

Decolonising teacher education for sustainability in Zimbabwe

- ¹. Zivave Wilson, Department of Humanities, Mkoba Teachers College, Zimbabwe
- ². Rudanda Gilta, Department of Humanities, Mkoba Teachers College, Zimbabwe

✉ Correspondence

Corresponding Author's Name :Zivave Wilson
Email: wilsonzivave@gmail.com

Citation: Zivave, W., & Rudanda, G. (2025).
Decolonising Teacher Education for Sustainability in
Zimbabwe. *The Educational Journal of Education for
Sustainable Development Studies*, 1(1), 1–15.

DOI: 10.64645/nust.tej.1.1.283

© 2025

Abstract

In the post-colonial period, the establishment of new teachers' colleges alongside the Education 5.0 initiative signifies a critical paradigm shift aimed at fostering innovation and industrialisation in teacher education. This paper argues that current teacher education programmes are focused on decolonising higher education by promoting creativity and sustainability, addressing the deficiencies inherited from the colonial era. The study examines the government's role in decolonising teacher education in post-independent Zimbabwe. Employing a qualitative research methodology with a case study design, data were collected through interviews, questionnaires, and archival research, focusing on Hwange College. Participants included ten lecturers, twenty student teachers, and the college principal, selected through stratified random and purposive sampling methods. The findings reveal that remnants of colonial influences persist, with current programmes leaning towards knowledge acquisition over practical skills. Although many participants felt adherence to Education 5.0 is largely superficial, efforts to decolonise the curriculum are underway, particularly through the incorporation of indigenous languages and relevant subjects. Nevertheless, challenges such as limited resources and deeply entrenched Eurocentric practices impede the decolonial process in the light of education 5.0. The study recommends the expansion of the number of teacher colleges, conducting continuous curriculum reviews to integrate local content, renaming colonial institutions, and enhancing professional development for educators. This study highlights the necessity for a holistic approach to decolonising teacher education in Zimbabwe so that innovation, industrialisation and sustainability are achieved. This means that teacher education programmes should equip graduates to meaningfully contribute to national development

Keywords: Decolonising, Innovation. Teacher education

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The relevance of historical research for an explanation of the roots of contemporary teacher education challenges in connection with equity, democracy, development and decoloniality has become topical in recent years (Jansen, 2017; Le Grange, 2018). This means that teacher education institutions have not been understood in relation to traditions and experiences of the past-colonial injustices, and hegemonic practices. For this reason, it is imperative to examine them critically to have a clear understanding of the present and future teacher education trajectory. The aim of this paper was to direct the attention of researchers to the

complexities and multifaceted nature of education 5.0 in teacher education in the light of British colonial Africa and Zimbabwe. It will also hopefully provide a new paradigm shift in teacher education and education to resonate with decolonisation of Africa in order to make products of teacher education programmes relevant to the social, economic and political change in post-colonial Africa.

Teacher education has long been used as a tool for social change as well as a means of disentangling colonial hegemony in the education system. This is because the main purpose of teacher education is to bring about social change and to prepare teachers to become active participants in a democratic society (Zvobgo, 1896). Therefore, teacher education has to prepare teachers to embrace and draw on local content and context to enhance their teaching and to make learning more meaningful for their learners (Ngwarai & Ngara, 2013). It is used as a tool to liberate and empower post-colonial states. In Zimbabwe, there has been a transformation of teacher education with the adoption of education 5.0, which is meant to promote innovation, creativity and drive the nation towards industrialisation by decolonising the teacher education institutions and programmes. Teacher education institutions were used to colonise, civilise, and assimilate indigenous people by immersing them in Eurocentric educational models, which tend to create employers than employees. As documented by Zvobgo (1986), colonial teacher education was introduced to improve the literacy rate. Teachers were to teach black indigenous people so that they would communicate with white settlers. Colonial teacher education created employees than employers (Murwira, 2019). Innovation, research and creativity were a preserve for white people. At independence, teacher education inherited colonial teacher training programmes, which made teachers employees without any innovation. However, the introduction of education 5.0 in 2020 meant that teacher education had to be transformed to become teaching, innovative, creative and competence-based. This is because education 3.0 limited individual teacher creativity and did not take into account different situations and circumstances, such as learner diversity and the operational environment (Mavhundutse 2019). By so doing, the colonial teacher needed to be decolonised.

Historically, teacher Education in Zimbabwe has been poor, preparing teachers to become bookish without problem-solving skills, and this is affecting the needs of the Zimbabwean society. Until the introduction of education 5.0, the previous educational model 3.0 made teacher education institutions produce consumers who exhibited a lack of awareness in tapping locally available resources to benefit the community which they served. Furthermore, teacher education was divorced from contemporary reality, which requires employment creators rather than job seekers. This is because colonisation had suppressed the competencies of teachers, which were produced in teacher education institutions and teacher education institutions contributed nothing in terms of revenue to the country, as well as utilising resources available to create self-employment for teachers and learners produced by teachers. The continuance of colonisation is sustained and confirmed in teacher education programmes in contemporary society, which continue to be a replica of the colonial era.

