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EDUCATION IN SERVICE OF PATRONAGE?

AN ANALYSIS OF THE COLLISION BETWEEN LEARNING-ORIENTED REFORMS AND A COHESIVE
AND COHERENT EDUCATION BUREAUCRACY SYSTEM IN ZIMBABWE

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Education in Service of Patronage?
An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a
Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

The evolution of Zimbabwe's education provides a curious case of contradictions. Zimbabwe's education system was once the pride of the nation, having achieved significant strides with regards to universal access to basic education for all in the first decade of independence. The achievements which have been termed an 'education miracle' placed Zimbabwe way ahead of its contemporaries in Southern Africa. However, this success began to fizzle in the second decade, resulting in a near total collapse of the country's education system towards the end of the second, and into the third decade. Further, the quantitative success of the formative years did not directly correspond with qualitative achievements. While there are numerous ways to explain Zimbabwe's quandary, this paper looks at the limitations of the education system as a function of a governance structure and the politics – bureaucracy interface. The paper hypothesises that the design of the education system, which is a product of the overall political context in Zimbabwe, makes the education delivery machinery coherent towards the attainment of other political goals that are not necessarily learning, as such, learning is only an emergent property. It further contends that the overall education bureaucracy and sector reform attempts must be understood in the broader political context which had been deliberately set up to restrict citizen voices in education and limit the inclusive participation of other key stakeholders in the governance of the sector.

Key words: Bureaucracy, politics, education, learning-oriented, inclusive participation

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The Millennium Development Goal number 2 - to achieve universal primary education – has largely been achieved globally (Levy, Cameroon, Hoadley and Naidoo 2016). In the case of Zimbabwe, the goal was attained by the end of the country's first decade of education. Yet in the face of such impressive achievement, the 2018 World Development Report decries the lack of learning. Zimbabwe's case is no different. The story of Zimbabwe's education system has been told from multiple angles. Both the success posted in the first decade of independence, and the demise that began to emerge towards the end of the second decade and into the third after independence, can be accounted for in many ways. Many scholars have tried to account for the fall mostly looking at the resource constraints as the cause behind poor performance especially in the post-Economic Structural Adjustment era (Shizha and Kariwo 2011; Mapolisa and Tshabalala 2013). While other authors focus on the quality and quantity of inputs, for instance, the number of qualified teachers, continuous teacher development and availability of teaching and learning materials (Garira 2014; Nyagura 1993¹; Kanyongo 2005). Though there is a case for looking at the proximate causes, the challenge of learning is far much more complex. Cognisant of all these perspectives, this paper takes on a governance perspective.

The purpose of this paper is to explore how the education system was affected by and responded to the unfolding state capture and the shifts in the broad political economy of Zimbabwe. The paper looks at the interface between politics and the bureaucracy in an attempt to understand the current system of education in the country. Through empirical case studies, the paper additionally looks at the implications of the politics-bureaucracy interface on learning supportive reforms. Using the case study approach the paper drills down on reform attempts around school governance and the efforts to balance horizontal control, autonomy and the traditional vertical arrangements.

To start with, the paper provides a historical account of Zimbabwe's political settlement, the early efforts at building a democratic and an efficient and effective state bureaucracy, the evolution of state capture and the changes in the education system. It then zeros down on particular reform efforts to try and understand the character of the

¹ Nyagura, L.M (1993) Quantitative Developments, Quality and Equity Concerns in Zimbabwean Primary and Secondary Education Sectors. Zimbabwe Journal of Educational Research. Volume 5 Number 1

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

bureaucracy and how this militates against progressive reforms that are deemed to be out of sync with other political priorities.

The research is guided by the following overarching questions;

- i. How do interactions between politics and bureaucracy influence efforts to improve the quality of education in Zimbabwe?
- ii. Is Zimbabwe's education bureaucracy coherent? In pursuit of what purpose?

The methodology and analysis take place at three levels;

- i. The macro-political settlement level
- ii. The sector governance level
- iii. A specific case study

1.2 The political economy context, and reforms in the Zimbabwean education system

1.2.1 Independence and the evolution of state capture in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe gained its independence in 1980 after a protracted liberation struggle. The denouement of the political and military conflict was done through a political settlement dubbed the Lancaster House Agreement (LHA) of 1979. The settlement created a platform for competitive political governance. ZANU PF emerged victorious albeit not with a landslide margin forcing it to accommodate other actors in government whom it had contested against in the elections. The post-independence government was, however, eager to consolidate power and dominance. The party leadership cunningly out-maneuvred opponents internally and externally to achieve a personalised authoritarian regime edging towards a one-party state. The formative years saw pro-poor development planning which had a dual purpose. On one hand, the policies were designed to redress the colonial injustices and on the other hand create a solid political support base, especially in the rural areas through increasing access to free social services. Elements of patronage and extractive predatory tendencies emerged in the early years of independence and extended their reach to weaken the bureaucracy making the state bureaucracy subservient to party interests.

This trajectory continues to confound many as scholars seek to establish what really went wrong with the promising young nation of 1980. Multiple hypotheses compete for validation. On one hand, there are arguments to the effect that the regime started well

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

with the best intentions and later became conflicted and predatory (Bret 2005). Proponents of this version look at the success in social services expansion and 'stability' in the political sphere in the formative years of independent Zimbabwe. While conveniently avoiding the tendencies emerging from the onset of independence as seen through the supremacy of the party, the drive toward a one-party state and the brutal suppression of dissenting voices. On the other hand, there is the view that the ZANU PF party has always been inherently predatory, and it only took long to manifest because it inherited a solid economy and functioning institutions that took long to dismantle. This paper takes a more nuanced view looking at the interplay between a state that is organised around a dominant party or personalised governance viz – a- viz a fragmented, competitive impersonal governance arrangement. Understanding the overarching governance structure is important as it helps to unpack the obtaining realities at public sector level. In other words, the political governance structure that defines the bureaucratic culture and character and subsequently public sector effectiveness in service delivery.

The paper takes an approach that looks at the evolution of statecraft overtime in the newly independent state.

The period 1980 – 1990 is important as the first decade of independence and a season of hope and great expectations. It is also significant in that the ZANU PF government pronounces that 1980 is the year of the people and they go on to build the state around this rhetoric supported by the socialist ideology. However, a closer analysis of the period reveals that the party had long since abandoned the socialist ideology around the 1976 internal rebellion within the party then still a liberation guerrilla movement. In effect, the state building exercise in Zimbabwe was the epitome of isomorphic mimicry. State institutions and the bureaucracy were modelled after the British model with all appearance of a meritocratic rule-bound state. Notwithstanding this "cut and paste," state coherence was achieved through deal-making, alliances and patronage.

To deal with competing interests the ZANU PF government developed a highly centralised patrimonial governance structure. Decision-making and policy formulation functions were vested in the Prime Minister. Secondly, Mugabe as the then Prime Minister strengthened the coalition between the political elites and the military which had been forged during the struggle. The Constitutional Amendment of 1987 was to accord excessive executive powers to the president and abolish the Prime Minister's

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

office. This served to entrench personalised dominant rule in Zimbabwe. By 1989 the Zimbabwean government exhibited traits of presidential authoritarianism (Sandbrook in Kawabata 2006).

The centralised decision-making and personalised rule highly impacted bureaucratic formation. At independence, very few black Africans had experience to hold senior bureaucratic posts due to the exclusionary policies of colonial rule. This played out in a couple of ways but important to this paper is how this 'weakened' the bureaucracy to the extent that it became a malleable tool in the hands of politicians. The rapid transformation of bureaucracy within a short space of time hampered a smooth transfer of skills and experience in the running of an efficient bureaucracy. Sachikonye notes that within three years (1980 to 1983) the number of African officers in the bureaucracy had risen exponentially from 3,360 to 17,690 (Sachikonye 2012).

Senior level positions in government became a ticket into the elite league to be coveted by the few educated blacks (Makumbe 1994; Meisenhelder 1994). Makumbe (1994) argues that the ruling elite cunningly used tradition and cultural primitive loyalty concepts in the public services as a means of controlling and exerting influence on the bureaucracy. This created a public service which is more obedient than rule-bound and consequently susceptible to patronage. The traditional concepts of rulers and subjects held much sway over the population, extending the view of the party/government as the chief over their subjects (Chung 2006).

The ZANU PF government used state power through coercion and elite bargaining to maintain control over key institutions and apparatus. The new government swiftly moved in to assert its control over state institutions by appointing party loyalists and ex-combatants into senior positions both at the central and local government. Bratton and Masunungure (2011) note that '...predatory tendencies were evident from the outset within the ruling party ...' (Bratton and Masunungure 2011; 6). The resultant effect was an incremental weakening of the bureaucracy and the rise of direct political interference in the day to day administration of government departments.

Of notable influence in the weakening of state institutions is the introduction of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) in 1990. While predatory tendencies were evident from the onset within the ruling party (Chung 2006, Bratton and Masunungure 2011; Makumbe 1994), this paper contends that the political leaders did not completely abandon a developmental agenda until 1990. Between 1990 and

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

1992 the ZANU PF government moved to officially abandon the socialist rhetoric in favour of neoliberal policy through the ESAP.

