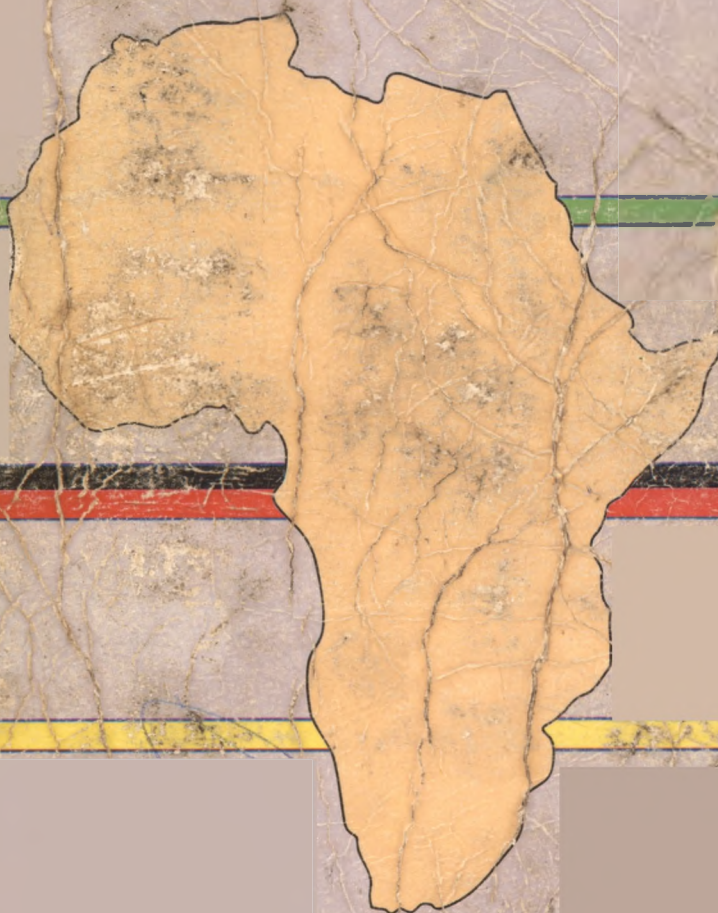


The Human Factor Approach to Development in Africa



Edited by

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The Human Factor and Education Content in Zimbabwe

Ignatius Chombo

Introduction

Human Factor, as defined in Chapters One and Two of this volume, plays a key role in Zimbabwe and other developing countries. It is crucial in order to meet national requirements for socio-economic and political progress. The goal of education is to produce a Human Factor (HF) content which is appropriately developed, committed, patriotic and has a thorough understanding of Zimbabwe's socio-economic and political goals. The new socio-economic order that is characterized by globalization, demands that the education system inculcates an entrepreneurial and enterprising spirit in the students, for them to play a useful and meaningful role in the development process. Only an efficient and effective HF can competitively develop a country now and in the next century.

We face many issues and constraints which challenge us to provide suitable HF content in education. Immediate concerns arising from our socio-economic context, past education and training policies and the need to be competitive are: access, quality, relevance, equity, gender, retention of lecturers, management, equipment, financing of education and training, cost effectiveness and sustenance of an efficient education system from pre-school to university.

The challenges we face as a nation are to define and determine the kind of skills and HF the nation needs in our process of education and training, right through life. Today, Zimbabwe and other African countries face multi-dimensional problems of scarcity, redundancy, surplus and having to employ newly introduced skills. We also face the challenge of assessing performance in terms of relevance, suitability, effectiveness and efficiency of the HF product from our education system, in the light of the social and economic problems we face. We also have challenges related to social vices such as violence, corruption, fraud, decadence, drunkenness and laziness. Many African countries have regressed instead of progressing because of their neglect to develop an appropriate HF centred education with checks and balances to guard against socio-economic and political decay.

At the same time, we face the challenge of making our institutions work effectively and achieve the goals of our education system. For us to accomplish such goals, we need to know the kind of society we want to live in. If we know what is good for us and benefits us most, then we can strive towards that goal. The challenge before us is, therefore, to develop relevant and suitable content and a methodology of education that have the desired impact on the development of the HF we want in Zimbabwe and other African countries.