The paper was motivated by the need to contribute to the current discourse on decolonisation of teacher education, utilising insights from the voices of some student teachers, lecturers and college administrators who are the key drivers of transformation of teacher education (Apple and Jungck, 1993; Carl, 2005; Yidana and Aboagye, 2018). This study is unique as it draws insights from the college administrators, lecturers and student teachers to investigate the current teacher education programme in the light of the past historical injustices in the quest for decolonising teacher education. Against this backdrop, the study sought to establish teacher education from the colonial past in the quest to decolonise teacher education by deconstructing and disempowering the colonial past in teacher education. This paper

contributes to arguments on the need to decolonise teacher education through education 5.0 in Zimbabwe and make education relevant to the needs of the African people in Zimbabwe. According to Mheta, Lungu and Govender (2018), decolonising teacher education is long overdue in Africa due to the Eurocentric practices embedded in higher and tertiary education.

The primary purpose of this study was to assess and determine the extent to which education 5.0, as demanded by the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology, assists in decolonising teacher education in Zimbabwe and to explain its role in promoting creativity, innovation and industrialisation post-colonial Zimbabwe. The information generated would be useful to the principals, vice chancellors and Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development in improving teacher education programmes as they do away with the colonial teacher education system.

Teacher education in Zimbabwe has been noted over the years to be ever reliant on colonial teacher models, which made the teacher the centre of information, an employee and uncreative professional. This has resulted in the flooding of teacher education graduates who are not relevant to the needs of Zimbabwe, as they are employment seekers rather than employment creators. The study sought to decolonise teacher education in Zimbabwe using Hwange College of Education as a case study in the assessment of the decolonisation process of teacher education in promoting innovation, creativity and industrialisation.

Main Research Question

How is the teacher education in Zimbabwe being decolonised using education 5.0 in driving the nation towards Innovation, Sustainability and Creativity?

Sub-Research Questions

The following questions were regarded as constituting the main aspects of the problem to be investigated:

- To what extent is the current teacher education programme a product of colonialism?
- To what extent is the current teacher education programme adhering to education 5.0?
- What is being done to decolonise colonial teacher education programmes inherited at independence?
- What can be done to promote decolonisation of teacher education?

Conceptualising Teacher Education

Teacher education encompasses all formal and non-formal activities and experiences that prepare individuals to assume responsibilities within the educational profession and perform their duties effectively (Mavhundutse, 2019). From 1906 to 1956, this preparation was known as teacher training, which primarily aimed to develop teachers as mechanics or technicians (Zvobgo, 1986). This approach was limited, focusing solely on skill training and resulting in a narrow perspective on teacher education. As Mavhundutse (2019, p.19) noted, "Training is given to animals and circus performers, while education is for human beings." In contrast, teacher education involves not only teaching skills but also a solid foundation in pedagogical theory and professional competencies. This study asserts that teachers are made, not born, countering the belief that "teachers are born, not made." Teaching is both an art and a science; thus, educators must acquire knowledge along with essential skills, often referred to as the "tricks of the trade." Consequently, teacher education is broad and comprehensive. The term "teacher training" was prevalent during the colonial era, but with the advent of decolonisation in education, "teacher education" has become the preferred term. In the post-colonial context, several factors have influenced teacher education in Zimbabwe, including black empowerment, agrarian reform, the impact of sanctions, and the quest for autonomy. These

elements have led to the emergence of “Education 5.0”, which aims to innovate and industrialise the nation. Such influences highlight the necessity for thoughtful planning and implementation of teacher education, pedagogy, and curriculum to effectively decolonise teacher education in Zimbabwe

Theoretical Framework

This study explores how teacher education can serve as an intellectual space for decolonising Zimbabwean teachers' colleges. Learning environments often reflect dominant knowledge systems, which can colonise students' minds (Nkrumah, 1974; Ngugi, 1986; Grosfoguel, 2007, 2011; Ajani, 2019; Du Plessis, 2021). Thus, the study is informed by two theories, namely decolonial theory and critical race theory. Wa Thiong'o (1981) argues that decolonisation involves rejecting Western centrality in Africa's self-understanding. Prinsloo (2016) emphasises the need to "re-centre" African perspectives by redefining what constitutes the centre of knowledge. Blaser (2013) and Mbembe (2015) encourage Africans to take a central role in understanding themselves and their world. Wa Thiong'o asserts that decolonisation is not an endpoint but the beginning of a transformative journey, focusing on what should be taught to the African child (Mbembe, 2015). This study is grounded in Critical Race Theory (CRT) (DeCuir and Dickson, 2004), which is crucial for theorising the decolonisation and transformation of teacher education. CRT emphasises the importance of race and ethnicity in knowledge construction, advocating for the inclusion of diverse perspectives (Roithmayer, 1999; Hiraldo, 2010). As a revolutionary movement, CRT places race at the core of critical analysis (Roithmayer, 1999). It highlights the need to dismantle colonial pedagogical practices and Eurocentric epistemologies in teacher education institutions to accommodate diverse groups (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015). The primary goal of CRT is to foster systemic change for social justice in these institutions, thereby shaping the outcomes of teacher education programmes. Decolonising teacher education in Zimbabwe is viewed as a transformative process that impacts social identities (Fanon, 2008). By integrating CRT into the framework of teacher education, this study aims to contextualise teacher colleges within their immediate environments, enabling graduates to become innovative, creative, and facilitators of industrialisation. This approach positions teacher education as a vital avenue for driving Zimbabwe's economic development through innovation and industrialisation.