One of the debilitating effects of ESAP was the incapacitation of the bureaucracy through ‘the option given to civil servants to receive a very tempting “golden handshake” to persuade them to leave government employment’ (Chung 2006; 268). The voluntary early retirement by competent and experienced senior technocrats in the public service including Permanent Secretaries (PS) and Principal Directors during the early EASP years opened an opportunity for capture and politicisation of the bureaucracy. ZANU PF filled up these posts with party cadres. Loyalty to the party became the first qualification for a senior government position. Bratton and Masunungure state that ‘...henceforth, cabinet Ministers could rely on permanent secretaries who would dependably execute the party’s bidding’ (Bratton and Masunungure 2011; 17).

Capture and predatory practices did not end in the public service, perhaps no other case is as illustrative as the capture of the judiciary, which set in motion various actions that had debilitating effects on governance and public sector effectiveness. The introduction of Constitutional Amendment No.7 was a key element in undoing judicial independence. The Amendment created an executive presidency which gave unbridled power to the executive. One key area was the appointment of the Chief Justice and all judges to both the Supreme Court and the High court. This was significant in that it affected the independence of the judiciary as they now served at the ‘pleasure’ of the President. However, the judiciary at least until 2000 continued with a measure of independence as the bench was occupied by seasoned and respectable judges.

In 2000, at the onset of the land reform programme both the High and Supreme Courts ruled in favour of the commercial white farmers and declared the farm invasions illegal. The response from the state was to unleash war veterans on the judiciary. The war veterans physically invaded the Supreme Court and demanded the immediate sacking of the Chief Justice Anthony Gubbay and threatened white judges with violence (Bratton and Masunungure 2011). ZANU PF took this opportunity to embark on a process of ‘transforming’ the judiciary by appointing known ZANU PF party functionaries to the bench. Chief Justice Gubbay was replaced by Chidyausiku, a former Member of Parliament and Minister in the ZANU PF government. Bratton and Masunungure contend that ‘...the ruling elite dropped any pretense of constitutionalism’

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

(Bratton and Masunungure 2011; 25). This signaled the death of the rule of law in Zimbabwe. With a pro-ZANU PF judiciary, the party went on an unrestrained path of human rights abuses with irreverent disregard for the rule of law and impunity for corruption and constitutional violations.

The end of the second decade in an independent Zimbabwe finds ZANU PF severely weakened by the untenable socio-economic conditions in the country as well as internal fissures and factional fights. The country had all the signs of a failed state, all basic services such as health and education had totally collapsed. At the same time, ZANU PF succession fights began to take a pre-eminent position in Zimbabwe's politics. The factional fights created confusion as the factions fiercely contested for Mugabe's approval to be anointed, successor. What this did at the state level was to create a contestation among the factions to use state resources to buy patronage and at the same time appease Mugabe, the then President. For instance, it became common for Ministers to arbitrarily order bureaucrats on where to establish a new school or clinic or to divert state resources for party activities such as the President's birthday. By the year 2008, traditional alliances within ZANU PF between politicians, the military and white commercial farmers had faltered as the commercial farmers no longer served a purpose in the political space. Further, the internal factional fights had severely crippled the bureaucracy. The words of the Presidential spokesperson, George Charamba aptly describe the state of the bureaucracy at this point. Charamba in his weekly newspaper article under the pen name Nathaniel Manheru writes,

... the Zimbabwean bureaucracy was bereft of intellectuals, bereft to levels of anaemia. That all it produced was staid at best, thoughtless at worst... The Zimbabwe bureaucracy seemed easy to encompass by way of its thought-tracks, unvaryingly predictable. (Manheru 2017)

This aptly describes a bureaucracy which had been 'traumatised' and subjected to political battering to a point of paralysis and inability to act independently towards fulfilling its mandate.

The combination of political and economic crises as well as collapsed state capacity led to the electoral defeat of ZANU PF in the 2008 harmonised elections. President Mugabe had lost control over coalition partners and could not balance off factions within the military. As it emerged the military was split between a faction which was pro - retired Major General Mujuru and a faction loyal to Mugabe through Mnangagwa. The

Education in Service of Patronage?
An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a
Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

factional fight had created cannibalistic behaviour amongst the alliance as each claimed monopoly over remnants of the economy and public sector. Dawson and Kelsall contend that 'The crony capitalism that developed in the 1990s degenerated into overt looting when the 'rules of the game' were discarded...' (Dawson and Kelsall 2011; 13).

1.2.2 The iterations and adaptations in the education system 1980 - 2006

The education sector provides a complex picture of development orientation and capture. Significant strides were made overtly with regards to increased access, quality of outputs and infrastructure development. In 1981, the government increased spending in the education sector from only 4% of the national budget to 22.6% in the first year of independence. With regards to the construction of schools, the government moved swiftly to establish schools, especially in the rural areas. In 1980, there were only 177 secondary schools and within 10 years the country had constructed 1354 secondary schools (IIEP (2001). By the 1990s the country had managed to achieve near-universal access to primary education (91% enrolment) and had one of the highest literacy rates across Africa at 91.4% (Shizha and Kariwo 2011).

These gains were achieved under the guidance of Dzangai Mutumbuka, who was tasked with reorganising the education sector and became the first Minister of education in independent Zimbabwe. The Minister managed, dexterously, to create a delicate but effective coalition comprising the liberation struggle educationist, the young professionals coming from the diaspora and the junior level African professionals already in the system. This formed a critical alliance of development-oriented professionals who were a bulwark against the white conservative bureaucrats and to an extent the predatory elements within the ZANU PF camp.

Reorganising the bureaucracy in order to align with government priorities in education proved to be a complex undertaking. A lot of compromises had to be made to accommodate the senior bureaucrats from the colonial regime, the new elites who had risen quickly due to party affiliation and the mandate of the department. Fay Chung contends that '...some of the new bureaucrats had tribal agendas. Others were bent on utilising their new-found powers for corrupt purposes, leading to distortions of government programmes.' (Chung 2006; 270). Party directives could take prominence over any consideration with regards to recruitment and operations, for instance, decisions that related to where to construct a school or who to give a contract for the

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

construction became influenced by the party. Party directives to bureaucrats largely found accommodation and compromise as the bureaucrats either feared to antagonise the politicians or felt indebted to them. Bratton and Masunungure note that ‘... the rapid growth of the civil service was led by the mass appointment of school teachers...., who, in return, granted political loyalty to the ruling party that had created so many attractive job opportunities’ (Bratton and Masunungure 2011; 14). The ultimate effect was to create a fraternity of educators and school administrators who felt indebted to the party and eager to oblige the political establishment (Chung 2006). What is more, the political establishment felt entitled to that loyalty. Nonetheless, the developmental gains could not be denied.

The progress made was however short lived as the education sector started on a downward spiral in the mid-1990s until it reached a point of crisis in 2008. Both schools and the bureaucracy were run down to a point where the system failed and caved in. Kanyongo (2005) argues that the germs of decline were sown in the policy design of the first decade. According to Kanyongo, ‘the policy formulation process of the first decade after Independence was hurried and highly centralised’ (Kanyongo 2005; 70). As highlighted above, the coherent and cohesive education bureaucracy depended heavily on the character of the Minister and as the first wave of post-independence Ministers and senior bureaucrats stepped aside, the education structure began to falter.

The quality of learning has been in recession since the era of ESAP (1990 – 1992). At the core of ESAP was market liberalisation, cutting down on public expenditure (including rolling back government subsidies), de-regularisation (especially with regards to labour and investment laws), decentralisation and rolling back of the state. The cut in public expenditure affected both capital and recurrent expenditure across government including the education department. This inevitably affected the motivation and allegiance of teachers ultimately impacting on the quality of the service provided (Brett 2005). The 1999 Nziramasanga commission of enquiry into the state of the education in Zimbabwe highlighted the policy and administrative mismatch. The centralised bureaucracy’s control in almost a draconian fashion was highlighted as ineffective. Chung notes that power was profoundly centralised at the central government and distributed unevenly. The model of operation was adjudged to be a stumbling block to reforms. Lack of decentralisation and democratisation of the sector was also identified as flaws in the sector that would hinder sustainability. The

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

curriculum was noted to be outdated, encouraging rote learning and favouring the academic route over technical and vocational skills. This, the commission noted had impacted on the country's capacity for the human capital formation to meet the needs of a modern economy.

The rise and fall of Zimbabwe's education sector accentuated by changes in the political economy of the country discussed in this section demonstrate the background foreshadowing more recent changes in the Zimbabwean context.

1.2.3 The GNU and post GNU politics 2008 - 2016

In 2008, the ZANU PF lost an election to the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) for the first time since independence. The MDC however, failed to garner the 50 +1% a constitutional requirement to be declared a winner in presidential elections. This gave the ZANU PF military and political coalition time to regroup and unleash a campaign of post-election violence, which threatened to destabilise the country. In the end through SADC intervention, the MDC and ZANU PF were forced into a settlement that resulted in the establishment of a Government of National Unity (GNU).

The GNU ushered in a period of relative macroeconomic stability. The MDC moved in to restore institutional integrity and professionalism in the ministries it was heading, making quick developmental gains in social areas such as education and health. But their developmental stance was met with ZANU PF resistance across the government, which made it almost impossible to institute radical sustained reforms in the education sector.

While the MDC focused on making the government work and service delivery, ZANU PF regrouped to consolidate its power in the key ministries such as the security ministry and the ministry of mines. These ministries were used to stack party coffers and military alliance was instrumental in securing electoral victory of the ZANU PF in 2013.

