



An evaluation of how socialism as a ‘school of thought’ has influenced the development of the educational system in Zimbabwe, Africa

Muswazi Tinny Margaret

Zimbabwe Open University, Faculty of Science and Technology, Bag MP 1119, Mt Pleasant, Harare, Zimbabwe.

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***Corresponding Author**
Muswazi Tinny Margaret
E-mail: tmmuswazi@yahoo.co.uk

ABSTRACT

The paper has identified socialism as the school of thought which the Zimbabwe government, through the Zimbabwe African National Union party chose as its guiding principle to run the country, particularly the education system, after attaining political independence in 1980. Having experienced the ills of colonialism, the choice of socialism from the point of view of the ruling party was justified as the intention was to develop the masses mentally and physically in order to enable them to work for and develop the country as well as provide equal opportunity for education and wealth. There were critical gaps in the planning and implementation of the policy such that it had to be abandoned, only to revert back to colonialism and as a result, the ambition to provide education for all encountered inevitable obstacles.

Keywords:

school of thought, socialism, colonialism, primary school, secondary school, Zimbabwe African National Union

INTRODUCTION

This paper addresses 'socialism in education', the school of thought adopted in Zimbabwe after attaining political independence in 1980. This paper traces socialism in education as it impacted on particularly primary and secondary school. To set the foundation, the paper will offer brief discussions on what is understood by the phrase school of thought, the terms education, and socialism from a Zimbabwean point of view. In an attempt to do justice to the topic, the paper will address issues in the following sections: brief history of education in Zimbabwe and the rationale of the choice of socialism as the education philosophy of independent Zimbabwe. To evaluate the chosen school of thought, there is going to be a chronicle of events and issues relating to the development of education in Zimbabwe under a socialist perspective, the influence of socialism on the curriculum as well as an evaluation of successes and challenges of the socialist education system under discussion. Finally, a conclusion will be provided.

School of Thought

This section will give the working definition of 'school of thought' as it should be understood in this paper. An examination of some works on 'schools of thought' has revealed that there may be as many such schools as there may be people who care to write about them. What this paper has deduced is that a school of thought which is in other words a philosophy, is a way of doing things and more specifically a way of thinking which is adopted as a guide for the education system of an institution, an organization or most commonly a country. It is a philosophy adopted by the governing body to guide the running of the systems of the establishment including the education system. As it is generally decided on by the leadership, in this case, the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) government which was to be known later in 1987 as the ZANU PF government, after its unity with Joshua Nkomo's Patriotic Front Party, a school of thought which is also an ideology unfortunately does not give the learners the opportunity to decide for themselves whether they feel drawn to adopt the beliefs or not (Barrow and Wood, 1995). As this paper will show later, there may be some measure of truth in this claim.

Anyway, be that as it may, Gwarinda (1985) says a philosophy is never determined by an individual as it is a social one. Gwarinda goes further to say that a philosophy has a history behind it and it is determined by given social conditions like the changed life of the educated (civilized) family member. Suitable examples of such social conditions could be colonialism, independence and post independence eras in Zimbabwe. Supporting Gwarinda (1985), Webring (03.08) agrees that any education system needs a clear direction (philosophy) which also understands the aims and objectives of the organization or government.

Gwarinda further points out that different aims and objectives which Mohammed (03.08) also says should be clear and have suitable methods, cannot be served by the same content e. g. education for free emancipated Zimbabwe cannot be served by colonial content. While according to Blank in Matthews (2006) a lot of people are seen to be blending different schools of thought for more effectiveness, the ZANU party opted for just the one, socialism, as there would not be any other to serve their intentions at the time.

Education

A simple definition of education is that it is a planned programme which is normally offered in institutions such as the school, college or university. However, education can be provided in fora other than those mentioned above and normally, there is an individual or a group of people leading the process who has an obligation to ensure that it happens and for a purpose. Generally education is provided for a variety of reasons. Gunter (1990) for instance says that a man cannot leave his offspring to themselves and allow them to grow up on their own. Instead, a man will as much as possible, determine what the child must learn. He explains education to mean *leading a child*. Similarly, leaders in an organization or country have the task to determine the philosophy that will guide the systems and running of the organization or the population otherwise, there is chaos, with everybody doing his or her own thing. The main difference between a country and a family is that when government changes and the successors are of a different orientation e. g. from colonialist leaders to socialist leaders, the philosophy that guides operations changes inevitably, hence the adoption of the socialist philosophy by the Zimbabwe government at independence in 1980.