Literature review

Teacher education in Zimbabwe has evolved significantly, influenced by historical, social, economic, and political factors that have shaped the experiences of graduates (Ngwarai & Ngara, 2013). The journey of teacher education reflects a response to these dynamics, transitioning through various phases since its colonial origins. Currently, it is entering a third phase driven by the need for decolonisation (Mavhundutse, 2019), marking a departure from colonial frameworks. Mavhundutse (2019) examines the evolution of teacher education, linking it to leadership styles. The study highlights that teacher training began in 1937 with the Primary Teachers' Lower (PTL) course, designed for teachers of Sub-Standard A and B. This course was restrictive, enforcing conformity through pre-prepared schemes that stifled creativity and critical thinking (Trevaskis, 1967, cited in Mavhundutse, 2019). The colonial education system prioritised rote learning and basic literacy, preparing teachers to produce compliant workers rather than innovative thinkers. Consequently, the PTL and Primary Teachers Higher (PTH) courses perpetuated a model that undermined the potential of native Zimbabweans (Goulet et al., 2011; Lopez & Rugano, 2018).

The transition from teacher training to teacher education began in 1976 with the establishment of Mkoba Teachers' College, marking a shift towards a more holistic educational approach (Chiromo, 2007). This phase introduced a Diploma in Education, emphasising active learning

and problem-solving under the Education 3.0 model, which included teaching, research, and community service. However, despite these advancements, many graduates lacked the practical skills necessary for the 21st-century job market (Mavhundutse, 2019).

Post-independence efforts to enhance access to education led to the establishment of more teacher colleges, such as Madziva Teachers' College and Hwange College of Education. However, these institutions continued to produce teachers who were unprepared for the economic realities of Zimbabwe. Instead of fostering entrepreneurial skills, the curriculum remained heavily theoretical, limiting the ability of teachers to innovate or address local challenges (Gordon, 1994; Kanyongo, 2005). The prevailing education model continued to reflect colonial legacies, prioritising knowledge dissemination over skill development.

The socio-economic upheavals of the early 2000s, particularly the land reform programme, necessitated a re-evaluation of teacher education to meet national needs. The introduction of Education 5.0 aimed to cultivate entrepreneurial skills among students and promote innovation and industrialisation (Murwira, 2019). However, the legacy of colonial teacher education still manifests in the form of a workforce that is more adept at seeking employment than creating it. Despite the push for decolonisation, existing literature reveals a persistent gap in aligning teacher education with Zimbabwe's socio-economic context. Current programmes often overlook the importance of local solutions to local problems, resulting in graduates who lack the skills to contribute meaningfully to national development. There is a critical need for a comprehensive framework that integrates decolonisation principles into teacher education in Zimbabwe. This framework should emphasise the development of innovative, entrepreneurial, and contextually relevant skills among teachers, enabling them to address the unique challenges faced by Zimbabwean society.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative research methodology, specifically utilising a case study design. This approach is favoured for its ability to provide a comprehensive and in-depth exploration of the research topic. Case studies allow for the integration of various data collection methods, including archival research, questionnaires, interviews, and observations, facilitating a rich understanding of the issues at hand. Qualitative research emphasises the importance of context and meaning, making it particularly suitable for examining complex social phenomena. By focusing on specific cases, this methodology offers valuable insights and contributes to theory development (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990; Sporn, 1999). Additionally, as Yin (1994) notes, case studies are effective for investigating contemporary events where the researcher has limited control, further supporting their relevance in this study. A case study design enables a nuanced exploration of the decolonisation process of teacher education in Zimbabwe.

Data collection for this study focused on Hwange College of Education in the Matabeleland North region, specifically targeting lecturers involved in implementing Education 5.0. The sample comprised two main groups: (a) 10 lecturers from Hwange College of Education, and (b) 20 student teachers, evenly drawn from each department. The selected lecturers were among the first cohort at this newly established college, providing valuable insights into the decolonisation of teacher education being investigated to ensure innovation, industrialisation and sustainability in Zimbabwe.