Though, the ZANU PF coalition came together to electoral victory in 2013, the party was riddled with internal factions to a point of no return. Shortly after the 2013 electoral victory, factional elements combined to oust then Vice President and second secretary of the party, Joice Mujuru. ZANU PF even amended its constitution to give Mugabe absolute powers to appoint people to key positions in the party. Internal democracy was shut – the only elected position was that of the first secretary. The factional fights

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

spilled over into the bureaucracy as the victorious faction started to purge all real or perceived Joice Mujuru allies in government and parastatals.

The electoral victory of ZANU PF did not enjoy legitimacy and lacked a popular mandate. The ZANU PF government did not have credibility both locally and internationally. The economy which began to show signs of recovery during the GNU (reaching a peak of 11.9% growth rate in 2011) stagnated while the gulf between the citizens and ruling elites deepened.

ZANU PF continued to consolidate its power and reviving the securitisation of the state started in the early 2000s. The party put military top brass in government positions and in state owned enterprises, which inculcated a culture of command and control within the bureaucracy. The bureaucracy could not work independently and innovatively.

Beyond securitisation of the state and use of government resources for party purposes, the ZANU PF factional battles intensified with the race for leadership succession. The economy became the battlefield for the ZANU PF succession battle. The Mnangwira faction was pitted against a faction led by the then First Lady, Grace Mugabe. State institutions could not act against any of it, but instead were accomplices in the process. It was evident that Mugabe was no longer the dominant sole centre of power. Most government bureaucrats were caught up in the tussle and without knowing which side would win, they chose caution and played safe. This had an impact on public service and made it impossible for any developmental initiative to take root.

The above discussion underscores the context in which the concerted efforts at wide ranging and much needed education reforms took place. The main aim of this paper is to build on the above discussion looking at how the bureaucracy responds to political shifts and how this interaction plays out in a specific period between 2007 and 2016.

1.3 Problem statement

Pritchett argues that 'existing systems of education have some elements of promoting learning as an objective but are mainly coherent as a system only around enrolment' (Pritchett 2015; 1). Zimbabwe's education system to an extent fits the bill. The 'phenomenal' quantitative successes posted in the first decade of independence have not been commensurate with qualitative success Nyagura (1993). The government of Zimbabwe has over the years drawn up policy blueprints aimed at improving the quality of learning in the schools in Zimbabwe. However, institutionalisation and consistent follow through on these reform initiatives has been lacking. The enduring challenge

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

seems to be around how the system is organised and the purpose it must serve. The puzzle that this paper seeks to tease out is the degree to which learning reforms are deterred and find themselves in conflict with other objectives of the education system and government at large. The study will test the following research hypothesis;

- a) A bureaucracy that is coherent but not oriented to learning will resist learning supportive reforms.
- b) Fragmented decision-making systems with competition among principles can create space for progressive reforms to be initiated and to take root.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The objectives of this paper are to:

- I. Understand the impact of country-level political settlements on education sector reforms in a country whose governance structures are characterised by vacillations between a dominant semi rule-bound governance structure and a personalised competitive governance arrangement.
- II. To explore the idea of bureaucratic coherence vis -a -vis delivery of quality learning outcomes
- III. Further, offer an alternative explanation to the crisis of learning in Zimbabwe

1.5 Methodology

This section concerns itself with the methods used in this research project. The study made use of qualitative research methods. The purpose of the study informed the choice of method to be used. The intention is to gain an in-depth understanding of reform efforts and the political institutions that mediate these reforms. Qualitative methods allow for the research to take into account the whole experience of interacting and observing research participants which enrich the analysis process.

The research intended to trace the reforms and key developments in the education sector and the process tracing method was employed to attain this. Process tracing is a qualitative research method that attempts to identify the causal processes, the chain and mechanism between a potential cause or causes (Bennett and Checkel 2015). According to Bennett and Checkel, process tracing can be both bottom up (i.e. develop hypotheses) and top down. Bennett and Checkel point out that Bottom-up process tracing, is usually preceded by a period of immersion in a case to collect extensive

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

information and come up with potential explanations. Top-down process tracing can only be used after a researcher has gathered sufficient information, which tests process-tracing hypotheses and theories. One of the important stages in top-down process tracing is “to develop case-specific observable implications of the theories in question” (Bennett and Checkel 2015, 18).

Process tracing is a research method for tracing causal mechanisms using detailed, within-case empirical analysis of how a causal process plays out in an actual case. Process tracing can be used both for case studies that aim to gain a greater understanding of the causal dynamics that produced the outcome of a particular historical case and to shed light on generalizable causal mechanisms linking causes and outcomes within a population of causally similar cases.

The analytical added value of process tracing is that it enables strong causal inferences to be made about how causal processes work in real-world cases based on studying within-case mechanistic evidence. But process tracing is a single-case method, meaning that only inferences about the operation of the mechanism within the studied case are possible because this is the evidence gathered through tracing the process in the case. Therefore, to generalize beyond the studied case, researchers need to couple process-tracing case studies with comparative methods to be able to generalize about causal processes.

Case studies

The use of case studies was deliberate to locate the phenomenon under investigation in context. It also allows for an in-depth exploration of any relationship between defined variables.

Data collection, Analysis and Presentation

The study utilised desk reviews, secondary data analysis as well as key informant interviews.

Key informant interviews (KIIs); the study identified key informants from current and former senior personnel of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE), renowned governance experts and teachers’ unions. The informants included;

11 Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education officials based at the ministry’s head office

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

2 former Ministers of education

2 Education governance experts who have worked with the Ministry of Education,

1 university professor engaged in teacher training curriculum development and

1 representative from the Zimbabwe Teachers' Union.

The selection criteria for interviewees was based on three aspects, expertise, years of service in the ministry, seniority and current positions. The selection was guided by Bernard (2002) who proposes that informants should be people with in-depth knowledge, who are willing to talk and share insights. The selected individuals were adjudged to fit the bill. The interviews will be sighted anonymously as per agreement with the respondents.

An interview guide was developed and used to guide the interviews. The guide used open ended questions that allowed for in-depth conversation and for the researcher to pick up and probe further on cues of interest to the study. The interview guide was divided into two broad sections (i) understanding the system and (ii) decentralisation and governance. These three sections formed the basis of themes identification during analysis.

Document review; the research also reviewed key policy documents such as the Education Act, The Prime Minister's Directive, Statutory Instruments and the new curriculum Framework.

Data analysis

In qualitative research, the key to good data analysis lies in meticulous recording and organising of information in the search for recurrent themes, emerging trends in the data and outliers (Neuman, 2011). The researcher took daily field notes and recordings (permission to record was sought, and recordings were done after consent had been granted by the respondents). Most employees of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education however, refused to be audio recorded, and the researcher relied on taking notes.

Large quantities of data were obtained from the Key Informant Interviews and document review. The vital stage in the analysis was sorting out the data and meticulously sifting through to find a logical thread that can be analysed and made use of to tell a coherent story.

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

Data presentation; the data was organised according to key themes. Data will be presented in the form of descriptive texts, themes, selected quotations from the interviews, tables for illustration and references to literature. The themes have formed the sections and subsections of the findings chapter.

1.6 Limitations of the study

Qualitative research has been challenged concerning the validity and generalizability of its findings. The charge laid against it is that it borders on subjectivity and cannot be used to explain similar occurrences in a different context. While there is indeed value in the criticism, however this study is clear on its scope and intention. This study explores a case study to understand the events and process in these specific cases. The first limitation is that the findings cannot be generalised as they apply to the cases reviewed. Process tracing by design is a single case study and as such the results are only valid in reference to that particular case. The research does not seek to generalise but to explain in depth the reform efforts and failures that took place.

The second limitation is that the study has a definite time dimension to it. This study is focusing on a particular juncture in the history of the country and the sector – that is the time of the GNU. This period presents the first colossal shift in the political landscape of the country post-independence. These national level political changes are of interest to the extent that they influenced or did not influence the effectiveness of service delivery in the education sector.

Further, it is also important to note that the author is a development practitioner who was actively involved in providing technical support to the Ministry of Education, Sports, Arts and Culture on the school governance reform efforts between 2010 and 2012. The author participated in the design and roll-out of the School Development Committee Capacity Reinforcement programme. The researcher's prior involvement in the reforms presents some dilemma with regards to researcher bias bringing the author's own experiences and point of view in the research. However, the author being cognisant of this sought to engage in an ethical, objective manner which emphasised rigour in research design. One of the areas that the researcher paid particular attention to was respondents. The research used purposive sampling, and the criterion for selecting interview respondents was based on the respondent's knowledge of the sector and period being studied, length of service in the Ministry, etc. This was to avoid only interviewing the respondents that the research was already acquainted with. Within the

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

Ministry itself, the author used the snowballing technique. From each responded the researcher would ask to be referred to the next official thereby reducing chances of selecting respondents already known to the researcher before the research. This approach was also useful in that the researcher would be directed to a source whom the respondent felt was best placed to answer the questions. In addition to the mitigation measures, the author's privileged position during the reforms provided valuable background and context awareness which made the research interviews more engaging and exhaustive. The author was able to do rigorous fact-checking and validation with respondents. This process enriched the study.