Importance of HF development in education

A nation's greatest resource is its people, because people are the sole activating resource. This makes the HF an essential and critical resource in development and the successful implementation and sustenance of any given programme. In that regard, the unique personality characteristics embodied in the human being are necessary and crucial for accomplishing development tasks and national goals and objectives. Adjibolosoo is right when he says:

The HF is the spectrum of personality characteristics and other dimensions of human performance that enable social, economic, and political institutions to function, and remain functional, over time [1995:4].

It is clear that the HF is not isolated. It operates within the context of a nation's social, economic and political goals. A well equipped, committed and conscious HF, can work to achieve the goals set. The country's institutions have to strive to define, enshrine, produce and re-produce the HF that can enhance the achievement of social, economic and political objectives. Among the theories, issues, opinions and decisions propounded by economists, politicians, lawyers and other intellectuals, the HF is fundamental.

The Ministries of Primary, Secondary and Higher Education in Zimbabwe need to aim for HF development and training through the development, implementation and administration of effective policies, provision of resources and supervision of institutions, to meet the manpower needs of the country.

To develop a system of education with an appropriate HF content is the starting point to economic development. Committed individuals who adhere to the highest standards of professional integrity are crucial in all aspects of national development. Our educational institutions need to provide excellent services, appreciate diversity and differences in individual needs, to achieve national goals. Government together with many other non-governmental organizations have, since independence, expanded access to basic primary and secondary education, with the concomitant expansion of tertiary education. But, something went wrong in the process. The HF was neglected in the educational content. The curriculum content of education had not been reviewed with a view to adapting the content of education to the socio-economic and political goals while, at the same time, maintaining high standards in terms of quality and quantity of education.

Undoubtedly, a nation's appropriately developed HF is its back bone. The peoples choices, attitudes, decisions and commitment are major contributing factors in developmental processes. No amount of capital, technology and other resources by themselves, can surpass the central and important role the HF plays in development. It is, therefore, crucial for any country to recognize the importance of having a well balanced and developed HF. Zimbabwe needs an appropriately skilled and well-disciplined labour force that has achieved the required human qualities and characteristics critical for articulating a national vision. We need the HF that has the capacity to think, initiate, plan, organize, lead, manage and effectively control change, and take active instrumental roles in national development.

An appropriately developed HF can successfully foster, advance and champion social progress, industrial expansion, economic growth and development, gender balance, environmental upkeep and effective leadership.

In other words, people are indeed the engine of growth and the undergirding factor of economic development. There is no amount of rhetoric about development and indigenization that can succeed without an appropriately developed HF with the ability to understand things correctly, clearly and quickly. An appropriately developed HF that is well prepared will be equipped to develop, plan, organize and manage relevant organizations, institutions and other sectors of the economy. The nation, indeed, needs the HF that is creative, inventive, innovative, responsible, resourceful, diligent, trustworthy, accountable, problem solving, tactical and strategic.

Does this mean that Zimbabwe and other African countries do not have an appropriately developed HF? Have those countries that have developed or have a high rate of economic growth and development had a well developed HF? If we can answer these questions, then we can suggest what is good for Zimbabwe and other African countries.

Our society requires to set specific goals well programmed to achieve the nation's economic development tasks. Internal or external forces can obstruct and impede the nation's development path but if people are united, committed, determined and have the will to work and fight towards those cherished goals of social, economic, political and intellectual development, they can always achieve their national envisioned goals. It is the patriotic spirit that characterized Zimbabwe during the liberation struggle against colonial settler domination, oppression and exploitation, that led to Zimbabwe's independence in 1980. The nation's leaders in the liberation struggle were strong and had vision to initiate, mobilize, train others and maintain discipline. The same spirit can guide independent Zimbabwe along the path of successful economic liberation and economic empowerment of the majority of our indigenous people.