The study's population included 20 student teachers, 10 lecturers, and the principal of Hwange College of Education. The principal was selected using purposive sampling to ensure the inclusion of individuals with relevant expertise. For the student teachers and lecturers, a stratified random sampling technique was employed, resulting in a balanced sample of 15

males and 15 females (Mandoga & Chakandinakira, 2014). This approach aimed to ensure gender balance within the sample. Purposive sampling was specifically used to gather rich information pertinent to the research objectives (Patton, 2002). Thus, three heads of departments and the college principal were interviewed.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents, analyses, and discusses the data collected through various instruments. The first sub-question aimed to determine whether teacher education in Zimbabwe is still influenced by colonial legacies. Understanding the participants' and respondents' views on this issue is crucial for the decolonisation process in teacher education. Information from heads of department and the college principal is coded as HD1, HD2, HD3 and CP, respectively.

Colonial teacher education remnants in the current teacher education programme

When research participants shared their views on colonial influences in teacher education, their responses were mixed. The study's findings suggest that current teacher education programmes still exhibit elements of colonialism. Specifically, the data shows that Teachers' Colleges prioritise knowledge production over the development of practical skills necessary for effective teaching. An analysis of assessment methods and objectives in these colleges indicates that the goals of teacher education still mirror colonial education practices. Assessments tend to focus more on knowledge acquisition than on skills application, as evidenced by the distribution of marks: 70% for exams and 30% for coursework, which is primarily theoretical. Students who do not perform well in these areas are unable to graduate. In this context, 60% of respondents acknowledged that teacher education retains some colonial remnants, while 40% felt that Teachers' Colleges have undergone decolonisation. This was further corroborated by HD1, who said;

Teacher education intakes enrolled from 2021 to 2023 reflect colonial footprints because they focused on knowledge production rather than the production of goods and services.

HD 3 underscored that:

During teaching practice, the student teacher is measured based on knowledge, application of teaching methodology, and record-keeping rather than producing items and solving challenges affecting the community in which they conduct their teaching practice.

CP also said:

It is difficult to do away with the colonial legacy in teacher education because the theories used in moulding teachers are Eurocentric and they are alienated from the African ways of educating children so that they become key contributors in their community.

The findings indicate that remnants of coloniality persist in the teacher education programme. This aligns with Chimbunde and Moreeng (2025), who argue that education in Zimbabwe is heavily influenced by glocalisation and decolonisation efforts. However, the integration of National Strategic Studies and indigenous languages like Tonga and Nambya at Hwange College of Education seeks to enhance teachers' understanding of Zimbabwe's identity and history, suggesting that efforts to erase colonial legacies are underway within the education system.

While colonial influences remain evident, the current teacher education programme also incorporates elements that diverge from these legacies. This perspective is supported by

Mheta, Lungu, and Govender (2018), who assert that the decolonisation of teacher education in Africa is overdue due to entrenched Eurocentric practices in higher education. Consequently, the slow pace of decolonisation has hindered the effective implementation of policies designed to make education more relevant to the needs of African communities.

Teacher education programme's adherence to Education 5.0

The second sub-question aimed to determine whether teacher education in Zimbabwe is adhering to Education 5.0, a key element in the decolonisation of teacher education. Insights were gathered from lecturers and principals to better understand their perceptions. Responses were mixed regarding adherence to Education 5.0. Of the participants, 63.3% indicated that compliance exists only on paper, while 23.3% expressed confidence that their programmes genuinely align with Education 5.0. The remaining 13.5% admitted to being unaware of any adherence. These findings were supported by interview responses. HD2 noted:

Education 5.0 is there on paper. New teachers' colleges like ours do not produce goods and services. Students just replicate what already exists, and innovation is lacking.

HD3 emphasised:

While Education 5.0 is a noble idea that can liberate our minds, institutions struggle to industrialise and innovate, which keeps them tied to past colonial legacies.

The CP remarked:

We are Education 5.0 compliant and driving Vision 2030, which is not just a national development programme but also a process of decolonising knowledge and skills in teacher education. The college is working towards establishing production of goods and services.

The above remarks indicate that teacher education programmes currently lack the innovation, creativity, and industrialisation necessary to effectively prepare graduates for the workforce. This observation aligns with Tandi, Zivave, Mawere, and Mavunga (2024), who found that the implementation of Education 5.0 in many teachers' colleges is largely superficial.

The study also noted that the transition to Education 5.0 places significant strain on institutional financial resources. Many colleges remain entrenched in Education 3.0, focusing primarily on teaching and research, rather than adapting to the innovative demands of Education 5.0. Financial constraints and declining enrolment may further impede smaller colleges from sustaining this new educational model. Zivave (2025) argues that Education 5.0 suffers from a lack of funding, with its implementation mostly existing on paper, as few colleges have established viable industrialisation and innovation hubs.