In their discussion of socialist education, Chung and Ngara (1993) point out that in class society, education is controlled by the class that controls the means of production. They say that the two functions of education are the following:

- To provide the individual with the skills and capabilities necessary for him or her to carry out certain tasks normally without a given class structure, e. g. teaching.
- To pass on the dominant religious or political social structure (especially in non socialist society where education is used to maintain the status quo e. g. colonial).

Chung and Ngara (1993) believe that there is no ideological neutrality in education. It is either one thing or the other. They also state that all education systems serve the interest of particular classes and social groups. Chung and Ngara gave the example of Portuguese and French policies which sought to make colonized people Portuguese or French totally respectively except for

colour in order to make domination effective and total. They however agree that education can change existing economic structures and social relations particularly socialist education, as it is designed to change rather than perpetuate existing social conditions especially in a transitional society like Zimbabwe in 1985. It was the mandate of the ZANU government therefore to change the thinking of the people of Zimbabwe from a colonialist mentality to an ideology of their choice in this case, a socialist perspective.

To further justify this change, Nyerere (1967) reveals that education systems in different societies have been and are very different in the manner in which they are organized and in content because the societies providing them are different and whether formal or informal, they have a purpose. He further points out that the purpose is to transmit from one generation to the next the accumulated wisdom and knowledge of the society and to prepare the young people for their future membership of the society as well as their active participation in its maintenance or development. Nyerere (1967) cites similarities in the educational system of Europe and communist countries which although radically different in ideology, was to prepare young people to live in and to serve society, to transmit the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes of the society. He also warns that if education fails in any of these fields, society falters. The analysis by Nyerere is what the government in independent Zimbabwe would hope for although as we will notice, these aims and goals may not have been clearly enunciated.

Brief History of Education in Zimbabwe

We are informed by Gwarinda (1985) and others that history is an inevitable determinant of the school of thought adopted by any organization or country. Before 1980, the education system in Zimbabwe was based on colonialist / capitalist ideology. Several approaches came along with it e.g. traditional education, child-centred education, distance education to name but a few. The main and conspicuous school of thought used before the attainment of independence was 'divide and rule'. The purpose was to train Africans to man the local administration at the lowest ranks as well as to staff the private capitalist firms owned by Europeans and no small wonder why Gwarinda (1985) says, 'colonial education sought to make Africans regard Europeans as heroes who saved the very African from extinction', because otherwise, without a job and a salary offered by the white man, how would the African fend for himself and his family? Gumbo (1986) says colonialism provided education for unemployment and frustration and concurring, Chung and Ngara (1985) explain this scenario in capitalist education as a struggle between the class that controls the means of production and the class that controls political power. The main idea in colonialist / capitalist education was to maintain the status quo of master and servant. According to Gumbo (1986), Zimbabwe inherited an education system full of

contradictions, discrimination, and negative attitudes and was seriously lacking in resources.

Gumbo (1986), agreeing with Mugadzaweta and Benza (2002) believes that the education system was characterized by inequalities. Further to that, Kapfunde (1999) reiterates that in many countries such as Mozambique, Zambia and including Zimbabwe, education policies had left a legacy of inequalities in the provision of the education service. The education system had been designed to prevent the indigenous people from competing with their colonial masters for important social services e.g. education and health. Kapfunde (1999) clearly agrees with Mugadzaweta and Benza (2002) and others that two systems of education existed in Zimbabwe, one for the Whites and the other for the Blacks. The one for the whites was further segregated to differentiate White people from Coloured people and Indians. For instance, there were three different classroom and outdoor curricula, one for the Whites, another for the Indians and Coloureds and yet another for the Africans (Blacks). Like the curricula, the infrastructure, furniture, textbooks, fees, timetables and the duration for lessons, extra curricula activities and even the teachers, including their training colleges were different from group to group. The school graduate from the African group, as mentioned above served in the companies or shops of those from the other two groups above i.e. Whites or Indians and sometimes even in those of Coloureds, except in a few rare cases where they (Blacks) went to mission schools from where they could find their way overseas through mainly church support. Sometimes when they came back upon university graduation, Blacks would find themselves in higher placed jobs, but even then, often, not really decision making jobs although they earned somewhat more respect than the local graduate. Education was based on and controlled by class. Peresuh and Nhundu (1999) purport that besides these problems, minorities such as women, linguistic and trivial groups had always received less education than bigger groups because they were not considered important in policy decisions. The socialist ideology hoped to transform this scenario.