The research methods utilised were chosen because they are appropriate with regards to being able to extract information within a single case. Qualitative research was preferred because it allows for description, interpretation and explanation of the social phenomenon and why an intervention is or is not working (McNabb, 2010).

1.7 Outline of the paper

Chapter two introduces the analytical framework. In this chapter, the discussion moves from being purely academic to explaining concepts in relation to obtaining realities in the Zimbabwean context. The study works through the sector level institutional arrangement analysis. The chapter sets the stage for a discussion on Zimbabwe's bureaucracy.

Chapter three provides a prelude to the empirical analysis of reform case studies by looking in depth at the effects of the political developments on the education bureaucracy and the system broadly — the collapse of coherence within the bureaucracy which corresponds with the fragmentation and conflict-ridden politics of the country between 2005 to 2016. By 2007, the education bureaucracy had been effectively paralysed and unable to discharge its essential functions. The schools were more or less left to their own devices. The politicians took hold of the education sector all the way down to school level as Mugabe tried to return hold over teachers.

Chapter four drills into the research findings and explores the research questions with empirical evidence from the case studies. The two subsections of the chapter focus on the reforms initiated in the period 2009 to 2016 and to what extent the reform efforts were affected by the political context.

The final chapter concludes the paper summarising the discussion and the key findings.

Chapter 2: Analytical Framework

2.1 Introduction

The focus of this research is on the interactions between politics, the education bureaucracy and efforts to improve the quality of education in Zimbabwe. With this in mind, the story is told and analysed at two levels. There is the national level of political settlement with various political actors driven by competing incentives and power contestation. At this level, the powerful actors define and shape how power is exercised and whether the overarching model of securing power is through competitive politics or dominance and subjugation. This level of political settlements was the preoccupation of the first chapter.

The second level of analysis, which is of direct relevance here, relates to the sector level arrangements. The focus is on the institutional arrangements and configuration of the bureaucracy and how these are shaped by national politics as mentioned above. It looks at how politics inform the operations of the bureaucracy. In this paper, we look at the governance of public education in relation to context. We use this framework to explore which institutional arrangements are likely to bring about effectiveness in public education. This inevitably brings focus on the bureaucracy and how the overall political context shapes the character of the bureaucracy.

The paper makes use of Levy's distinction between the country-level political settlements from the institutional level governance framework (Levy 2018). At the level of the political settlements, the discussion centres on the interaction between actors, power and incentives that define the country's political context illustrated by a four quadrant of political typologies (see table 1 below). The political typology distinguishes between whether political power is organised around political competition or by dominance, 'whether the institutional rules of the game are personalised or impersonal' (Levy 2018; 13). This produces national level four quadrant political typologies which define the political context as illustrated in table 3.

Education in Service of Patronage?
An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

Table 1. Governance Typologies

		Personalised	Impersonal
	Dominant	(i) Discretionary – dominant party or leader, top-down leadership; weak institutions	(ii) Monopolised political control/ dominant party or personality. Institutions are rule-bound and impersonal
	Competitive	(iii) Competitive and personalised institutions, weak settlements are a result of patronage and clientelism	(iv) Competitive rule-bound. Formal rules of the game, impersonal and rule-bound

Levy explains the four ideal types shown in table 1 as follows,

- Dominant-personalised—where elite cohesion is high, and power is exercised top-down by the leadership, with limited constraint.
- Dominant with rule-by-law—where elite cohesion is high, and power is top-down but anchored in rules which institutionalize how it is to be exercised.
- Personalized competitive (or competitive clientelist)—where elite cohesion is low, the settlement revolves around an agreement that political power should change hands on an electorally competitive basis, but the rules of the game are personalised.
- Competitive with rule-of-law—where politics is competitive, and impersonal rules prevail.

At the level of bureaucratic configuration, however, this plays out slightly different though with some overlaps. The discussion at the level of institutions looks at whether the bureaucracy is organised along the lines of vertical hierarchical relationships or horizontal negotiated peer- to - peer structure and whether the rules are personalised or impersonal. These distinctions generate a set of institutional arrangements or bureaucratic characterisation that can be plotted on a four-quadrant framework focusing at sector or institutional level as shown in table 2.

Education in Service of Patronage?
An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

top left cell, the situation is complicated in so far as the system can be personalised and developmental at the same time or personalised and predatory. Rules in this cell are not the defining feature of governance. The bureaucratic norms will be characterised by nested patron-client relationship. The bottom left quadrant, cell (iii), presents a messy picture where multiple principals compete, and the rules are poorly defined and personalised. Levy argues, however, that this cell can hold the possibility for development-oriented actors to initiate innovative reforms at a small-scale, carving space for themselves and working incrementally over time till the reforms take root and become institutionalised (Levy 2018, Levy 2014).

The Zimbabwean education bureaucracy can be said to be a hybrid of the three cells. However, in as much as it's a hybrid, when one applies a time dimension lens what emerges is that at any given time there is a dominant character which is more pervasive and defines the institutional arrangements. So, in reality, what we have is not a clear-cut delineation of one ideal type but a mix. To be able to illustrate these 'grey areas effectively' the paper turns once more to Levy's heuristic use of the quasi-quantitative illustration to show a combination of the ideal types. Levy allocates 100 percentage weighting distributed across the four quadrants. This case applies this heuristic tool against a time series analysis. The most dominant characterisation gets a high percentage that shows its dominance during a specified time period. Because the characterisation is hinged on the changing context and political settlements, the distribution over time is not uniform. Instead, it serves to show corresponding shifts and changes the behaviour of the bureaucracy. Table 3 gives an illustration of this summary.

Table 3. Heuristic illustration

Hierarchical	20	60
Competitive/negotiated	10	10

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

The example laid out in table 3 above depicts a highly impersonal and hierarchical arrangement which would imply a bureaucracy which is coherent around rules emphasising vertical accountability. Such a bureaucracy is likely to be effective in delivering services. This heuristic device will be used extensively in the next section as the paper delves more into the character of the bureaucracy in Zimbabwe over a specified period of time.

Chapter 3: Overview of the Bureaucracy 2005 to 2016

This chapter is a prelude to the discussion on the empirical case studies. It builds on chapter one to give the context of the institutional arrangement in Zimbabwe between 2007 and 2016. It is also informed by the discussions in the analytical framework chapter.

3.1 Bureaucracy and Service Delivery in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe's bureaucracy has been described as "... cumbersome and heavily centralised, secretive, lacking in transparency and with poor communication of decisions [and is] inaccessible to the general public"². At face value, the Zimbabwean bureaucracy fits the bill of the Weberian one with all the trappings of a modern public administration structure. As opposed to the bureaucratic entrepreneurs and notions of bureaucratic freedoms (Carpenter, 2001), Zimbabwe's bureaucracy finds itself deeply enmeshed in the country's politics to the point of paralysis (Charamba, 2017). The most significant handicap for the bureaucracy to emerge as an actor and attain bureaucratic autonomy as envisaged by Carpenter and articulated in his works, is weak civil society, a dominant and highly personalised political system and fungibility of tenure and existence of strong predatory coalitions.

A number of scholars have written about public service and the bureaucracy in Zimbabwe. However, a cursory look at the literature reveals that the focus has by and large been technical, looking at the quality of the bureaucracy from a technical perspective (Makumbe 1994, Agere 1998, Zigora and Chigwamba 2000, Naing 2012). This study looks at bureaucracy in Zimbabwe as being a victim of history, culture and dominant party politics. It further articulates the shift from a seemingly rule-based system to an open obedience-based system compliant along party and personality interests.

In the case of Zimbabwe, the colonial administration created distance between the government, its bureaucrats and the citizens. Moyo contends that the colonial institutions, and by extension the bureaucracy including village level extension workers and teachers, 'were notoriously not accountable to the general public' (Moyo 1993, 10). The frontline service providers - teachers, nurses and agriculture extension officers became revered as those who had made it, with the knowledge of and proximity to the

²Zigora and Chigwamba 2000 Workshop on Management for Human Resources in Africa: Challenges for the Third Millennium: Public Service of Zimbabwe, Tangier, 23-27 October 2000

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

system. The colonial arrangement accentuated power asymmetries that have taken over three decades in post-colonial Zimbabwe to dislodge. The ZANU PF government at independence inherited the system, maintained and perfected it for its purposes. To reinforce the distance between citizens and office bearers at all levels. Moyo argues that the ZANU PF government adulterated traditional value systems to enforce unquestioning obedience to the party and government (Moyo 1993).

Indeed, this notion that the liberation party was the equivalent of traditionally ordained leadership was pervasive in the early stages of post-independence Zimbabwe and has to an extent endured (Shaw 1986³; Chung 2005). One of the Key Informants, Governance Expert 1 argues that 'ZANU PF collapsed society into itself as a way of building a movement which would be dominating. This was so that no one can resist and oppose an enduring ZANU PF.' A similar point is made by Moyo (1993), Moyo argues that upon attainment of independence ZANU PF appropriated the voice of the people by sucking in all civic spaces and coercing all black African social movements into its structures. This process permeated through all levels of community organisations and extended the party's reach to neighbourhood level organisation structures like burial societies (Moyo 1993). Moyo observed that '... ZANU PF took maximum advantage of an underdeveloped civil society by claiming that ZANU (PF) was the sole legitimate representative of the people' (Moyo 1993; 7).