The colonial education system

The colonial education system was based on racial discrimination in terms of access, progress, financing and curriculum. The curriculum in schools for whites was diversified and of high quality. It suited the needs of white children and their white supremacist economy. In African schools, the curriculum was neglected. It alienated them from the socio-economic environment. It gave them an education whose content was geared for menial jobs and to be subservient to the white man. The racial bias and segregation accounts for the continuing limited and marginal investment in African education and bottlenecks for African development. About 25 per cent of black children never attended school. Over 60 per cent did not complete full primary education. Only 4 per cent could manage to complete four years of secondary education (Riddell, 1979). As a result, the majority of the African population had no access to (or received limited) education. It meant that the skilled jobs were for whites. Racism reflected itself in all sectors of the economy. The Apprenticeship Training System took the majority of whites. Low levels of apprentices were deliberately designed to create artificial shortage of skilled African. Neglect of technical training and acquisition of

manual skills were reflected by heavy reliance on white immigration, which still has a bearing on problems of skill shortages in strategic sectors of the economy today.

In the colonial era, legislation was used as an instrument to control the access of blacks to education through racial segregation and discriminatory laws. Some of the laws were, The Land Apportionment Act of 1930; The Land Husbandry Act of 1951 and; The Land Tenure Act of 1966. These pieces of legislation divided the country along racial lines, thus reducing black people to second class citizens.

The new education system

After independence in 1980, the new nation made changes in the education system to reflect political changes and the new circumstances. Education became a vehicle for social change. Racial education was replaced by unitary multiracial education. Many schools were built and government encouraged private organizations to construct schools to ensure accessibility to children of all races and classes and to improve physical infrastructure.

Every school was to have Responsible Authorities (RAs). These were legal bodies which included governmental and quasi-governmental, private business, non-business and individuals under whose support the school was to be opened and registered. The state and local government authorities such as district trusts, business people and farmers were responsible for putting up school infrastructures and maintaining them. At independence, the state maintained only the schools which were its own. The construction of new schools, expansion and maintenance of existing ones, were no more its responsibility.

In 1996, the national number of schools stood at 6,200 of which, 7,4 per cent were government owned, and 92,6 per cent were private (Fig. 1). There were 4 633 primary schools; 266 government-owned and 4 367 private. Out of the 1 535 secondary schools, 193 were government-owned and 1 342 private (Ministry of Education: Statistics Unit, 1996).

The private sector was to play a major role in ensuring increased access to education and improved infrastructure. The rationale behind this increase was the realization of the role education played in development, which should, of necessity, have included a strong component of the HF content for training patriotism, commitment and national vision in our youths.

Formal education in Zimbabwe consisted of four levels:

- Stage 1: Pre-school,
- Stage 2: Primary: Grades 1-7 in seven years.
- Stage 3: Secondary: four years (Ordinary Level) secondary education and two years (Advanced level) secondary education,
- Stage 4: Tertiary: Teachers' Colleges, Vocational Training centers and Polytechnic Colleges and Universities.

The majority of the secondary schools offered academic subjects. But there were about 90 schools offering vocational National Foundation courses (NFC). Those who completed Ordinary level could either proceed to Advanced level or enter into teacher or technical training or join the world of work (Ministry of Education, 1996).

Primary and secondary education was administered by the Ministry of Education while tertiary education was administered by the Ministry of Higher Education.

The new Zimbabwe education system reflected new thinking. Important aspects and changes reflected and effected in the new educational policies included free and compulsory education at primary school level (1980-1990); access to education for every citizen, abolition of discrimination on the basis of race; colour, and/or religion. Education became a basic human right for all citizens.

Expansion in the education system

At independence in 1980, the education system had to expand its capacity to accommodate substantially large numbers of people who were of school-going age. Table shows the school enrolment figures between 1977 and 1995.

TABLE 1: PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL ENROLMENTS, 1977-1995.

	All Pupils in School	Pupils in Secondary School
1977	839 079	44 031
1986	1 235 994	74 321
1995	2 216 878	483 000

Numbers of teachers rose tremendously from about 28 455 teachers in primary schools in 1980, to 63 085 in 1994, an increase of about 122 per cent. In secondary schools there were 3 730 teachers in 1980 to 25 597 in 1994, an increase of about 586 per cent. These figures go a long way to illustrate Zimbabwe's efforts in terms of addressing issues of access, equity, quality and equality in education. By 1996, the national teaching force stood at 91 000 with 73,4 per cent trained and 26,6 per cent untrained. The primary sector has 64 184 teachers comprising of 71,1 per cent trained and 28,9 per cent untrained. The secondary school sector has 26 823 teachers comprising of 78,7 per cent trained and 21,3 per cent untrained (Ministry of Education: Statistics Unit, 1996).