Nyerere (1967) also makes an observation that colonial education induced attitudes of human inequality and in practice underpinned the domination of the weak by the strong especially in the economic field and he cites the high school dropout rate prevalent among Africans as one of the reasons for the situation. There were several reasons for that situation, part of which was the high school dropout rate prevalent among Africans. Contrary, in a discussion on 'Educational Inequalities and Policy Considerations in Zimbabwe' (Zvobgo, 1997), Mhlanga is said to have pointed out that there was no drop-out in the white system and that the discrepancy was only due to migration. This is indicative of the fact that the other races, especially the White, remained in school for a much longer duration than the African. As a matter of fact the UNESCO report of 1990-2000 reveals that European education was compulsory and therefore offered universal education.

The Rationale for the Choice of Socialism as the Philosophy in Independent Zimbabwe

The decision to move away from capitalism as a guiding ideology in independent Zimbabwe was influenced by a number of factors. At independence and after, with a new government and a new ideology, supported by history and the bitterness of oppression, a Marxist-Leninist socialist ideology was adopted. First of all, according to Chung and Ngara (1985) socialist education in Zimbabwe was the planned and systematic shaping of consciousness. It was believed that it would change society for the better especially in the process of socialist transformation e.g. freedom and education. The words by Kim Jong Il, leader of the Koreans that, 'education is one of the fundamental bases on which the prosperity and future of a nation depend and that without education no country, and no nation would be able to achieve social progress and prosperity nor would its dignity and its bright future be conceivable', rationalize the choice by Zimbabwe of the socialist ideology. In the same vein, Chung and Ngara believe that education makes people powerful agents of social transformation and socialist education is a particularly effective tool in this regard. The authors go further to point out that education especially socialist education as it is designed to change rather than perpetuate existing social conditions particularly in a transitional society (like Zimbabwe in 1985) can change existing economic structures and social relations. Yearning for all this and more, the ZANU government was convinced about the appropriateness of socialism.

Once more in the words of the Korean Leader mentioned above, 'socialist education is, in essence, an undertaking to transform man into a powerful being.' It should be remembered that under colonialism, the Black Zimbabwean was always oppressed. Because man's social position and role are determined by his consciousness of independence and by his creative ability, it was believed socialism would bring this awareness to the Black Zimbabwean. It was reasonable to move in that direction because according to socialist thinking, even with only these qualities, a man can be a powerful being and can fulfill his responsibility and role as a master of society. Agreeing with the Korean Leader, in his contribution in 'African Education Webring' of March 2008, on capitalism, Walter Rodney says it is not the ability to read and write that allows people to function well in society, but it is their ability to construct knowledge or ways of thinking specific to their environments that does so. In the same discussion, Dr. Semali says it will take generations for colonized societies which are subjected to an imperial school system, to get over the lack of identification. If one does not have an identity, it may not be possible for one to be a master of one's own society and incidentally, Zimbabwe seemed to be struggling with who they really were as they did not even have a national dress, nor real common traditional songs etc in the true sense of the

word common except of course for the new National Anthem, *Ngaikomborerwe Nyika yeZimbabwe*, the English version of which is 'Blessed be the Land of Zimbabwe'. Also, very important was the fact that socialist thinking was to transform everyone into people who can use both hands and minds to develop their country and also maybe get a clear identification.