The public service in Zimbabwe is not directly accountable to the citizens. What is more, because of the centralisation of power by former President Mugabe, the civil service was also not accountable to the elected representative of the people in Parliament. Mugabe had managed to perfect the art of mimetic isomorphism. He maintained all forms of modern-day institutions with respective due processes being done, for example, parliamentary debates, consultations, etc. but the real source of power was concentrated in the executive and not even the parliamentarians would go against the wishes of the executive. Chikuhwa notes that, 'Parliament, the Politburo and the Cabinet ... could be counted on to rubber-stamp all that the President says and does' (Chikuhwa 2004; 41)⁴. They acted in concert with the executive. One of the respondents who had been a senior cabinet member noted that when she tried to canvass for votes against the proposed Presidential Powers (Temporary Measures)

³ Shaw W H. 1986 Towards the One-Party State in Zimbabwe: a Study in African Political Thought The Journal of Modern African Studies, 24, 3, pp. 373-394

⁴ A Crisis of Governance: Zimbabwe.

Education in Service of Patronage?
An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

Bill, which would confer to the president legislative powers as well, her party colleague's respondent by saying, "Are you crazy? The party wants us to vote in favour, and that's what we shall do." (Former Minister of Education 1)

3.2 Overview of the Education bureaucracy from 2005 to 2016

The strength of this paper is its use of a time series analysis to trace key turning points in the sector. At this point, the study relies on the heuristic summary laid out in the preceding chapter to show the shifts in institutional arrangement and bureaucratic characterisation. Table 4 gives a heuristic summary of Zimbabwe using the ideal types over a period of time.

Table 4 Characterising Zimbabwe's Education Bureaucracies Overtime

1980 - 1993		1993- 2008	
20 %	65%	55%	15%
15%	-	30%	-

2008 – 2013		2013- 2016	
30%	15%	55%	35%
50%	5%	10%	-

Above, table 4 shows that during the first decade of independence, 1980 to the early 1990s, the bureaucracy was organised hierarchically and around rules. The first decade is characterised by a reasonably strong bureaucracy which is supported by a strong and focused political leadership. The first two Ministers of Primary and Secondary Education had in their favour substantial liberation war credentials, significant political alliances with their erstwhile 'comrades' now at the helm of political leadership as well as a professional working relationship with the bureaucracy. The second Minister of education described her style of leadership and management as dictatorial and goal-oriented fitting the bill of dominant impersonal leadership. This explains the 65% allocated to the top right cell in the period 1980- 1993. The ministers during this period were able to articulate the mandate of the new government with the emphasis being on the expansion of education infrastructure and increased enrolments. From the interviews, Governance Expert 1 contends that the relationship in that phase could be characterised as one of mutual dependence between the Minister

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

and the bureaucrats as technocrats. The Minister relied on the bureaucrats to engage in detailed analytical work that would feed into policy proposals with the Minister providing leadership, authorisation and much-needed support against predatory elements in both parliament and cabinet.

The period 1993 – 2008 in table 4 sees the waning of rule boundedness. Chapter one detailed how the process of bureaucratic capture started around the same time as the structural adjustments' era. In the chapter, the focus was on how the predatory elements within the ruling party began a concerted campaign to take over key positions in government putting in place weak personalities. During this period the veneer of rule-boundedness is removed, and the culture within the bureaucracy becomes that of obedience not only to the hierarchy but to ZANU PF party officials as well. It became common practice for provincial party heavyweights, who could be Ministers or MPs, to issue directives to Provincial Education Directors and schools. As illustrated by the weighting in table 4, institutions of the state became highly personalised and bureaucratic processes were mediated by obedience and patronage than rules.

Governance Expert 1 observed that an enduring legacy of the Mugabe era is the deliberate weakening of state institutions and the bureaucracy which started at independence but perfected and full-blown in the post-1993 period. The intentional weakening extended to the party level as Mugabe sought to consolidate power and make himself a dominant figure in the political landscape of Zimbabwe. By conflating the state and ZANU PF, it is not only the state that got weak, but ZANU PF as a party itself became increasingly weakened. Mugabe's modus operandi was such that his directives became law.

The study revealed that the President's strategy post-1990s was to create a system which made political appointments dependent upon the President's grace instead of via a network of political positioning based on internal party democratic processes and merit. Chikuhwa concurs with this finding and states that the appointees are, in many (if not most) cases, of low calibre. These people cannot excel in their functions and so are particularly beholden to the people who appointed them. They, in turn, make appointments based on the same criteria, partly to establish obligations to themselves and partly to conceal their own misdeeds by having leverage over their subordinates. (Chikuhwa 2004; 242)

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

As a result, the state became personality dominated, with Ministers and bureaucrats living on the 'edge' of the President's whims. It became commonplace for a Minister to try and decipher the President's preference on any policy matter and zealously implement it without giving consideration to quality and outcomes. If at any point the existing laws did not conform to the desired arrangement, ZANU PF simply changed the laws and the system would become 'compliant' to the new set of rules. The top right block of cells in table 4 above captures this shift at an institution level. Authors on the Zimbabwean situation have argued that Mugabe would allow the party cadres free reign as long as it did not threaten his rule. Governance expert 2 went on to state that Mugabe encouraged competition amongst his Ministers for his approval and perchance opportunity to be the anointed heir. Corruption, nepotism patron-client relationships became the order of the day. In paper one, the corruption case of the former Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education was cited as an example. The corruption case came to public light because the Minister had fallen out with powerful forces in the ZANU PF factional fights⁵. The practice of diverting ministry resources for party purpose became rampant.

Further, schools and school children became embroiled in party politics. It became common practice for local politicians to direct district and provincial education officials to bus school children and teachers to ZANU PF rallies (Research and Advocacy Unity 2018⁶; Pswirayi and Reeler 2012)⁷. The fact that politicians could at any given time commandeer schools, served to reinforce to the teachers and bureaucrats the supremacy of the party over the state. More and more the bureaucracy was rendered ineffectual with Ministers leaning more towards populist policies. Governance Expert 1 noted that the strategy was to disjoin the Minister from her/his function as the head of a ministry working closely with the bureaucrats to advance the ministry's mandate. The Minister, who is already politically weak because s/he has been handpicked, is removed from the support they could have received from technocrats within the bureaucrats and become more beholden to the President who insists that no decision can be made outside of him.

⁵ Mlambo E. (2016) 'Jonathan Moyo in corruption storm, The Independent. Available at <https://www.theindependent.co.zw/2016/10/07/jonathan-moyo-corruption-storm/>. (Accessed on 16 January 2019)

⁶ Research and Advocacy Unit. (2018) Making schools zones of safety & peace. RAU

⁷ Pswirayi T and Reeler A (2012) 'Fragility' and education in Zimbabwe: Assessing the impact of violence on education. RAU

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

In this way, the Minister became beholden to the person of the President thus creating politically weak Ministers. A former Minister of education interviewed in this study noted that cabinet briefings were platforms characterised by the President giving instructions and getting progress updates. Hardly ever was it space for a cabinet member to show innovativeness and critical thinking. The culture created by the President in party and government turned ministers and parliamentarians into minions, most importantly though it served to dissolve the relationship between the Ministers and the bureaucrats in their respective line ministries. Rule boundedness was replaced by obedience and the practice of policy debates were replaced by acquiescence. To illustrate this the Figure 1 shows that there already existed an intersection between rule-boundedness and obedience. Discussion on the analytical framework in the preceding chapter alluded to the fact that at any given period a hybrid of settlements existed. However, the difference was which bureaucratic culture became dominant over the others. In expanding this argument, the Venn diagram shows this via the intersection point between rule boundedness and obedience as well as with the direction arrows.

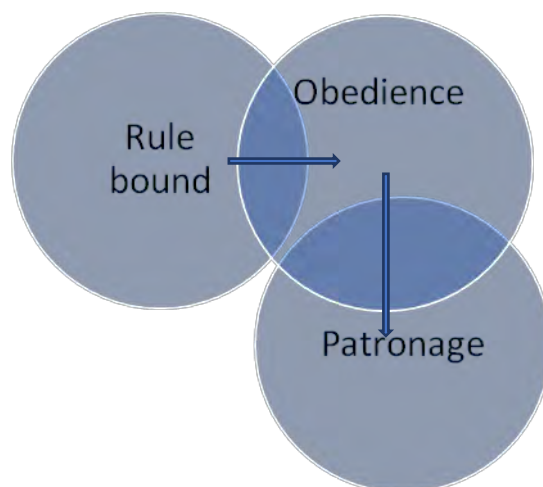


Figure 1 Movement from Rules to Patronage

The discussion in chapter 2 revealed that obedience had been the overarching characteristic of not only the bureaucracy but the Zimbabwean society as a whole. The Venn diagram is to be read in the light of the institutional characterisation illustrated in table 3 (chapter 2) and expanded in table 4 above looking at the bureaucratic cultures against time period and the Ministers at a given time. The public bureaucracy is seen to be responsive to signals coming from the political leadership. The Venn diagram above allows us to show the intersection where rule-boundedness and obedience fade into

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

each other. Once in the obedience circle, the bureaucracy is exposed to capture and patronage. The second Minister of education made the point the culture of obedience was not only limited to bureaucracy but defines the Zimbabwean citizenry.

