that we draw from them [7]. In the context of Zimbabwe, Heritage based Education, therefore, comes as a contemporary activity, meaning and behaviour that draws from its tangible and intangible resources as it is conceptualised and translated into Education 5.0. The key elements of transformative continuity are: Discovering our heritage; remembering our lived experiences on it; enabling ongoing reflection. As a learning theory, transformational individuals interpret and reinterpret their experiences to make meaning beyond just simple knowledge acquisition that guides future action [17]. When explicitly

engaged in heritage planning and decision making, communities can interpret and reinterpret their resilience, while focusing on their values, cultural traditions, assets, and capabilities through facilitated reflection [16]. As such, transformative continuity can be an ongoing process of remembering and discovering

that can promote any type of adaptation (i.e., persistent, anticipatory, or autonomous). Approaching our heritage from this perspective would create opportunities for economic transformation through the production of goods and services as guided by Education 5.0.

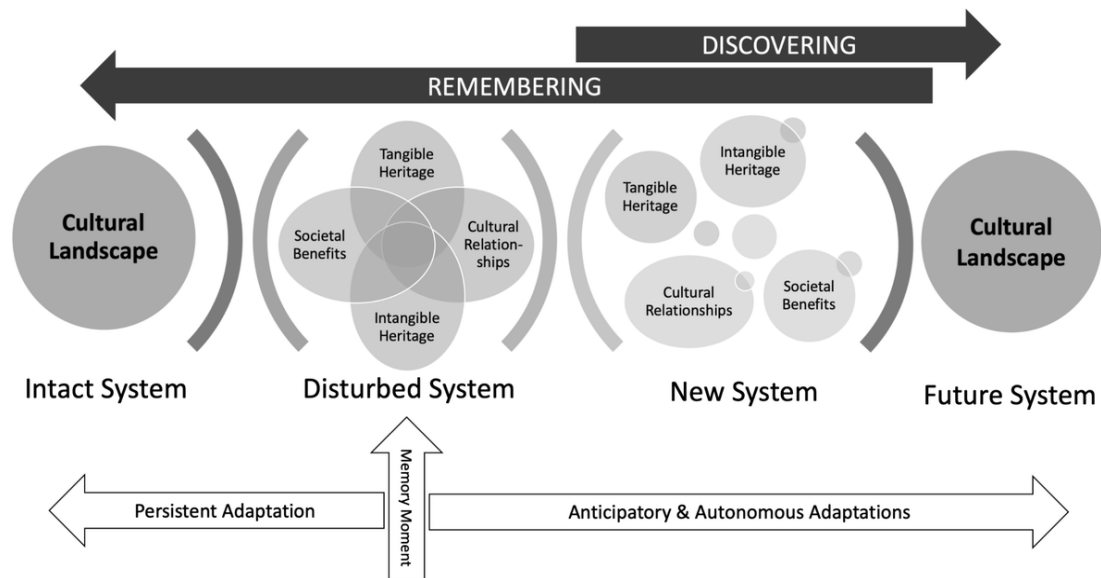


Figure 1.1 Transformative continuity [16]

Context and research questions

Zimbabwe's heritage, tangible or intangible, is fundamental to its sustainability. Driven by Education 5.0, an educational framework underpinned by Heritage based Education, Zimbabwe sought to harness its heritage to produce goods and services for it to have a middle-income economy by 2030 through Education 5.0 subscribed universities focusing on five pillars of education involving, teaching, research, community service, innovation and industrialization. Zimbabwe has eleven state universities and seven private universities. ZIMCHE, as a regulatory board, is mandated to guide higher education in Zimbabwe. MHETESTD [2] point out that [i] 'the immediate must-do for our committed Education 5.0 subscribed state universities is adopting and nurturing a job-creator (JCR) mode mindset, [ii] immediately operate in the industry solutions provider (ISP) mode, [iii] demand participation of their councils in dictating funding and incentives approaches, [iv] state University Councils must dictate key performance indicators. For Private universities, this is also a call to action for them to remain relevant. A literature search indicated a dearth of research on

Heritage based Education as it relates to private universities. It is the purpose of this study to establish: a) the nature of institutional quality assurance standards, b) the development of curricula that subscribes to the Education 5.0 philosophy as well as the preparation and amendment of private university charters and statutes to enhance Heritage-based Education. In an attempt to explore this study, two research questions stated below will be answered. That is: (RQ1) How are private universities aligning themselves for value addition as local industry solution providers?; (RQ2) What interventions can be implemented to ensure Zimbabwean private universities are capacitated to subscribe fully to Education 5.0?