Gwarinda (1985) who acknowledges Kwame Nkrumah as the last contributor to the socialist theory says that the greatest contribution of the latter was to illustrate that the granting of independence to a colony by a colonial power does not by itself remove the exploitative relationship between the two. Gwarinda adds that Nkrumah also demonstrated how African states now have classes based on the capitalist mode of production and these classes cannot be dissolved except by socialist revolution, thus the adoption of socialism would make sense in Zimbabwe.

According to Mugadzaweta and Benza (2002) the first task of the independent government was to dismantle the inequalities which had characterized the colonial education system and very importantly, the new government needed to keep good faith with its electorate and therefore, declaring education a basic human right was prudent.

Justifying the policy further, Zvobgo (1997) also says as the policy declared education a basic human right, it sought out to do three things i.e.

1. From the points of view of the socio-political needs of Zimbabwe, promote national unity, socialism, egalitarianism and patriotism
2. Remove racial discrimination in education
3. Orient the education system to national goals and enhance social justice and equality of educational opportunity for all races (Zvobgo, 2005).

Zvobgo (1997) says the policy would also satisfy the following reasons:

- There was need to provide equality of educational opportunity for all.
- The nation was in dire need of indigenous manpower at all levels of the economy and civil service if the anticipated economic growth was to be achieved and the move towards self reliance in manpower development could only succeed if provisions were put in place to ensure that education and training opportunities were made available.
- The democratization of the political system needed to be supported by similar action at both the social and economic levels if racial equality and comprehensive national development were to be achieved.
- The electorate expected change and demanded tangible evidence of removal of racial impediments which stood in the way of African advancement prior to independence. The

education initiatives had a multi-purpose concern which government had to address as a matter of urgency.

- It was to increase access to education, enhance curricular relevance, improve the quality of education and stimulate national development through the provision of appropriate human resources.

It was important to develop education quickly as most sub-Saharan Africa, including Zimbabwe, believed it would address the following critical issues:

- Reduce unemployment
- Ensure political socialization of citizens
- Foster national unity and economic growth
- Help in the achievement of equity and equality of opportunities
- Provide manpower needed for rapid socio-economic growth and industrialization
- Since it was politically dangerous to deny anyone education who needed it, governments in developing countries were induced to expand educational facilities so that among other things, popular support was maintained (Kapfunde, 1999).

It was important for government to conform to international expectations in order to be abreast with what was happening in the rest of the world. For instance, it is reported by Little (1994) that in the light of the 1948 United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, the UNESCO Conferences in Addis Ababa, Santiago and Karachi in 1960 and the World and National Literacy Programmes of 1970s, governments of most developing countries made an ideological commitment to achieve universal primary education. These international expectations therefore gave further motivation to the Zimbabwean government to adopt socialism in order to ensure that education ceased to be a privilege for only a few and as such, it should be brought to every child's door-step (Gatawa, 1998; Zvobgo, 2005).

The Influence of Socialism on the Development of Education in Zimbabwe

Many authorities including Zvobgo (2005) note that the achievement of independence in Zimbabwe in 1980 led to the introduction of wide ranging reforms in socio-economic, political and educational spheres. It was mandatory for government to change the trends in education. Part of the reason was that they needed to provide education as 'payback' to the people who had participated in the liberation struggle to bring about independence. As seen from the observation by Kanyongo (2005), some of the reforms were quite hurried and inadequate in a variety of ways. For instance, the goals and targets were not put within a reasonable time-frame. They were not well defined and

focused. However, Kanyongo (2005) acknowledges that the reforms were within the framework of the ZANU party and government ideology of scientific socialism.

The ZANU Election Manifesto of 1980 was the first to enunciate the government education policy. Item 'L' of that document stated that the state would under the ZANU government maintain a uniform educational system and abolish the distinction between African education and European education. It continued that it would be the government's major concern to maintain an educational system of high quality in respect of both its organization and content. According to the 1980 Manifesto, education would be guided by what Zvobgo refers to as the six cardinal principles which were;

1. The abolition of racial education and the utilization of the educational system to develop in the younger generation, a non-racial attitude, a common loyalty
2. The establishment of free and compulsory primary and secondary education for all children regardless of race
3. The abolition of sex discrimination in the education system
4. The orientation of the education system to national goal
5. The basic right of every adult who had no or little education opportunity to literacy and adult education and
6. The special role of education as a major instrument for social transformation