The emerging trend in the 1990s to the 2000s is that institutions became aligned along the lines of loyalty. The President, as the sole appointing authority, even for senior bureaucrats used this authority not only to appoint party loyalists but party loyalists who could be trusted not challenge authority or question directives. Chikuhwa argues that there was a deliberate process of entrenching partisanship in all sectors Chikuhwa (2004). The Ministers became preoccupied with the desire to please the President in some instance presumptively reading signals from the head (be they utterances at a rally or any other public gathering) to be policy directives to the extent that experts and technocrats were sidelined in policy design processes. During the interviews, the bureaucrats explained how senior management meetings had become platforms to affirm a position already taken by either the Minister or Permanent Secretary (PS). One respondent said that 'when we ask our directors "what is the basis of a directive or a policy circular", they only shake their heads and say it has come from above.' The directors cannot question the PS or even principle directors for fear of the repercussions to such show of temerity

The timeframe 2000 to 2008 coincided with a couple of events that had an impact on the political settlement at the national level as well as at the education sector level. The first is the launch of formidable opposition, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and closely related to this and even arguably so as a reaction to this is the so-called Third Chimurenga or the fast-track land resettlement scheme. As alluded to in chapter 1, the MDC challenged the political hegemony of ZANU PF. The MDC, after just under a year of inception, won 47.5% of the contested parliamentary seats. This defeat was more of a personal blow to the former President, Mr Mugabe. His reaction was to consolidate power further and turn all institutions to serve that purpose. As mentioned in the preceding sections, one of the strategies used by the former President was to usurp all executive authority from cabinet members so much so that not a single Minister would make decisions without the President.

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

The 5th Minister of Education, who had no political base himself and owed his appointment to the then President⁸, became more preoccupied with demonstrating his obedience and loyalty to the President at the detriment of the sector. He also took the cabinet culture to the MoPSE. According to a senior official from the MoPSE interviewed, Minister Chigwedere centralised all decision-making to his office to the extent that not a single decision could be made without his authority. The respondents noted that the problem with that was that the Minister in all his tenure only came to his office at most twice a week, on cabinet day (every Tuesday) and Fridays. Furthermore, the Minister had no confidence to make the decisions without conferring with the President.

One case referred to was how international education partners had lost faith in the Ministry because they could never agree on support initiatives and even when they did the whole budget cycle would come to an end without the agreed programmes being implemented because for an entire year the Minister could not give his approval. The culture that ensued within the bureaucracy was that of fear⁹, avoidance and obedience. This killed the agency and paralysed the bureaucracy. Observations during data collection revealed that the culture endures as even the top echelons of the bureaucracy are hesitant to take the initiative, responsibility and to be transparent.

The second significant event during the same period was the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP). Faced with a most significant political competition and a real chance of losing power the ZANU PF government turned to populist policies. The FTLRP, the so-called third chimurenga, was one such populist policy. The FTLRP was a knee jerk reaction to the growing popularity of the MDC and the government sought to consolidate its rural constituency base by parcelling out land. The programme was carried out in a haphazard, brutal manner with total disregard of the rule of law. The resultant effect was that the international community turned up pressure on ZANU PF to restore the rule of law and governance as well as respect for human rights. In retaliation ZANU PF adopted anti-western and anti-imperialist rhetoric. During this period the Minister crafted reform initiatives without any relation to learning. The most

⁸ Chikuhwa (2004) in his book gives some detail of the sycophantic behaviour of the Minister both in government and in the party.

⁹ The period from 2000 saw increased direct verbal attacks on teachers and the education sector by the President. With the President spewing vitriol on the frontline service providers, the party youth and war veterans translated the verbal attacks into physical attacks. Many teachers resolved to align themselves with the ruling party to guarantee their safety. Shizha and Kariwo state that ‘...teachers as a group have been targeted by the government and the ruling party, ZANU PF... some teachers are known to have been murdered because of their political affiliation or views.’ p63

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

controversial was the attempt to arbitrarily change school names to give them names of liberation war Heroes from the names given during the colonial period when the schools were built. Schools such as Churchill Boys High School and Roosevelt Girls High with related colonial names became the target. Respondents reviewed that the motivation for the Minister was to use the ministry to support the Third Chimurenga. The Third Chimurenga was crafted around reclaiming sovereignty and anti-western rhetoric.

Table 5 below gives an illustration of both bureaucratic cultures as explained in table 4 above as well as some key policy initiatives over the life of the Zimbabwean education bureaucracy. It supports the heuristic summary laid out in table 3 by tracing the key policy directions and bureaucratic cultures against time and personalities.

Table 5. Policy initiatives and dominant bureaucratic cultures

Period	Minister	Reform Initiatives	Governance bureaucratic culture
1980 – 1988	Dzingai Mutumbuka	- Formative stage of the education sector - Key reforms were the Education Act of 1984 - Post-independence curriculum developed	Impersonal and rule-bound leaning. Fairly strong rule-governed bureaucracy
1988 – 1993	Fay Chung	- The decentralisation attempts including institutionalisation of the School Development Committees (SDCs) (1992 & 1993)	
1993 – 1996	Edmund Garwe	-	Vacillation between dominant/ discretionary and personalised competitive Weak bureaucracy Compliance and obedience around personalities
1996 - 2000	Gabriel Machinga	Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training (CIET) (1999)- The Nziramasanga Commission The localisation of National School Examinations	
2001 – 2008	Aeneas Chigwedere	'Third revolution.' Policy initiatives directed towards 'patriotism'?	
2009 – 2013	David Coltart	Autonomy and governance Strengthening of the School Development Committees, Curriculum review Alignment of Education Regulations	A mix of Competitive rule by law leaning Fragmented and personalised bureaucracy Attempts and strengthening bureaucracy
2013 - 2017	Lazarus Dokora	Curriculum review and sector restructuring	Dominant Discretionary Strengthening bureaucratic coherence along party allegiance

3.3 Bureaucracy during GNU and beyond

In 2009 the GNU was constituted with the political competitors sharing power (see block 2008 -2013 in table 5). The erstwhile political foes had to share ministries and other political posts such as ambassadorial assignments. The Ministry of Education, Sports, Arts and Culture (MoESAC) as it was then known was given to the opposition, and the 6th Minister of education was, therefore, an 'outsider' in the system. The Minister is the executive head of the ministry but because of the long history of one-party dominance and the threat that ZANU PF felt from the GNU, the Minister's access to the bureaucracy is via the Permanent Secretary. In a bid to retain a measure of control ZANU PF dragged its feet on the provisions that required that the GNU government install new PSs agreed upon by the principals of the agreement. Effectively the bureaucracy in every ministry including education remained firmly under ZANU PF watch.

This settlement set an interesting institutional arrangement which affected how the bureaucracy functioned. The GNU period signalled that

- a) ZANU PF's hold has been shaken and therefore the party is not invincible,
- b) Secondly, it created multiple principals in the ministry, especially between the minister and PS. The two main principles at the sector level were divorced from each other but in charge of the same sector,
- c) It also opened up a 'window' of possibilities, and a few innovative senior bureaucrats took the risk to try out innovations and present them to any one of the principal who might seem favourable.

The 6th minister of education referred to two such initiatives that were already underway and came to his attention namely, the Performance Lag Address Programme (PLAP) and the SDC capacity reinforcement initiative. The SDC capacity reinforcement dovetailed with the Minister's priority areas which included expanding inclusive participation and autonomy in school governance. A critical observation here is that even in a polarised competitive space a dominant force can prevail over others thereby tipping the scales and any chances of creativity and space. Secondly, following Carpenter's arguments for bureaucratic autonomy, the infrastructure necessary to nurture space and independence at the local level has been decimated over the years, civic space has been clamped down, and critical voices have been cowed into silence

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

in Zimbabwe. Chikuhwa (2004) notes how the reign of terror unleashed on schools in the early 2000s left indelible memories. Similar sentiments are echoed by Shizha and Kariwo (2011). In this sense, the GNU period can be said have been too short for citizens and bureaucrats to recover and regain their agency. So even in messy competitive arrangements as depicted by the third block of cells in table 3, the actors do not wield the same amount of power and influence. While a few bureaucratic entrepreneurs initially emerged in the first two years of the GNU, they quickly retreated into the column of loyalists when it was clear that ZANU PF's hold on the bureaucracy in the education sector remained unshaken.

The disagreement between the Minister and the PS became commonplace, and sharp differences emerged with regards to policy direction. A newspaper article in the government-controlled Sunday Mail revealed the depth of these clashes and how the bureaucrats align with the system. What is most revealing from the newspaper article is the comment by an unnamed senior civil servant in the Ministry of education. The 'source' is quoted saying

The Minister sought to revert to the old Rhodesian system where Government had no say whatsoever in what happened at these schools. Had (Sen) Coltart's proposals been accepted, this would have resulted in private schools being given the freedom to levy their own school fees and produce their own calendar while writing foreign examinations of their choice. (The Sunday Mail 4 September 2011)

The above quote is instructive in that it reveals some aspects of the GNU that militate against bureaucratic entrepreneurship. The quote reveals some issues that are important for this discussion, firstly, that the GNU created moving parts within the system, but the fluidity did not necessarily open the bureaucracy which had known only one-party rule for over three decades. Second, that the bureaucracy had acquired a perspective on how education is administered that was not going to significantly shift in the four years that the GNU was in place. Thirdly, that in times of competitive politics the PS would remain the vanguard of the system and that for the more significant part the loyalty of the bureaucracy was first to the PS.