Decolonising Teacher Education

The third sub-question aimed to explore how teacher education can be decolonised, addressing the main objective of the empirical study to promote innovation and industrialisation. Understanding respondents' perspectives on the decolonisation processes in teacher education is essential for achieving Education 5.0. Responses were mixed: 73.3% of participants believed that teacher education is being decolonised, while 26.7% felt that the process is challenging. Those who viewed decolonisation positively emphasised the crucial role of government and institutions in leading these efforts.

HD1 remarked that:

Teacher education is being decolonised through the establishment of new colleges. He noted that, during colonial times, access to teacher education was restricted by a bottleneck system, limiting opportunities to a few institutions.

HD3 emphasised:

The government's proactive approach to decolonising teacher education. He highlighted that the introduction of new colleges and relevant subjects is crucial for challenging colonial mind sets. According to him, decolonising the mind is essential for effectively implementing the decolonisation process in teacher education.

Findings reveal that the establishment of new teacher education institutions, such as Hwange College of Education, is a key element in the decolonisation of teacher education in Zimbabwe. This development marks a departure from the restrictive bottleneck system of the colonial era, which limited access to educational opportunities. By introducing new colleges and relevant subjects, the government aims to challenge and dismantle the colonial mind-sets that have historically influenced educational practices. Literature indicates that colonial teacher education promoted the marginalisation of Africans through limited access to education, exemplified by the few colleges available during that time. Hwange College of Education is a response to these injustices, contributing to efforts to decolonise and indigenise teacher education. As noted by Le Grange (2016), schools and universities act as microcosms of society, and their decolonisation can initiate broader societal transformation. Since gaining independence 44 years ago, Zimbabwe's population has grown to 15 million, leading to the establishment of teacher colleges in marginalised communities. Colleges like Hwange aim to eliminate the previous bottleneck system, allowing access to teacher education for all citizens and promoting inclusivity. Currently, many teacher colleges in Zimbabwe are reviewing their curricula, guided by directives from the Department of Teacher Education and Materials Development. This review aligns with the national vision for 2030, encouraging institutions to rethink what decolonisation means and how it can enhance teacher education to meet the needs of Zimbabwean society. Decolonisation aims to remove privilege, inequality, poverty, unemployment, and coloniality in teacher education (Tamburro, 2013).

CP had to say:

Hwange College of Education was established in 2019, and it became the first teacher education institution in Matabeleland North with the focus on uplifting previously marginalised communities through access to education. Now languages like Tonga and Nambya are not only recognised but they are also offered in teacher education to promote inclusivity and cultural diversity.

The study revealed that the introduction of a junior teacher education programme at Hwange College of Education in 2019 reflects these decolonisation efforts. Established to address historical injustices, this programme specifically serves the Nambya, Tonga, Chewa, and Ndebele ethnic groups in Matabeleland North, who have faced marginalisation since colonial times. The focus is on producing innovative and creative teachers who can drive the nation towards industrialisation by leveraging local contexts such as tourism, mining, and education.

The study also observed that the decolonisation of teacher education is evident in the subjects now being offered. Historically, colonial teacher education prioritised English while side-lining indigenous languages. However, the current curriculum recognises the importance of indigenous languages, such as Nambya and Tonga, which were previously marginalised. This shift indicates that teacher education institutions are increasingly embracing local content and context, contributing to the decolonisation of the teacher education curriculum. As Ryan and Tilbury (2013) suggest, the decolonisation of education must begin with the deconstruction of

dominant pedagogical structures that promote singular worldviews, particularly the Western Eurocentric curriculum prevalent in Zimbabwe. Thus, teacher education curricula need to acknowledge and incorporate the diverse epistemological knowledge found within local communities into both the curriculum and pedagogical practices (Le Grange, 2018). This broader perspective is essential for creating a more inclusive and relevant educational framework that reflects Zimbabwe's rich cultural heritage. HD2 Further underscored that:

Teacher education programmes are fully embracing a heritage-based curriculum. This approach aligns with Education 5.0, an educational philosophy that focuses on using local resources and technology to address community challenges.

The verbatim above further revealed that Zimbabwe teacher education is now shifting from knowledge-based to heritage-based teacher education. The current review of the teacher education curriculum represents a significant step in decolonisation, aiming to dismantle colonial legacies within existing programmes. This shift is part of a broader movement towards decolonising Africa through curriculum change, in response to evolving trends in teacher education (Mswazie and Gamira, 2011). Since gaining independence, Zimbabwe has undertaken numerous reforms in its teacher education programmes (Zvobgo, 1986; Mapara, 2009). Decolonising teacher education is essential for rediscovering and transforming established bodies of knowledge that have remained static. As Le Grange (2016) notes, this transformation involves ensuring that colleges function as mini-industrial hubs, generating products and skills for self-sustainability. This empowers both teachers and institutions to apply knowledge practically, an approach that was largely absent during the colonial era, when practice and experimentation were reserved for colonial powers. The deconstruction of colonial teacher education fosters a conscious and active resistance to the forces of colonialism that continue to subjugate our minds, bodies, and lands. This resistance aims to overturn colonial structures and achieve indigenous liberation (Wilson and Yellow Bird, 2005). Thus, decolonising teacher education means seeking African solutions to African problems. Historically, colonial teacher education served primarily white interests, addressing issues that affected only the colonial population.