There was no question about the importance attached to education. It was considered a critical factor in economic expansion, in the efficient utilization of land, in raising the living standards of all Zimbabwean, in the enlargement of employment opportunities, in the development of science and technology and in the maintenance of correct balance between development and the environment (Gatawa, 1998). To be commensurate with this importance and to achieve results, government sent many groups of people overseas to the Soviet Union, East German, China, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Cuba and North Korea for the purpose of studying the socialist ideology first hand, an exercise which according to observers unfortunately caused an outcry as the groups never made any meaningful report-backs, meaning therefore that the country did not derive much benefit from the trips. In addition, in spite of all this effort, it is noted by Gatawa (1998) that the impact of the ideology in the classroom practice was negligible because the teachers who were the implementers got no re-orientation in the way of refresher course or in-service training. Soon, Marxist-Leninist socialism was trivialized due to the fact that their competency in the demands of the ideology was compromised.

Maravanyika (1990) observes that education policy transformation in Zimbabwe has been more quantitative than qualitative. The development in

education was characterized by numbers more than anything. From 1979 -1990, and with the abundance of youths who had been denied education during colonialism keen to take advantage of the opportunity, and with the many school doors opening, enrolment in both government and non-government schools rose by 178%, from 189 580 to 2 281 595. This development mostly concerned the general public while elsewhere, in the group 'A' schools (white schools which still existed), privileges were still common. For instance, compared to the other schools in general, there was increased and more adequate equipment, class pupil enrolment was low (14-20), teachers had standard or university qualification and because of unaffordable fees (Tooley, 2005) and boarding fees for the general public, enrolment did not change much.

In addition, according to Zvobgo (2005), enrolment in the group "A" schools remained low because due to the zoning system, children from high density suburbs continued to be excluded (and yet the intention of the policy was to allow children coming from zones which were full to capacity into schools in other zones). Anyway by 1990, Zimbabwe had achieved universal primary education through which by 1983 the number of six to twelve year olds enrolled in school rose by 125%. According to Mugadzaweta and Benza (2002), this massive expansion is often referred to as "Zimbabwe's Education Miracle" because through this development, Zimbabwe moved closer to the achievement of Universal Primary Education for the general public. As the number of primary schools and their enrolments were increasing, so were all other institutions of education, pre-schools included and even the adult literacy section. This was a miracle partly because according to the "Education for All" Towards 2015 document, universal education should have been attained in 2015 and this was 1990!

While the Education Act of 1979 consolidated the existing racial structures which were segregatory, the one for 1987 had a different focus. 1987 is also significant in that it is the year of the unity between ZANU and the Patriotic Party of Joshua Nkomo. The Act stipulated that, It is the objective in Zimbabwe that primary education for every child of school going age shall be compulsory and to this end it shall be the duty of the parents of any such child to ensure that such child attends primary school.

Although by this time socialism seemed to be dying a natural death, while at the same time, reminded by the Nziramasanga Commission Report of 1999, the ZANU PF Election Manifesto of 2008 increased the duration of universal education from just primary to secondary education. Apparently, the Nziramasanga Report (1999) also recommended that the curriculum be changed to focus on employment related skills and other essential skills. To fulfill the desire by government to ensure that children developed both mental and manual skills, schools for 'Education with Production' which as Gatawa (1998) observes, enrolled former refugee children from Mozambique, Zambia and Botswana, were

established on commercial farms (owned by whites) where ready-made facilities and other essentials such as water, electricity, land, farming implements etc were readily available. It should be noted that because these schools were so well equipped, they did not resemble schools nationwide. Maravanyika (1990) notes that while educational policy formulation was influenced by ideological goals, the colonial capitalist infrastructure also contributed a lot to the programme. For instance, none of the ordinary schools had nearly half the infrastructure and other materials as there were at the commercial farm schools. In addition, the children enrolling in these 'new' schools brought with them a culture of hard work and strict discipline from the liberation war, a development which was different from the scenario in the other schools where children still believed in academic education. When practical subjects were introduced in schools, it is reported that some of the children did such remarkable work that they even built their own dormitories and it was observed by this author that some teachers, under the pretext of offering an opportunity for practical work, had school children build houses for the latter. Nevertheless, while this was happening, other schools depended on hired labour for the practical components as both the teachers and pupils (in the original colonial sense) concentrated on academic programmes since it assured them of both further education and high paying employment and were not capable of teaching the 'new' practical subjects.