An issue which should be of great concern to the government of Zimbabwe is the content of education and how such an education content is to be delivered. A lot needs to be done to ensure that enough emphasis is placed on teaching facets in HF development such as creativity, responsibility, resilience and accountability. New approaches which stress the technical 'know-why' as opposed to the technical 'know-how' should be developed.

There was a marked decrease in numbers of schools built over the years. Between 1980 and 1984, 1 000 schools were built. Between 1984 and 1988, 310 schools were built. Between 1988 and 1992, 98 schools were built and only 42 schools were built between 1992 and 1994.

An analysis of enrolment figures shows that out of the total population in the 6 to 13 years age group, 90,51 per cent attended school (Gross Admission Rate or GAR). The GAR represents the proportion of new entrants in primary or secondary education regardless of age, to the proportion of six year olds and 13 year olds respectively of the total population in those age groups.

A further analysis shows increasing numbers of children who were out of school. The GAR in 1990 was 59,37 per cent. In 1992, GAR was 57,79 per cent and in 1994 was 58,71 per cent. This shows that 42,63 per cent, 44,21 per cent and 41,29 per cent respectively, were the proportions of children out of school. This obviously has an adverse impact on development, because human potential is not tapped.

Trends indicate a significant proportion failing to make it to Form One, and 1992 appears to have been the worst due to drought and other factors. In 1988, 35,01 per cent of the Grade Seven pupils failed to make it to Form One and in 1994, 31,63 per cent. Again this impacts negatively on the development of the HF. The potential capacity of these children to play their role in the economy is reduced because of the limited education they get. This is quite true, considering the fact that there is dwindling demand for unskilled workers in present day technological revolution. Computers and robots now do the repetitive tasks previously performed by unskilled persons.

The school curriculum

To suit the aspirations of the people, demands of new circumstances and socio-economic realities after independence, the curriculum had to be reformed. Education with production was the guiding philosophy in infusing relevant values in the new educational system. This was a way of vocationalizing education and inculcating relevant skills and attitudes in the youths.

The objective was to reflect the child's experiences at school in his/her performances in academic, practical work and the environment in which the child lives and to produce patriots equipped to meet the needs, wants and demands of the country.

Problems faced in implementing the new curriculum were many. Firstly, the rigid structure of the adaptive-subsystem in schools, and the HF itself, that is, teachers, administrative staff and educational managers, were underdeveloped and not appropriately equipped to implement the new curriculum. In some cases, even a local elitist community could not accept and accommodate change.

Secondly, the old management system could not be changed overnight; school heads, teachers and other education managers were not prepared to change because of inappropriate experience and training, to deal with increased enrolment and multicultural situations. Lack of HF training accounted for the resistance to change and failure to respond quickly to the new curriculum. It became quite clear that we could not significantly change the curriculum without changing the HF which constituted the management machinery. Thirdly, there were shortages in educational finance, qualified teachers, suitably oriented educational managers and physical infrastructure such as classrooms, houses for teachers, and teaching-learning materials to implement innovations.

Challenges to HF and manpower training in Zimbabwe

Changing socio-economic circumstances requires a corresponding changing education, training system. That means that education and manpower training have to be re-adjusted in order to adapt to changing needs of industry, commerce and national

aspirations. The formal sector is undergoing restructuring to meet challenges of the economic structural adjustment programmes. As a result, retrenchments occurred.

Manpower and HF training are real tasks for Zimbabwe, given the thousands of school leavers. In the last plan period alone (1991-1995), 829 227 students completed Ordinary Level studies and 45 983 completed Advanced Level studies. Of these, only 61 265 received training in government and non-government institutions. This represents seven per cent of the total number of school leavers. Demand for tertiary education by far outstrips supply.