In this context, the study highlights that decolonising teacher education can foster a deeper understanding of ourselves through decolonised knowledge (Jansen, 2017). Such knowledge is now reflected in teacher education institutions and curricula that value indigenous knowledge systems, which had been dismissed by colonial settlers. These systems are crucial for producing goods and services while addressing contemporary socio-economic and environmental challenges. Decolonisation is vital to ensure that Zimbabwean challenges are tackled by Zimbabweans for Zimbabweans. Naicker (2016) argues that decolonising teacher education will lead to meaningful social transformation within institutions. Therefore, the decolonisation of teacher education is imperative for realising Vision 2030, which aims to achieve a middle to upper-income economy.

Among the respondents, eight individuals, representing 26.7%, expressed the belief that the decolonisation of teacher education is not being effectively pursued. They elaborated on several issues they perceive as obstacles to this process, including a lack of resources, foreign influence, and the presence of private teacher colleges, all of which hinder complete decolonisation. The study found that the journey toward decolonising teacher education in Zimbabwe is fraught with numerous challenges, each complex in its own right. Key obstacles identified include ethnic inequalities, inadequate resources, and a complicated curriculum, which complicate the implementation of Education 5.0 principles. Additionally, economic sanctions have emerged as a significant barrier, further impeding efforts to achieve meaningful decolonisation in Zimbabwe's teacher education system.

Promotion of Decolonisation of Teacher Education

When the participant was asked about what was being done to promote decolonisation in teacher education, HD1 said:

I believe that establishing tertiary institutions, such as teacher colleges in all provinces, is an important way to promote the decolonisation of teacher education. Making teacher education accessible to everyone is essential, as it plays a crucial role in preserving culture and heritage.

The statement argues that establishing teacher colleges across provinces promotes decolonisation. Setting up a teacher education institution is a means of decolonising teacher education. It noted that the establishment of Hwange College of Education, Madziwa Teachers College, and Joshua Mqabuko, among other newly established colleges in every province, is a decolonial process. This is contrary to colonial teacher education, which was not accessible to all, as it used the bottleneck system. Only a few teachers were trained to cater for the needs of the white supremacists, but in the current situation, so many teacher colleges have been established to ensure that education is accessible to all. These initiatives are meant to decolonise higher and tertiary education, particularly teacher education in this context.

Furthermore, HD3 stated that:

Colleges with colonial names should be renamed so that they are identified with local people and history.

It was established that through the renaming of teacher education institutions, decolonisation is improved and enhanced. The renaming of teachers' colleges is the starting point of decolonisation. The respondents argue that names such as Hillside Teachers College, United College of Education, and Marymount Teachers College reflect colonial remnants in teacher education. Thus, the renaming of teachers' colleges becomes an opportunity for these institutions to decolonise their image and buttress their Africanness. Newly established colleges like Joshua Mqabuko College, Masvingo Teachers College, and Hwange College of Education help in the decolonisation process of teacher education institutions as they are identified with the African legacy.

In the same vein, HD2 underscored that:

All teachers' colleges should be offering indigenous languages rather than making English language superior to local languages.

The study established that curriculum reviews contribute to the decolonisation process, as the courses offered should be relevant to the African needs in the post-colonial period. In this context, it emerged that teachers' colleges are reviewing the teacher education programme so that it becomes relevant to heritage-based education. As such, indigenous languages such as Nambya, Tonga, Ndebele, and Shona, among others, are offered. This is contrary to colonial teacher education, which despised indigenous languages in teaching and learning. English was considered the language of teacher education. However, curriculum review in teacher education emphasises the value of the indigenous language. Furthermore, the curriculum that is being decolonised is hinged on skills rather than knowledge, which is a direct deviation from colonial teacher education, which was focused on knowledge and making teachers centres of information.

4. CONCLUSION

Zimbabwe, a sovereign state that gained independence in 1980, faces the imperative of decolonising teacher education to align it with 21st-century trends, particularly in terms of Afro-centricity. Decolonisation involves challenging the dominant Eurocentric discourses prevalent in higher and tertiary education. The establishment of Hwange College of Education plays a critical role in this process by encouraging post-colonial student teachers to rethink their approaches to education within the Zimbabwean context, where job creation is prioritised over mere employment seeking. This institution highlights the colonial injustices that persist in marginalised areas and empowers Zimbabweans to produce educators who can drive the nation toward its aspirations. Hwange College of Education helps student teachers in these areas develop a deeper understanding of their perspectives, which have often been shaped by colonial philosophies that need to be critically examined. The college's teaching programme aims to stimulate graduates to engage with new ideas, marking the beginning of a decolonisation process.