Political commentators and scholars have argued that the GNU allowed ZANU PF warring factions to regroup and consolidate political power base while the MDC wrestled with national development and attempted to strengthen institutions. Alexander

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

and Macgregor (2013) argue that the power-sharing arrangement ‘...enabled ZANU (PF) to rebuild its support base and party structures in the aftermath of near collapse’ (Alexander and Macgregor 2013; 760). They further contend that the party perfected its ‘coercive capacity’ and reinforced its party hierarchy to dominate both party and state.

Post GNU bureaucracy

The post GNU period saw the return to power by ZANU PF and as alluded above the victory was characterised by a return to one-party dominance. But also, another key feature of the post GNU period is the visible internal power struggles as party members jostled to succeed Mugabe. Chapter one described how the victory of ZANU PF masked the internal fissures within the party and that it did not take long before the contestation for power within the party began to spill into the bureaucracy and public administration.

An interesting observation of this period from an analytical perspective is that though the post GNU period sees the return of ZANU PF to power, the party is itself is much more at war with itself than at any other point in the post-independence history. 2013 can be described as the peak of intra-elite contestation with fractures and false alliances emerging with increased occurrence. However, these palpable fights did not result in bureaucrats creating space for themselves and forging ahead with the innovative initiative at the sector level. Instead, the period sees the Minister reaffirm his authority at the sector level, and the bureaucracy is further cowed into obedience. A key actor in this regard of brow-beating the education bureaucracy into submission is the Public Service Commission (PSC). The PSC in the post 2013 era took a more policing role, “it seems their mandate is to police and follow closely on the activities in the education sector” one senior bureaucrat stated, while the PSC is the employer with regards to every government department, they seem to be more focused on the activities of the Education sector. In trying to explain this one, a civil servant alluded to the fact that most district-level PSC inspectors are former teachers and headmasters and that could explain why they found the education sector much more natural to ‘police’ than any other government department. The overall effect though was to make educationists feel under constant scrutiny¹⁰. The method of putting bureaucrats and

¹⁰ In 2017 the commission was moved to the dreaded president's office and in a newspaper article teachers union decried move as they felt it meant greater control and limited space for teachers.

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

citizens in general, under 'surveillance' has been observed by Alexander and Macgregor to be designed to induce compliance to ZANU PF whims, in this case then we have coerced obedience.

In summary, the discussion in this section while giving an overview of the bureaucracy in Zimbabwe, also contextualised the analytical framework and used to it to explain the observed shift in the bureaucracy. Two things emerge from the discussion, first, that a bureaucracy can be compliant to persuasions other than rules. The basis of compliance can be primitive loyalty, fear or even ambition on the part of the bureaucrats. In a corrupted system, one's career path is largely depended on how well they can play the 'game' and can be counted on by the predatory elements to be on their side.

The second observation is, while obedience was noted to be almost a default position to the broader Zimbabwean society in general and to bureaucrats, in particular, the source or reasons for obedience are not uniform. In the period 2005 – 2016 various forms of coercion were applied to induce compliance. Through the discussion, the context within which the bureaucracy operates is a huge determinant of its character and culture. The bureaucratic culture and character, in turn, have an impact on the types of reforms which are designed and implemented. It also determines the main preoccupation of bureaucracy, whether it is for the advancement of learning as a central objective or survival and self-perpetuation.

Education in Service of Patronage?

An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

Chapter 4: Case Study Analysis

The research sought to look in-depth into the efforts by the 6th Minister of education to transform both policy and practice with regards to education governance in the country. The case under review covers the period from 2009 to 2013. The first few paragraphs will give a brief background of education decentralisation and governance history as revealed by the research findings. This brief background is essential for a comprehensive understanding of the case study that follows.

4.1 Decentralised education governance - Key turning points

The study traced the critical turning points with regards to parents' participation in school governance (with the national level political settlements always in the background and illuminating the process). Figure 1 gives an overview of the key policy choices over the years that relate to education governance.

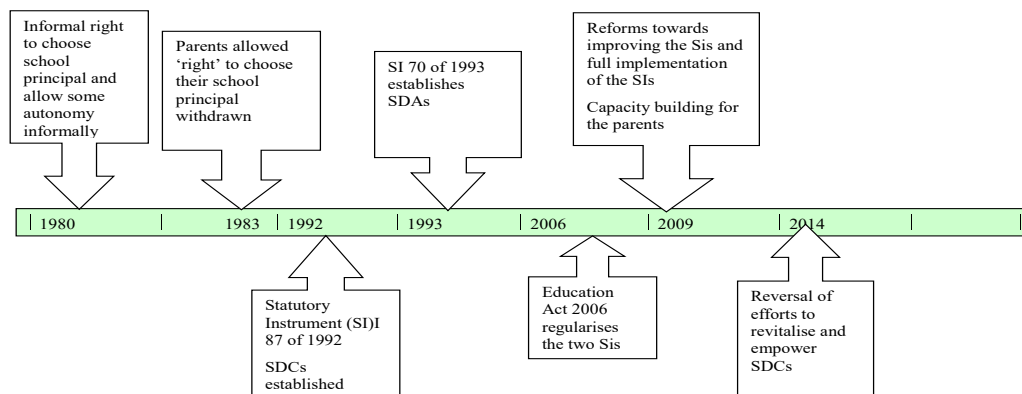


Figure 1 Timeline - Parents participation in education governance

According to the 2nd Minister of Education, the idea of decentralised school governance as part of the process of democratisation was introduced in Zimbabwe's education system right at independence, albeit informally and without any supporting legal infrastructure. However, two things happened, while the intention was to give parents and local community structures a say in the management of the schools within their community, this intention was never formalised and institutionalised within the policies of the ministry. Secondly, the communities and parents according to the Minister were by and large ill-prepared to assume the level of responsibility that such a function

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

entailed. By 1983 the ministry had reversed the powers that it had delegated to the parents which included the 'right' to select school principals and to be more directly involved in learning activities by way of direct accountability via the community selected school principal. The former Minister, during the interview, decried the ministry's decision to withdraw the rights that had been conferred informally, "looking back again I think we shouldn't have taken away their functions. Instead, we should have nurtured them and empowered them more" she said. It was not until 1992 (ten years later) that the government revisited school governance and parents' participation in a more formal and structured way. The 1992 Statutory Instrument 87 of 1992 came into force giving birth to School Development Committees (SDCs). However, this study revealed that the motivation at this point was somewhat distorted and school governance was not the driving force at this point. Because the guiding motivation was not community empowerment and increased autonomy, the statutory instruments that gave legal standing to school development committees was conservative and narrow in the rights it conferred to parents' governing bodies.

Before the GNU in 2009, the ministry of education emphasised school physical development and material support as the overarching responsibility of the SDCs. Governance expert 1 stated that 'The remit of the SDC is infrastructure development, the welfare of educators and pupils as well as community school relations more than the core which is learning. An SDC's role becomes about creating an enabling environment not necessarily defining what quality education is nor the processes that enhance learning.'

In an interview, the 6th Minister of Education explained that he endeavoured to transform education governance by increasing parents' and schools' autonomy. The Minister sought to do this in two ways, firstly by reviewing the legislation which provided for the establishment of parents' governing bodies. Secondly, by way of capacity building in the SDCs so that they can at least utilise the current legal provision to its full extent while the proposed amendments to the law were reviewed. The Minister stated that "what I tried to do was grant as much autonomy (as possible) to schools ... Included in that policy was, for example, the right given to parents to enhance conditions of service for the teachers teaching their children and allowing school development associations (SDAs) to control their own funding."

4.2 The School Development Committees

In 2008 the education sector was on the brink of total collapse as the socio-economic situation in the country had deteriorated. 2008 is dubbed a lost year in the education sector in Zimbabwe with over 70% of the schools either closed or operating with only the headmaster and SDCs. The GNU brought reprieve to the sector and allowed for education sector reconstruction. The 6th Minister of Education in consultation with the National Education Advisory Board and other supporting partners in the form of donors and development organisations went about defining entry points which would in the short to medium term get the education sector back on its feet. In addition, he also started looking at which pillars of the education sector would provide resilience to future socioeconomic and political shocks.

The Minister recounted that they identified education governance as one area that needed immediate attention as it was adjudged to offer a pillar of resistance once strengthened. The 6th Minister went about restructuring the education governance in two ways, firstly to purposefully and deliberately strengthen and capacitate the SDCs and institutionalise the capacity building. Secondly, begin to engage the education stakeholders on the proposed revision and amendment to the existing regulatory framework so that the law transfers greater autonomy to schools and school governing bodies. The approach taken by the minister was informed by the lessons learnt from the first decade of independence. As noted earlier in this chapter, the informal attempts at transferring governance responsibility to community and parents failed because of among other things premature load bearing, both the system and the parents according to the second Minister of Education were not prepared for such progressive horizontal governance even though it was fast becoming trend internationally. Both the parents and the education system were not prepared for greater parents' involvement in school governance. At that time (soon after independence) most parents were illiterate and without a solid appreciation of governance and quality education (2nd Minister of Education). Without prior conscientisation, capacity building and accompaniment the envisaged governance reforms by the 6th Minister of Education would suffer the same fate. It thus became that the SDC capacity reinforcement programme was adopted by the Ministry as part of the governance reform initiative.