RESEARCH METHOD

In this study, we chose to use a mixed methods approach, whereby data was both collected and analysed quantitatively and qualitatively in order to answer our two research questions, drawing on the participants lived experiences [18]. This mixed-methods study used a google form questionnaire to explore Heritage-Based Education in Zimbabwean private universities.

Quantitative data from multiple-choice, scale, and demographic questions were statistically analyzed to quantify participant profiles, experiences, and their general perceptions. Qualitative data from open-ended questions were thematically analyzed to provide rich, narrative insights into understandings, opportunities, challenges, and proposed interventions. The integration of both data types allowed for triangulation; the quantitative results identified dominant trends, while the qualitative responses explained the underlying reasons, ensuring a strong and nuanced understanding of Heritage-Based Education implementation. We skewed towards a qualitative approach within the interpretive paradigm and a multiple case study design of seven-private universities in Zimbabwe.

We decided to use this mixed method approach to understand Heritage Based Education and what it means to the case of private universities in Zimbabwe. Creswell [19] states that case study design is a powerful instrument which provides for an in-depth investigation of a phenomenon. We used a multiple-site case study design which enabled us to capture rich descriptive data on Heritage based Education and what it means to private universities in Zimbabwe.

Given that the interpretive paradigm assumes that reality is constructed inter-subjectively through the meanings and understandings developed socially and experientially [20], we therefore, chose one of the instruments, which could involve participants in making their voices heard [21].

Among several methods applicable, we selected a google forms questionnaire, requiring participants to freely complete it online, explaining their views robustly, and representing their thoughts through intense and deep explanations [22]. A Google forms questionnaire is a method in which people are able to express their feelings and their thoughts about an issue in a relaxed atmosphere [23]. In our case, it is a

small group of participants conveniently selected that we emailed the questionnaire in order to generate data [24]. Google forms have the advantage that participants freely contribute their ideas in a non-threatening environment. The participants are selected based on the fact that they have something in common in relation to the topic, hence, their interpretations of the topic would be both deep and contextual [23].

Every participant has his/her own understanding and interpretation of heritage-based education as applied in a private university. In the google forms questionnaire which is open-ended, the participants conveyed their understanding of the phenomenon and so large amounts of data could be generated within a short period of time [23]. In light of the foregoing, we found google forms open-ended questionnaire an ideal method of data generation for the two research questions.

Participants in context

The study was conveniently carried out in three private universities. We worked with a small sample [19] of 20 academics whom we conveniently selected from initially six private universities out of seven (85, 7%) and a detailed google structured questionnaire was emailed to them via a created link. After about 5 reminders over a period of 2 months we only got 4 responses, from all the 6 universities. Two responses, one male and one female were from University X. Two more lecturers, one male and one female, were from two different private universities. Table 2 shows demographic details of participants. We were left with no option save to analyse the views of the four participants, two were from one university. All the four were senior academics by virtue of being PhD holders, other two being departmental chairpersons, all with experiences in private universities ranging from 3 to 15 years. By virtue of long service experiences in years, and being doctorate holders, the information supplied is deemed reliable and valid hence we can depend on it as trustworthy.

Table 2. Participants demography (N=4).

Participant	Pseudonym of University	Gender	Position	Faculty	Years in a Private university	Highest Qualification
4	X	F	Chairperson	Law	15	PhD
3	X	M	Lecturer	Education	6	PhD
2	Y	F	Lecturer	Education	3	PhD
1	Z	M	Chairperson	B/Studies	10	PhD

Data presentation and analysis

Our sample does not profess to be representative and does not enable the generalization of results beyond the selected participants and their context [19], [20], but it did enable gaining insight into the study focusing on Heritage based Education and what it means to private universities in Zimbabwe. The quantitative data shows a small sample of senior academics from three private universities. All the four participants (N=4) hold PhDs, showing a high level of academic expertise, which gives weight to their qualitative responses on the complex concept of Heritage based Education. The sample comprises two Chairpersons and two Lecturers, offering potential perspectives from both a leadership and an implementation level. Gender representation is balanced (50% Male, 50% Female). The participants possess extensive work experience, with years in private universities ranging from 3 to 15 (Mean=8.5 years), suggesting their insights are informed by sustained exposure to the institutional environment. This sample of highly qualified, experienced staff is precisely the cohort whose understanding and buy-in are critical for successfully implementing Heritage-Based Education. Their quantitative profile establishes them as knowledgeable key informants, meaning their subsequent qualitative data on challenges and opportunities likely reflects deep institutional insight rather than shallow opinion.