About 813 945 school leavers were being carried over into the next plan period, in addition to the 824 448 who were expected to complete their studies in the plan period 1996-2000. The 813 945 left over from the last plan period included those who received training from the private sector and those who found jobs in the formal and informal sectors. Assuming 7 per cent students in the 1996-2000 period received training, there would be a left over of 766 737. Given the high unemployment rate of about 45 per cent, it is safe to assume that the majority of the 813 945 left over from the previous plan period had been carried over into the next period. Cumulatively, from the carry-over of 1991-1995 period to the 1996-2000 period, there would be about 1 580 685 school leavers who would fail to get training from government and non-government institutions. This represented 93 per cent of our school leavers. These figures did not include the thousands who did not continue studies after Grade 7, or who dropped out of Ordinary and Advanced Level studies. This was a serious problem which needed not just co-operation, but a vigorous joint effort by parents, communities, the private sector including commerce and industry, educational institutions and government and other interested parties, to produce a workable solution for developing Zimbabwe's HF for the future.

It is clear that the formal sector was unable to absorb all the school leavers. If more jobs were to be created through the informal sector, small and medium scale enterprises and the rural sector, there would have been the need to re-design and re-orient the school curriculum by adapting it to changing needs of industry and commerce and the national economy as a whole. One aspect of this would have been to teach both vocational and entrepreneurial skills. Furthermore, the rapidly changing labour market trends, in terms of demand and supply conditions, required that all stakeholders work more closely. This could have gone a long way in reducing unemployment and enhancing the relevance of skills produced in our education and training systems.

Tertiary institutions

Tertiary education in Zimbabwe which offers teacher-training, vocational, technical and university education, is run through both government and non-government institutions. The demand for training outstrips supply. The ministry co-ordinates training in other ministries and parastatals and those in the private sector. The private sector plays a significant role in manpower development. By March 1996, the private sector had 190 colleges with an average enrolment of 70 000. In fact, the sector trains more school leavers at tertiary level than government. Private community-based institutions run by welfare organizations with the assistance of the ministry, of Higher Education, are

helping in imparting survival skills to the disadvantaged groups. HF-centred education is still grossly neglected if not under-rated. The emphasis is on imparting employable skills to our youths rather than values of patriotism, accountability and commitment.

Teachers' Colleges rose from 8 in 1980 to 15 in 1995, while enrolments rose from 2 829 to 15 891 during the same period (Ministry of Higher Education, Statistics Unit). There were two technical teachers' colleges whose graduates could join the school system and teach vocational subjects or join industry and commerce. We also had the Zimbabwe-Cuba Teacher Training programme which has been re-located to Bindura and the Bachelor of Education (UZ) programme.

Vocational and technical education institutions increased from two in 1980 to 10 in 1995. Enrolments rose from 3 469 in 1980 to 14 436 by 1995 (Ministry of Higher Education Statistics Unit). Output of apprentices increased from 1 239 in 1990 to 1 611 in 1995.

The number of universities rose from one in 1980 to four in 1995, and 2 of these are private. The two public universities, University of Zimbabwe and National University of Science and Technology, have enrolments of 10 606 and 1 268 respectively. Private universities are Africa University and Solusi University. These had an enrolment of 99 and 469 respectively (Ministry of Higher Education, Statistics Unit).

Content of education and training in tertiary institutions

Zimbabwe is diversifying the tertiary education curriculum in terms of number of courses, levels and subject areas. Among new courses introduced are textile technology, rubber technology and cooperatives. Here again HF development-centred subjects seemed neglected at the expense of skills training.

The curriculum content of Vocational Training Centres has continued to change. Courses have been extensively diversified and others such as business development and management, asset management, project planning and implementation, cater for both formal and informal sectors. They have been introduced to inculcate entrepreneurial skills and entrepreneurial spirit. These courses go a long way to assist graduates from the institutions to establish their own businesses.

The curriculum content in Teachers' Colleges has also been diversified and enriched in terms of technical business skills. Business, secretarial and computer studies have been introduced at Chinhoyi Teachers' College and several others.