Furthermore, Education 3.0 has been critiqued for perpetuating colonial legacies, prompting a paradigm shift to Education 5.0. This transformation in teacher education is essential for Zimbabwe to achieve its goal of becoming a medium to upper-middle-income economy by 2030. Reflecting on the need to decolonise teacher education curricula suggests that these programmes must be contextualised within the framework of Education 5.0. Jansen (2017) offers six approaches that can aid in decolonising higher education, applicable to teacher education in Zimbabwe under Education 5.0. These approaches include: decolonising through additive-inclusive knowledge; decentralising European knowledge; critically engaging with settled knowledge in the curriculum; repatriating and linking occupied knowledge to society; Africanizing curriculum contents; and decolonising the curriculum to facilitate encounters with entangled knowledge.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- Establishment of more teachers' colleges: Expand the establishment of teacher colleges across all provinces to enhance accessibility and relevance in teacher education, ensuring that all communities can benefit from quality educational opportunities.
- Continuous curriculum review of teacher education programmes: Implement regular reviews of the teacher education curriculum to incorporate indigenous languages and culturally relevant content, aligning with the needs of local communities and promoting Afro-centricity.
- Renaming institutions with colonial names: Advocate for the renaming of teacher education institutions that carry colonial names to promote local identity and heritage among students and communities.
- Professional development for educators: Provide ongoing professional development for educators that focuses on decolonisation, equity, and inclusive pedagogy, equipping them to challenge colonial legacies in their teaching practices.
- Community engagement: Strengthen partnerships between teacher colleges and local communities to ensure that educational programmes reflect community needs and aspirations, thereby enhancing the relevance of teacher education.

- Research and innovation: Encourage research initiatives that explore the impact of decolonisation in teacher education, facilitating the development of innovative teaching practices and methodologies that resonate with the African context.
- Policy Advocacy: Advocate for educational policies that support the decolonisation process, ensuring that these principles are embedded in national education frameworks and standards.
- Integration of Education 5.0 Principles: Align teacher education programmes with the principles of Education 5.0, emphasising skills development, entrepreneurship, and community engagement to prepare graduates for contemporary challenges.

REFERENCES

- Ajani, O. A., & Gamede, B. T. (2019). Decolonising teacher education curriculum in South African higher education. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 10(5), 121-131
<http://ijhe.sciedupress.com>
- Apple, M. W., & Jungck, S. (1993). Whose curriculum is this anyway? In M. W. Apple (Ed.), *Official knowledge: Democratic education in a conservative age* New York, Routledge (pp. 118–142)
- Blaser, M. (2013). Ontological conflicts and the stories of people in spite of Europe: Towards a conversation on political ontology. *Current Anthropology*, 54(5).547-568
- Carl, A. (2005). The “voice of the teacher” in curriculum development: A voice crying in the wilderness? *South African Journal of Education*, 25(2), 223–228.
- Chimbunde, P. and Moreeng, B.B. (2025). Decolonising or glocalising Zimbabwe schools history curriculum reform: which way forward? *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, DOI: 10.1080/14767724.2025.2509285
- Chiromo, A. (2007). *History of teacher education in Zimbabwe: 1939-1999*. Harare: University of Zimbabwe.
- DeCuir, J. T., & Dixon, A. D. (2004). “So when it comes out, they aren’t that surprised that it is there”: Using critical race theory as a tool of analysis of race and racism in education. *Educational Researcher*, 33(5), 26–31. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X033005026>
- Du Plessis, P. (2021). *Decolonisation of education in South Africa: Challenges to decolonise the university curriculum*, *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 35(1),54-69.
- Fanon, Frantz. (2008). *Black Skin, White Masks*. New York, United States: Grove Press
- Fraenkel, J. R., & Wallen, N. E. (1990). *How to design and evaluate research in education*. Hightstown: McGraw-Hill Publishing Co.
- Gordon, R. (1994). Education policy and gender in Zimbabwe. *Gender and Education*, 6(2), 131–139.