A first layer of analysis was done by the participants themselves, through their explanations to the questions posed. We then did a thematic analysis of the explanations as group data, followed by re-contextualizing data in the existing literature and making meaning of the findings in terms of the theoretical framework.

In carrying out thematic analysis, we drew on Braun and Clarke [25]. Six steps of thematic analysis were employed, which are: immersion in the data, generating initial codes and categories, searching for sub-themes, reviewing sub-themes, defining and naming sub-themes, and finally presentation of the sub-themes and the themes [25].

Trustworthiness and ethics

In this study, data were generated through questionnaires. Inasmuch as this data source lacked robust triangulation, it allowed us to review all of the data, made sense of it and organised it into categories or sub-themes significantly increasing accuracy and

trustworthiness. Braun and Clarke [25] assert that producing multi-modal transcripts may also lead researchers to feel that their data has been credibly and clearly mapped, with the component pieces all thoroughly accounted for.

Trustworthiness was ensured by drawing on four major constructs, which are: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability [26]. We constantly reflected and reframed our thinking to minimize our bias. Additionally, participants completed the online google forms in the comfort of their homes or offices, which enabled deep engagement with the data [19]. We were committed to working ethically with the participants from the outset of the study, as we initially sought their informed consent to participate and also in how we represented their work.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Participants were aware of what Heritage Based Education entails. Participant 4, a female lecturer of 15 years working experience in a private university, and a chairperson of a department opines that *“Heritage Based Education is informed by historical experiences and culture of a country.”*

In addition, participant 1, said:

Heritage Based Education is the development and implementation of a curriculum that embraces both the local / traditional culture and the current global / digital culture.

In his submission, participant 3, a male lecturer in the Faculty of Education, echoed a statement almost similar to that of participant 4, when he said *“Heritage Based Education has to do with teaching and learning about a people’s culture and heritage.”*

To sum up the understandings of what Heritage Based Education is, participant 2 had a fairly long exposition when she said,

Heritage Based Education is an education system that is informed by the maximum exploitation of locally available resources and the use of our indigenous knowledge systems. As a country we turn inward and rely on what we have to grow our economy to competitive levels.

Of the four participants, the chairpersons of departments, participants 4 and 1, had at sometime attended and participated in different workshops on Heritage Based Education. In her explanation, participant 4 asserted that,

Workshops helped to inform us more about what is Heritage Based Education and understand what it involves.

Participant 1 indicated,

Workshops exposed me to diverse ideas about how local resources can be harnessed to grow the economy of Zimbabwe using our own indigenous knowledge.

The study focused on attempting to answer two research questions that say: (1) How are private universities aligning themselves for value addition as local industry solution providers?; (2) What interventions can be put in place to ensure Zimbabwean private universities are capacitated to subscribe fully to Education 5.0?

We analysed our intensive structured questionnaire as informed by Braun and Clarke's [25] thematic approach. Two a priori themes were constructed as follows.

Theme 1: Private universities' alignment for value addition

Turning to theme 1 that says; Private universities' alignment for value addition as local industry solution providers, two subthemes were drawn, Performance Contracts and Opportunities to modernize local industries as a result of heritage-based education 5.0.

Each of the sub-themes had its own categories. We decided to dwell more on the subthemes than categories for our narration and discussion.

Subtheme 1: Performance Contracts

All four participants indicated that every year they complete performance contracts (p.c.) forms created by their universities. In these forms, participants have to indicate what they intend to do in any of the current years.

Participant 3 argued that:

It is within my performance contract that I have to align my work with what I want to achieve, whether it could be research, teaching, innovation and industrial linkages.

Participant 4 asserted that,

When I got employed, I signed a contract that clearly laid out my job description and at the end of every year, I am expected to submit a report about my performance, but achieving the goals of Heritage Based Education is not directly part of my contract.