University education has continued to expand and diversify its curriculum. New courses have been added to the curriculum at the UZ such as Environment and Design, Human Anatomy, Human Physiology, Ophthalmology and Venerology. The ideal thing would be to temper these with HF content.

The content of education would not be perfect at any point without HF development, given the ever changing socio-economic circumstances and the kind of problems that beset our society as a whole. Taking cognizance of this fact, Zimbabwe is involved in on-going curriculum research and development to adapt its education and HF to prevailing socio-economic circumstances. In addition, curriculum liaison committees have been established with representatives from industry. However, more staff is needed to strengthen the research operations and produce a relevant curriculum guided by Zimbabwe's specific manpower and HF development needs. In December 1990, the

government of Zimbabwe adopted the policy on Rationalization and New Structure of Vocational and Technical Education in Zimbabwe.

Since the democratization of the Zimbabwe education system, there have been a multiplicity of courses offered in private institutions, parastatals and government institutions. These, however, neglected emphasis on HF content. The various levels of training have been standardized and structured at five levels. These are:

- The Pre-Vocational Certificate (PVC) for those in secondary schools Forms 1 and 2, who have completed 7 years of primary education.
- It is a multi-discipline basic course to prepare and equip the individual to be a handi-person in more than one industry. The pre-vocational thrust is in the form of industrial Arts Subjects incorporating:
 - (i) theoretical content of industrial and commercial occupations,
 - (ii) basic practical skills and
 - (iii) entrepreneurial skills.
- The course facilitates general knowledge of broad skills and the technology related to the production setting, non-formal setting and maintenance and service industries.
- The broad industrial arts subjects are construction, printing, automotive, aircraft industrial, electrical industrial, hospitality, beauty therapy, clothing and textile, computer technology, mining, structural engineering and mechanical and production works. Business and agricultural studies are included.
- The National Foundation Certificate (NFC) is for those who have completed two years of secondary education, or PVC, and are at technical high schools or vocational training schools. Vocational training centres are an important component of tertiary education for those who fail to secure places in the mainstream technical colleges. The NFC is issued for single subject courses in the trade to equip the individual with the productive and entrepreneurial spirit. The single subject can either be a vocational or technical subject of the student's own choice covered at 'O' level. These subjects are: carpentry, metal work, building, agriculture, home economics, commerce, bookkeeping and typing. The Ministry of Higher Education facilitates the accreditation of the NFC in single subjects examined by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The student obtaining five subjects which include one or more technical subjects may enter into apprenticeship training or pursue self-employment.
- The National Certificate (NC) is for those at Vocational Training Centres who have completed four years of secondary education or NFC. It is issued for single discipline advanced courses to equip the individual to be more productive and understand the basic principles in a single specialized industry. Employment outlets are provided at this level. The NC is mainly for tradesmen who have to be finally licensed as Skilled Workers for Skilled Workers Class 1/Artisans.
- The National Diploma (ND) is for those who have completed six years of secondary education or NC. This level is equivalent to first year of university work. The student specializes in a given industry at this level. The ND and NC are offered at technical colleges. The ND is for technicians who perform mostly supervisory work but not necessarily skilled as artisans.

The Higher National Diploma (HND) equates with the first two years of university work and is issued for single discipline, more advanced courses in a given discipline. The NC, ND and HND are all offered at polytechnics. These courses are for technologists who conduct practical research to adjust technologies to the local environment.

For education and vocational training to be suitable and relevant, and for current problems and challenges facing Zimbabwe to be solved, the content and methodology in apprentice/vocational/technical education and training, must take into account HF development training in-order to address the following:

1. lack of technical skills in the engineering field within the manufacturing sector;
2. poor workmanship in industry resulting in great financial losses;
3. poor worker attitudes and low morale;
4. lack of the fusion and adaptation of indigenous values, beliefs, norms and other traditions in trained personnel;
5. the need to adequately staff technical colleges with qualified lecturers in order to avoid compromising standards and quality in technical colleges currently understaffed and experiencing under-utilization of their capacity;
6. the need to adequately equip technical colleges with appropriate and modern technology and replace old equipment;
7. the need to continually carry out research and needs analysis on our actual manpower problems and needs;
8. to encourage skilled staff to remain in the country and avoid a continuous brain-drain;
9. to create the necessary machinery and structures for working with commerce and industry so that their contribution to technical education and training is fully tapped;
10. to create closer and stronger linkages between technical high schools, vocational training centres, technical colleges and universities;
11. to improve methods of training so that we can improve the quality of skilled manpower; and
12. to establish more technical high schools.