- Goulet, L., Linds, W., Episknew, J., & Schmidt, K. (2011). Creating a space for decolonisation: Health through theatre with Indigenous youth. *Native Studies Review*, 20(1), 35–61.
- Grosfoguel, R. (2007). The epistemic decolonial turn. *Cultural Studies*, 21(2), 211–223.
- Grosfoguel, R. (2011). Decolonising post-colonial studies and paradigms of political-economy: Transmodernity, decolonial thinking, and global coloniality. *Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World*, 1(1), 1-36
- Hiraldo, P. (2010). The role of critical race theory in higher education. *The Vermont Connection*, 1(1), 7–10.
- Jansen, J. (2017). Decolonising the university curriculum, given a dysfunctional school system? *Journal of Education*, 68(1), 1–14.
- Kanyongo, G. Y. (2005). Zimbabwe's public education system reforms: Successes and challenges. *International Education Journal*, 6(1), 65–74.
- Le Grange, L. (2016). Decolonising the university curriculum: Leading article. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 30(2), 1–12.
- Le Grange, L. (2018). Decolonising, Africanising, indigenising and internationalising curriculum studies: Opportunities to (re)imagine the field. *Journal of Education*, 1(74), 4-18
- Lopez, A. E., & Rugano, P. (2018). Educational leadership in post-colonial contexts: What can we learn from the experiences of three female principals in Kenyan secondary schools? *Education Sciences*, 8(99), 1-15
- Mapara, J. (2009). Indigenous knowledge systems in Zimbabwe: Juxtaposing postcolonial theory. *Journal of Pan African Studies*, 3(1), 139-155
- Mavhundutse, O. (2019). *A critical examination of the role of action research in improving teacher education in Zimbabwe: The case of three Masvingo teachers' colleges* (Doctoral dissertation). University of Zimbabwe.
- Mbembe, A. (2015). Decolonising the university. *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education*, 15(1), 29–45.
- McCoy, D. L., & Rodricks, D. J. (2015). Critical race theory in higher education: 20 years of theoretical and research innovations. *ASHE Higher Education Report*, 41(3), 1–117.
- Mheta, G., Lungu, B. N., & Govender, T. (2018). Decolonisation of the curriculum: A case study of the Durban University of Technology in South Africa. *South African Journal of Education*, 38(4), 1–7.

- Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development. (2018a). *Doctrine for the modernisation and industrialisation of Zimbabwe through education, science and technology development to achieve Vision 2030*: Government Gazette. Harare
- Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development. (2018b). *Biotechnology and advanced cattle reproductive technologies*. Government Gazette. Harare
- Mswazie, J., & Gamira, D. (2011). Transforming teacher education: The quest for a unified primary teacher education in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, 13(4). 410-422
- Naicker, S. (2016). Nephrology in Africa: Challenges of practice in resource-limited environments. *Clinical Nephrology*, 86 (13), 84–89. <https://doi.org/10.5414/CNP86S112>.
- Ngugi, T. (1986). *Decolonising the mind: The politics of language in African literature*. Michigan: University of Michigan Press.
- Ngwarai, R., & Ngara, R. (2013). Term paper effectiveness: Perceptions of students and lecturers at Zimbabwe Open University. *European Social Sciences Research Journal*, 1(3), 195–203.
- Nkrumah, K. (1974). *Neo-colonialism: The last stage of imperialism*. London: Panef Books Ltd.
- Nziramasanga, C. T. (2018). Curriculum review process in the context of ZIMASSET: Possible linkages with the CIET provisions. *Zimbabwe Journal of Educational Research*, 30(1), 25–30.
- Prinsiloo, E. (2016). The role of the Humanities in decolonising the academy, *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education* 15(1):164-168
- Roithmayer, D. (1999). *Introduction to critical race theory in educational research and praxis*. London: Routledge.
- Ryan, A., & Tilbury, D. (2013). *Flexible pedagogies: New pedagogical ideas*. New York: Higher Education Academy.
- Sporn, B. (1999). *Adaptive university structures: An analysis of adaptation to socioeconomic environments of US and European universities*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Tamburro, A. (2013). Including decolonisation in social work education and practice. *Journal of Indigenous Social Development*, 2(1), 1-16
- Tandi, C., Zivave, W., Mawere, M & Mavunga, R (2024), *Transforming Pedagogy in Zimbabwe Teachers Colleges: Exploring Curriculum Innovation, Modularisation, and the Future of Education*, Bamenda: Langa Research & Publishing CIG Mankon
- Trevaskis, G. A. (1967). *In-service training in Rhodesia: An interim report of a study sponsored by the Afro-Anglo-American programmes in teacher education* (unpublished).
- Wa Thiong, N. (1998). Decolonising the mind. *Diogenes*, 46(4), 101–104.

- Wilson, A., & Yellow Bird, M. (2005). *For Indigenous Eyes Only: A decolonisation handbook*. New York: School of American Research.
- Yidana, M. B., & Aboagye, G. K. (2018). Management of curriculum change: A mechanism for ensuring continuous academic improvement in Ghanaian universities. *International Journal for Innovation Education and Research*, 6(2), 41–60.
- Yin, R. (1994). *Case study research: Design and methods* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.
- Zivave, W. (2025). Indigenous Religion in Teacher Education: Addressing Societal Needs through a Decolonised Religious Studies Curriculum in Zimbabwe in C Tandi, W. Zivave, M. Mawere, & R. Mavunga, *Pedagogics and Curriculum Transformation in Zimbabwe Teachers Colleges: A Review of Curriculum Innovation and the Future of Education at Colleges*: Bamenda, Langaa Research & Publishing CIG Mankon,
- Zvobgo, R. J. (1986). *Transforming education: The Zimbabwean experience*. College Press.