Great effort to raise the status of technical subjects which was believed would produce totally developed individuals who understand the world they live in and are capable of transforming it (Chung and Ngara, 1985) was made. At the same time the Swedish Development Agency (SIDA) did their part by highly subsidizing the technical subject kits. It should be remembered that socialist belief was to transform all people into those who could use both hands and minds to develop their country.

While the enrolments continued to rise, there was more and more strain for resources on the government, some of which were exacerbated by the drought of 1991-1992 as well as the Economic Structural Adjustment Policy (ESAP) which had been adopted in 1991 in an attempt to improve the economy of the country which was depreciating. ESAP, an economical policy which like the education reform observers say was not adequately transmitted to the population prior to its implementation, demanded the reduction of government expenditure on education as the understanding was that education was a private benefit rather than a social benefit as government had previously perceived.

As a cost recovery measure, Fay Chung, then Minister of Education, proposed the introduction of school fees. This proposal was first made effective in urban schools as it is generally and commonly believed that urban households are more economically viable than rural ones. Once the route of paying school fees was considered, let alone taken, it marked a considerable departure from the socialist philosophy

which hoped to accommodate everyone equally as clearly the class structure, which is capitalist, was once more endorsed by the 'new' system.

Considerations for Curriculum Issues in the Socialist Education System of Independent Zimbabwe

Education with Production which Nyerere says was an extension of the socialist ideology was introduced to the curriculum. Practical subjects such as metal work, building, woodwork, agriculture etc were re-introduced in full force. Mind you, these subjects had been available in some schools especially government and mission schools even during colonialism, although they were not adequately equipped and resourced. According to Ncube (2004), the curriculum did not address the needs of the rural school students and this contributed to the low pass rate along with low teacher morale, lack of resources and the fact that students walked long distances to school. Furthermore, most rural schools were not electrified, making it impossible to teach and learn effectively as most of the machinery and gadgets in the laboratories and workshops required electricity to run effectively. The now so common generator was not a common phenomenon and besides, it would be too expensive to run. In spite of the emergence of the Zimbabwe Integrated Teacher Education Course (ZINTEC) colleges all over the country in 1981, apparently, for a variety of reasons, some subject areas e.g. Physical Education and Sport (PES), still remained without expert teachers, thus perpetuating their poor teaching and learning as well as lack of interest in the subjects. Contrary to the technical subjects referred to earlier, there was no specially hired labour for PES. The ZINTEC was an unconventional crash programme for training teachers which was meant to ensure that all the schools which had increased in number, were properly staffed by adequately qualified teachers. It should be noted that some of these subjects were more preferred than others and the reasons ranged from being naïve, stereotypic, to real genuine reasons on the part of the stakeholder. For instance, while in addition to the reasons given above, the general belief about PES was that it was too expensive, Muswazi in Mararika (2006) would argue that subjects like Hotel and Catering, Computer Studies and Clothing and Textiles, to name but a few, were equally if not more expensive.

Evaluation of Successes and Challenges of the Socialism Education System in Zimbabwe

While Zimbabwe achieved what many developing countries failed to achieve, the "Education Miracle of Zimbabwe", on the other hand, many problems arose as a result of the mistakes made in an attempt to implement the socialist ideology in the education system. Most of the mistakes indicate that there was little consideration of critical issues at planning and implementation levels. Like the situation in many developing countries, schools

were churning out too many academic graduates whose skills were not relevant to the labour market. Young school leavers migrated from rural areas to the urban areas in search of employment. Because the economy was not growing as much as the population, government could not keep up with the pressure of the ever expanding education system as the resources were very strained.