Government policies on education under ESAP

The Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) is a combination of macro-economic policies designed to cure economic ills which are the result of internal and external influences. Under ESAP, government expenditure is to be cut, subsidies removed, goods markets, money markets, and labour markets deregulated, prices decontrolled in order to respond to market forces and trade liberalization to be the order of the day. Reduced government expenditure under ESAP has an impact on HF and resources development. The main objective of the reform programme is the reduction of the budget deficit from 10 per cent of the GDP in 1990 to only 5 per cent in 1995. To achieve this, the budget for education was expected to be reduced from 9,2 per cent of the GDP in 1990 to 8,7 per cent by 1995. Government has to maintain, build and improve the quality of education upon past successes, while at the same time reducing the proportion of the budget devoted to education.

On average, expenditure on education as a proportion of budgetary allocations has been on a downward trend in the ESAP era 1991-1995. This decline was associated with the drought period and cut-backs in expenditure induced by the introduction of economic reforms. Increased expenditures as a proportion of the budget were experienced during 1993/94 and 1994/95. Measured as a proportion of GDP, expenditure on education has a rising trend up to 1988/89 and a downward trend after 1988/89. The downward trend was expected to continue with an upturn expected only in 1997-98 according to the 1996-98 Ministry of Higher Education rolling budget. Reduced expenditure on education by government implies that alternative sources of financing education had to be sought. Cost recovery and cost sharing were adopted along with measures aimed at greater efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

Under ESAP, there have been a number of changes in terms of financing education and management in education. The following were undertaken:

1. Cost recovery measures to introduce efficiency in the provision of educational services. For example, local students enrolling at the country's five universities were to be 50 per cent of the total annual fees as their own contribution towards the cost of their education and training;
2. improvement of utilization of educational resources and cost effectiveness;
3. additional support given to disadvantaged communities and schools, while the better endowed schools obtain reduced subsidies;
4. improvement of personnel training and management system; and
5. reducing the proportion of the budget devoted to education.

ESAP and human resource development in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe, like most African countries, has suffered from the effects of drought, wars, economic stagnation or regression, highly constrained growth, foreign debt, declining export prices and escalating costs of energy fuel. Reforms guided by the International Monetary Fund have, amongst other issues, been characterized by:

1. Cutting social expenditure, which has resulted in increased costs in education and health and this has disadvantaged low income groups;
2. commercialization of public enterprises which has resulted in increased costs of public goods and services, and;
3. trade liberalization, the elimination of protectionist measures to domestic industries to encourage competition, and price de-controls which have resulted in the skyrocketing costs of basic and other goods.

These measures have affected development in Zimbabwe, with the worst and severe impact on poor and vulnerable groups. Thousands of jobs have been lost through retrenchments. In fact, there is de-industrialization due to numerous factory closures. Shortages of skilled labour exist alongside a growing number of the unemployed, school leavers, drop-outs, jobless graduates and unskilled labour. Apart from human suffering of those who lack skills, this mismatch has harmed the whole economy and increased the average rate of unemployment. All these disadvantaged groups need training for not just the formal sector but also the informal sector. The 1996-2000 Human Resources Development Plan, took into consideration the skills that have been identified as

critical for the indigenization of the economy such as entrepreneurial skills, technological 'know-how' instead of 'know-why' and economic development skills (Zimbabwe Cabinet Paper, 1994).

It is quite clear that government is under pressure to improve education and training to produce skilled and semi-skilled workers and to retrain retrenched workers. While government tries to cater for the needs of school leavers, it also has to address the needs of the thousands losing jobs due to ESAP. Attitudes to development and utilization of human resources have to change and a more pro-active stance taken on the problem of open unemployment. It is against this background that the Social Development Fund (SDF) was introduced to help the vulnerable groups, such as retrenched to relocate to other areas of the economy.