Participants 1 and 2 made references to the P.C. but did not ever refer to Heritage Based Education 5.0. Despite the fact that P.Cs are meant to indicate the year's objectives and work to be done or achieved by employees, in our case lecturers, it seems that the lecturers are not including any reference to Heritage Based Education, which is an indicator of a 5.0 compliant lecturer. This corroborated the findings by Muzira and Bondai [10] in their study in which they explored educators' perceptions towards the adoption of Education 5.0, they observed that despite knowing what education 5.0 entails, there is very little practice. Heritage-based education has attracted the attention of Bhurekeni [5], Nhamo and Katsamubanga [9], Munikwa and Mapara [13]. The focus of the studies varies and none has focused on Heritage based Education in private universities in Zimbabwe. In this study, we observe that not much emphasis on Heritage Based Education is done during the completion of yearly p.cs which should be key indicators in the realization of teaching, researching, university service, innovation and industrialization which are the 5 pillars of Heritage Based Education philosophy. If p.cs. are silent, that implies, little or no reference will be done to Heritage Based Education 5.0. There will be very little in terms of discovering, remembering, reflecting of our heritage and there will be constrained adaptation whether persistent, anticipatory, or autonomous as encapsulated in the transformative continuity theory. Given this scenario our hope for achieving a middle income economy will not be achieved through our education system.

Subtheme 2: Opportunities to modernize local industries

Participant 3 had this to say:

From my experience, the institution did not do much to support Heritage Based Education. They encourage the adoption of the concept by offering programmes that

embrace Heritage Based Education. A museum is being constructed to display all cultural artifacts. This is an opportunity to capitalise on the research on Heritage Based Education and we modernize our local industries.

Participant 3 went on to say:

Our university has teamed up with outside (name of university withheld for confidentiality) universities and done exchange visits where students learn what our universities have exploited from their local knowledge to advance their economies.

Participant 1 argued that

Heritage Based Education has created opportunities for private universities to grow the socio economic needs of the country, however they are less inclined to embrace a holistic Heritage Based Education on account of the fact that they are not bound by rules and procedures that go with public universities.

Participant 2 said

Nothing much has been done by my university to provide solutions facing local industries in order to add value to the local industry.

She went on to say,

There is just talk with nothing tangible on the ground. At one time, a MOU was signed with (name supplied) but nothing materialized, but there was a big opportunity that had arisen when the MOU was signed. It was the best opportunity to align our module outlines to heritage based education and consider the local heritage versus demands of our industry.

Participant 4 opined,

Needs assessments have been done with nearby industries. Students on industrial attachment have always brought back knowledge about the industries and provided their own recommendations which have informed the material content for existing

and possible new university programs linking with modernizing our local industries.

Although Heritage-Based Education 5.0 is an opportunity linked to the growth of the economy as we gear for Vision 2030, it seems private universities refer to Heritage-Based Education at the macro level but operationalization by lecturers at the micro level seems a non-event.

Furthermore, private universities have their own peculiarities in the sense that their values come first before all else. Church institutions that are externally controlled tend to follow their own ethos, and religious practices with little attention to that which is externally thrust upon them. To confirm this, Mhandu and Dambudzo [15] argue that aspects of the culture, heritage and national history of Zimbabwe were not being taught in private colleges. ZIMCHE being the regulatory authority has to enforce all its objectives impartially between public and private universities. This is an opportune moment for private universities to fully embrace and link the concept of Heritage-Based Education 5.0 to human capital development and national economic growth. In corroboration, Nhamo and Katsamudanga [9], argue that the focus of the research should be on the practical aspects of linking Heritage, in particular archeological heritage, with both individual and community economic development. We therefore, applaud the private universities that are constructing museums within their institutions. It is the time and opportunity for educators in private universities to fully buy in and reform their curricula to Heritage Based Education 5.0.

Theme 2: Interventions to capacitate universities

Under this a priori theme, two sub themes emerged. Subtheme 1 (Resource management and Lecturer “fatigue”) and Subtheme 2 (The History, Culture and the Futures).

Subtheme 1: Resource Management and Lecturer “fatigue”

All the participants pointed to lack of adequate resource support from the government as the main challenge faced by Zimbabwe private universities in implementing Heritage Based Education. However participants somehow forgot that private universities have their own individual charters that speak to the concept of self-supporting and self-sustaining modes, hence,

the government does not strive to fund public universities.

As a solution to the resource-based challenge, participant 2 contended that private universities are to look for partners worldwide for financial support for the implementation of Heritage Based Education, through the construction of Incubation Hubs like what is happening in State Universities. Such a view is noted as noble. Where and when a private university is facing financial challenges, it has to find other noble means of sustaining all its programmes, for instance, donor funding.