The introduction of school fees resulted in many dropouts as many parents were not able to afford it and a 1994 report by Anthony Beridge reveals that only 83% of 6-12 year olds remained in school due to unaffordability of fees by parents. Through ESAP, education, like many institutions was privatized, although not entirely and this indicated another clear departure from socialism. The ESAP policy focused on the individual rather than the collective approach. Education expansion failed to promote the intended equity between the demands of the labour market and supply from the education system because there was no corresponding growth in the economic sectors to facilitate the absorption of school leavers. The rapidity of social change did not take into account availability of resources and government did not monitor the appropriateness of school curriculum until they were caught unawares by the masses of *irrelevant* school leavers, but this is not surprising because Wadsworth et al. (2002) say in quality control, focus is on the product rather than the process. Generally, quality control is an activity undertaken at the end of the production process so, the results of the education system were bound to be seen only at the end of the school life.

Ncube (2004), supported by Gatawa (1998) and Bray et al. (1986) reveal that in spite of efforts to universalize primary school education, no African country has neared universal secondary school education due to a variety of reasons among which are dropout rates, exam results, high costs and neglect by authorities so it was imperative that those who had foresight and could afford, sought alternative education. As a result, parents sending children to privileged classes, boarding school, seminaries and theological colleges where they were trained for specific occupations. Through such behaviour, Ncube (2004) believes that socialism has also partly introduced bourgeois education. Ncube says this kind of separation defeats the objective of equality and justifies it only in cases where the difference of sex makes such separation absolutely necessary. Yet, this development did not come as a complete surprise. Socialism in education would not be completely successful because as President Mugabe indicated, ZANU was not a vanguard organization. Although they were a mass movement, not all members were necessarily socialist. According to Meisenhelder (1994), the President revealed that there were still people with bourgeois mentality in the party, (and this would inevitably have an effect on the education system later).

Like many researchers on issues of education reforms in Africa, Jansen (2002) highlights the fact that

curriculum failure has been a result of an inadequate consideration of both technical/practical as well as critical/political contingencies which have an impact on curriculum. Jansen (1991) also points out that postcolonial curriculum reform fails due to curriculum continuity e.g. same text books and syllabi etc are used in the new paradigm. As soon as they got into power in 1980, the ZANU party immediately effected education reform without having prepared adequately for the change, no wonder Maravanyika (1990) points out that among the factors that hindered substantial qualitative change is the short time period since independence. He adds that a particular problem was the preference of students and parents for a traditional academic education of the sort often denied Blacks under colonial rule over the new practical and vocational curriculum. Another grievous omission made by government in their adoption of socialism as a guiding ideology for the education system was their failure to clearly clarify their aims and objectives (Sifuna, 2005).

An evaluation by Gatawa (1998) of policies shows that whereas in other African countries reforms were the brain-child of national task forces or education commissions, in Zimbabwe, they seemed to be directives handed down to schools and related institutions and as such, the *buy-in* necessary for effective implementation by teachers was missing. He also observes that the classroom dimensions of Marxist-Leninist socialism were not clearly spelt out and that it is doubtful whether the education leadership was itself clear on how this ideological position translated into classroom pedagogy. According to Chung and Ngara (1985) polytechnic education failed in Soviet schools as tried by Krupskaya, wife of Lenin. Chung and Ngara (1985) give the reason as that socialist education would require the abolition of class distinctions, gaps between rural and urban and introduction of universal education, yet in Zimbabwe, socialism seemed to be characterized by these ills. While the aspirations by the ZANU government may have been democratic, Zvobgo (2005) observes that their pursuit should have taken cognizance of such practical realities as financial, material and human resource limitations which imposed serious constraints.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, his paper highlighted the fact that while the intentions of the ZANU government may have been noble, their strategies seemed to lack in a number of ways particularly at the planning and implementation levels and therefore, socialism in education had to be abandoned. They also lacked monitoring strategies to establish relevance of the curriculum to ensure the appropriateness of the school graduate to the industry for economic development. Quality control should have been an on-going exercise rather than a summative one. The government failed to do wide consultations with groups that mattered such as teachers, to ensure *buy-in*

by the latter. Both natural and unnatural phenomena such as the drought of 1991-1992 and ESAP respectively had devastating effects on the chosen school of thought, socialism. Finally, the fact that not all members of the party and government believed completely in socialism made it difficult to ensure that everybody was bound by the same thinking, hence the emergence of other schools of thought and the demise of socialism.

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