A Social Dimensions of Adjustment 1994 Report by the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, reveals that the employment and training programmes which catered for retrenched persons both from the private and public sectors and persons with disabilities were being carried out. This was to train and reorient these people so that they could be able to generate self-employment in the non-formal micro-business and small-scale enterprise sectors. The training had two parts comprising entrepreneurship development and skills training. There was need to promote a more active national entrepreneurship because the seemingly de-industrialization and industrial re-location process affecting Zimbabwe appeared to be a pattern of businessmen (private, mostly foreign) showing vested interests. Such people lacked commitment to Zimbabwe's development and improvement of the quality of life for its people.

There was need to work hard through institutional means to encourage and promote the indigenous entrepreneur. The skills re-training programme for mainly retrenched included welding, carpentry, panel beating, spray painting, motor maintenance, building/bricklaying, tailoring, auto-repairs, bookkeeping, plumbing, driving and agriculture.

There was urgent need to have special training programmes in vocational/technical education which took into account the informal sector's needs so that the sector's employment potential could be promoted and re-enforced. This must not only be in terms of training, but also the provision of premises and marketing arrangements. The sector urgently needed a generation of vocational and managerial skills for masters, artisans and apprentices. Training would help introduce appropriate technology into the informal sector. Labour-intensive technologies for small and medium scale enterprises were needed for the sector to break away from the low-productivity trap. These programmes could help in the process of indigenization.

Transitory hardships of the reforms might be considerable. Their alleviation might be an integral part of the programme itself. As part of a programme of action to mitigate the social cost of adjustment, the Social Development Fund (SDF) provided educational and health assistance through payments of school fees and health fees for those families who earned less than Z\$400,00 per month.

The way forward

To have an internationally competitive industry, there is need for a well skilled,

motivated and committed labour force. Without an appropriate HF with the required technical skills and attitude, there cannot be such a growing economy.

Industrial trends reveal that in the current international division of labour, competition is not based on rigid comparative advantage that is based on the relative resource endowments of respective countries. The new competition is rather based on cost and non-cost factors relating to product characteristics. Thus, sustained growth is increasingly associated with the development and use of appropriate technologies, the provision of incentives, especially for research and development and the establishment of requisite institutions manned by persons with appropriate HF qualities of vision, commitment and discipline. For example, there is competition from low-wage countries such as the newly industrialized countries (NICs) and they are often blamed for causing unemployment in America and Europe. Labour-intensive industries have a big incentive to move to a cheaper country. This accounts for industrial relocation and de-industrialization in America and Europe to other parts of the world such as the NICs. But at the same time, it is true that so long as American workers possess better skills and use better technology, they can compete despite enjoying higher wages. As a country acquires the latest technology, its labour productivity rises.

In the current division of labour, the location of industrial production is generally influenced by the availability and level of technological capacity, labour cost and level of human resource development. In this context, labour is seen as an innovatory resource whose potential has to be maximized and its cost made relatively low. While access to technology is essential, the main constraint in Africa is the capacity to develop the intangible capital of management, skills, work organization and attitudes crucial for self-application, discipline and accountability.

The new strategy entails the conversion of the economic base so that new and competitive activities could be encouraged in an environment of flexible labour specialization with product diversity; a prominent feature of the production system. Labour markets are dynamic. It may be an important and strategic approach to have the provision of multi-skills for workers so that they can adapt to changing economic circumstances. This, therefore, entails re-training of workers and redefinition of occupations.

Conclusion

In this new competitive environment and rapid technological change, acquisition of new technologies and a stock of more enterprising, resourceful and innovative human resources, is essential for achieving economic and sustainable growth. Nations that lag behind in creating technological capabilities are less competitive in both the domestic and international markets. Such nations need to develop the HF content of their people. In this regard, all stakeholders; government, the private sector, parents and other interested parties, should unite to find solutions to problems regarding education and training in Zimbabwe. Government alone cannot satisfy the ever increasing demand for an education and training with the appropriate HF content.

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