Participant 4 argued that

Lecturers seem resistant to change from education 3.0 to 5.0 because of extra work loads and low remunerations. Research Board funds are in some cases not available or are very little hence to achieve education 5.0 is an uphill task. There is little motivation amongst lecturers to research and publish because they are hungry.

From participant 4, it seems lecturers are fatigued and not motivated due to a lack of appropriate remuneration. Education 5.0 seems additional work to the already existing education 3.0. Similarly, Muzira and Bondai [10] explored educators' perceptions towards the adoption of Education 5.0. Their study did not include private universities. They found out that for curriculum reform to take effect, there is a need for buy-in from educators. Muzira and Bondai [10] went on to argue that, in some cases, the buy-in is there, but the achievement of Education 5.0 is constrained by a lack of infrastructure and financial resources for proper implementation. Based on these findings, which are quantitatively difficult to generalize, thinly point to an atmosphere of low morale for research and article writing, worse still innovative and industrialized based forms of research among lecturers hence low in buying in of Heritage Based Education 5.0.

Subtheme 2: The History, the Culture and the Futures

Participant 4 argued that

One of the intervention strategies that can be put in place to ensure Zimbabwe private universities are fully subscribed to Heritage Based Education is promotion of workshops,

conferences and seminars for awareness and encouragement of implementation of the philosophy.

According to participant 4, it seems there is not much work taking place in private universities with reference to implementation of Heritage Based Education 5.0.

Separately and independently, participant 3 is quoted saying, "*ZIMCHE must spearhead the process.*"

By inference, he asserts the need for the regulatory authority to bring on Board private universities to fully subscribe to Heritage Based Education. ZIMCHE seems to have put a thrust of implementation onto State Universities only [2], hopefully with justified reasons. Participant 1 also echoes the same view when he said, "*As an intervention, exchange programs for lecturers in private and public universities is necessary.*"

This could be achieved through contact and sabbatical visits.

Participant 2 had a different but slightly new line of vision as an intervention strategy that is what could be put in place to ensure Zimbabwe private universities fully subscribe to Heritage Based Education. She argued about the future of industries in relation to current programmes drawing from Heritage Based Education 5.0. She said, "*We can use history, our culture and shape our future. From the knowledge of our history, we can build our future.*"

Heritage is a full range of our inherited traditions, monuments, objects and culture [7]. It includes, much more than preserving, excavating, displaying or restoring a collection of things, it is both tangible and intangible, in the sense, that ideas and memories—of songs, recipes, language, dances, and many other elements of who we are and how we identify ourselves—are as important as historical buildings and archeological sites [7].

In building up on this observation by participant 2, what we draw from our history, our present culture can point us into the future. Van Bostel et al. [8] argue that Heritage Based Education is a teaching approach based on cultural heritage, in cooperating active educational methods. We argue that various methods across university curricula can be used, focusing on our environments. Zimbabwe is endowed with rich natural resources, flora and fauna, water, minerals and human capital. This heritage is much more than preserving it or passing it to our

future generations but using it as Heritage-based innovation for the socioeconomic transformation of our nation. The underlying principle is an educational science and technology system that produces goods and services useful to the heritage-based economy.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study, framed within the context of Heritage-based Education 5.0 and guided by the transformative continuity theory, examined the critical role of private universities in Zimbabwe. The theory illuminates the nation's disturbed economic system, characterized by the export of raw minerals, the importation of food, a demise in technological capacity, and a stark lack of beneficiation. It is within this challenging landscape that private universities are called to play a vital restorative and complementary role to public institutions. The research finds that the alignment of private universities for value addition as local industry solution providers is

currently on a slow trajectory. However, their potential is significant. To fully capacitate them to subscribe to Education 5.0, multi-faceted intervention strategies is required. First, there is an urgent need for the creation and enforcement of strong institutional quality standards. Second, the curriculum must be radically reformed towards an artefactual design and futures model, moving beyond theory to the actual production of goods and services that transform the economy. Ultimately, the path forward hinges on the concept of autonomous adaptation. Private universities must embrace their capacity for anticipatory learning and discovery, leveraging their agility to foster transformational learning. This involves a continuous process of reflection—or remembering of lived experiences and a reconnection to Zimbabwe's natural and cultural heritage. By doing so, they can become epicenters of innovation and industrialization, fulfilling their destiny as key drivers of a sustainable, heritage-based economic future.

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