4.2.1 Challenges to SDCs autonomy

The formal inclusion and institutionalisation of parents as key actors in the education sector came about in 1992 and 1993 by way of Statutory Instruments. The government

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

gazetted the Statutory Instrument 87 of 1992 (SI 87 of 92) for non-government schools (which constitutes close to 75% of all schools in Zimbabwe). SI 87 of 92 established the School Development Committees (SDCs). In 1993 the government gazetted the Statutory Instrument 70 of 1993 which established the School Development Associations (SDAs) for government-run schools (constituting just around 10% of schools in the country). For this study, both structures will be referred to as SDCs for convenience given that SDCs cover close to 75% of the structures in the non-government school.

The SDC is a membership-based committee elected at a school's annual general meeting by parents with children learning at a given school. Section 6 Clause (1) of SI 87 Of 92 states that a school development committee shall consist of five persons elected by parents of pupils at the school. Also, the school head, his deputy and one teacher shall be added to the membership. In the case of non-government schools where the responsible authority of the school is, a local authority, a councillor named by the local authority or any other authority or body shall also sit in the SDC. The SDCs' tenure of office is one year with the possibility of re-election for as long as one still has a child learning at that school.

The remit of the SDC as set out in the SI 87 of 92 is to;

- i. Provide resources and assist in the operation and development of the school for the benefit of present and future pupils, their parents, teachers and the community;
- ii. advance the moral, cultural, physical and intellectual welfare of pupils at the school;
- iii. promote the welfare of the school for the benefit of its present and future pupils and their parents and its teachers.

Shrinking GDP and the macroeconomic reforms in the form of Structural Adjustment Programmes dubbed Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) in Zimbabwe adopted in 1990-92 motivated the decentralisation efforts. Respondents in the study submitted that the decentralisation endeavour through the SI 87 of 92 was not driven by a desire to increase community and citizen voice in the education system instead it was stirred by the need to share responsibility for education financing. In reading the Statutory Instruments and the amended Education Act of 2006 the prime

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

function of the SDCs is to raise and manage funds for school improvements and general infrastructure development. This finding resonance with other authors who have written on the subject. For instance, Samkange observed that "... the implementation of decentralisation had occurred not to empower people and communities but to shift on them the responsibility of payment and sustenance of educational provisions." (Samkange p1158)¹¹

By 2009, the SDCs had been in existence for sixteen years. However, their role and functions by both law and practice were restricted and narrow mostly confined to providing material and to some extent moral support to educators. One governance expert interviewed gave a more cynical view of the matter. The expert states that '... the SDC's role has been limited to 'pacifying parents', the headmaster doesn't have to interact directly with the parents but through the SDC.'

2.2 SDC Capacity Building programme design and implementation

The GNU and the coming on board of a minister who was not part of the system provided an environment of possibilities and space for experimentation and trying out of new ideas. The Minister of Education during the GNU period made schools governance a priority reform area. As it happened, between the years 2007 and 2008 the Provincial Education Director for Manicaland had been working collaboratively with development partners on a localised initiative on SDC capacity building programme. The initiative was aimed at enhancing parents' participation in the education of their children towards enhancing quality results. The initiative was informed by an earlier dipstick assessment of poor performing schools in the province. The innovative programme aspired to develop a training model as well as training materials that would be adopted by the ministry and institutionalised as part of the ministry's procedures for SDC induction and on-going capacity building. This local initiative in one of the ten provinces and being tried out in a few schools provided an entry point into reforming school governance.

The 6th Minister mentioned that the PED Manicaland brought the pilot initiative with well-documented results and documentation that showed the processes, collaboration and partnerships that had made the pilot projects possible to his attention. According to the Minister what made him buy the PED's SDC capacity reinforcement model was that

¹¹Samkange W 2013 Decentralization of Education: Participation and Involvement of Parents in school governance: An attempt to explain limited-involvement using Bourdieu's theory of social practice.

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

the PED was able to articulate the problem of governance and offer a solution that had been tried and tested at a local district level. However, attempts at SDC empowerment were going against the grain regarding operations and perceptions of the bureaucracy. According to one development advisor providing advisory support to the provincial directorate, the initiative was met with resistance from the onset, “While Minister Coltart was busy with his core team drafting parents’ participation framework and SNV was invited to share their experience ... the Permanent Secretary had no interest in having the SDC to be outspoken and community-driven”. (Education advisor and SDC programme coordinator for SNV)

The Minister noted that the move by the PED to present the idea to him was well calculated and risky given the well-known aversion that the PS had to increased autonomy and improved sector governance that might be interpreted as threatening the order, command and control of the central government. It was thus crucial that the PED start by securing support for the initiative at the very top before the PS got the opportunity to stifle it. The Minister ‘adopted’ the programme and managed to give it a national profile. This step was important for two reasons, first, for the pilot to be scaled up there was a need to build consensus on the content of training materials and alignment of procedures. For the SDC capacity building to have a national outlook, it meant that all 10 PEDs and the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) of the ministry had to be engaged for them to buy-in and take ownership of the programme. The Minister’s authorisation gave the PED leeway to engage with his counterparts and bring SNV on board as the technical support partner.

The second reason was funding. For the initiative to gain currency and be implemented at scale, it required substantial funding. The Minister notes that “at that time the government barely could afford to pay the civil servant salaries”. It was thus fortuitous that with the GNU in place, development partners and donors revived interest in supporting Zimbabwe on its recovery path. The main focus of development donor support was in the social service sector. It is not by a random occurrence that the social service ministries (Health, Education, Labour and Social Welfare) were also under MDC ministers. The MDC partnership in the power-sharing arrangement engendered trust and confidence in the government once more.

The multi-donor rescue package for the education sector in Zimbabwe dubbed the Education Transition Fund (ETF) was a result of government engagement with donors,

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

but most specifically it was a by-product of the donor's faith in the new Minister's sincerity and capacity to deliver and to use resources in an accountable manner. The Education Transition Fund provided the sector with much-needed funding to embark on an ambitious governance reform path *inter alia*. The ETF made it possible for technical and advisory experts to work with the Minister. One of the partners roped in by the ministry was the Netherlands Development Organisation (SNV). SNV had been part of the Manicaland province trails and provided both technical and some financial support to the PED to carry out pilot activities.

Implementation

The SDC capacity reinforcement initiative was implemented between 2010 and 2012 with a follow-up innovation aimed at building SDC capacity to design school development plans, financial management and responsiveness. The follow-up programme ran from 2012 to 2013 at the dénouement of the GNU. The initiative was designed with the intention of making it a core package for SDC induction training and support for the ministry. To that end, a collective of education governance specialists, educationists and experts in the ministry formed the core team for material development and design. In a bid to transfer ownership to the ministry, the programme was anchored at the ministry's head office with the CDU and the 10 PEDs forming a core team with regards to materials development review and adoption.

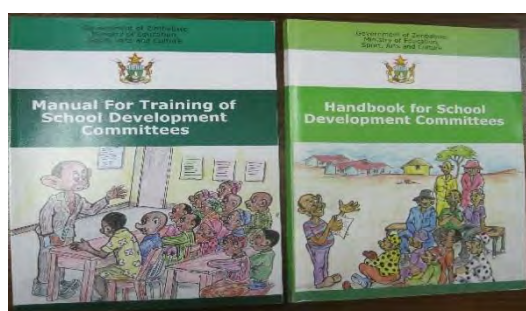


Figure 2 Ministry approved SDC training materials, 2010

The materials development process, as well as the capacity building training, had a strong documentation component. The idea was that the lessons and discoveries in the process of deep engagement debate and feedback would provide invaluable input into the legislative reform process which was still under negotiation.

The programme approached capacity building holistically with tools adapted to not only train but initiate to fundamentally shift the attitudes of both bureaucrats and parents

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

with regards to school governance. The drive was to facilitate processes where there is a shared appreciation of the fecundity of horizontal governance and increased schools autonomy. A total of 690 education officials including head office staff, provincial directorate and district education officers went through the capacity building process, and in turn, they rolled out the training to 5519 schools and 21 573 SDCs members (Boonstoppel and Chikohomero 2011). Also, the programme engaged teacher training colleges and local universities as local capacity builders to create a pool of resource persons for continual support, improvement and quality control.

4.3 Bureaucratic resistance to SDC autonomy and the reversal of GNU gains

From the study what is evident is that the seeds of failure for the programme lay outside the best intentions of the protagonists. According to governance advisor 3

“The challenge in Zimbabwe for the bureaucracy is that it is aversive to any structures that it has no direct power over, where it cannot easily exert influence or pressure or even sanction. The bureaucracy is comfortable with its staff, the teachers, school heads inspectors, etc. These it can sanction in many ways, threats of punishment, demotion, arbitrary transfer, even dismissal. This it cannot do with a parents’ assembly. As such the bureaucracy is not very keen on them playing a direct critical role in school governance besides paying up levy and making sure that school infrastructure development actually happens. Any attempt to empower the SDC structure is seen as a potential direct challenge to the bureaucracy.”

The findings from the study reveal that notwithstanding the political settlement which brought some respite to the education sector and some semblance of competitive politics, the ZANU PF system has deep roots that would take more than four years of GNU to dislodge. The bureaucrats interviewed for this research revealed that they were always conscious of the fact that ZANU PF is a dominant force and as such they were careful not to appear too excited with the reforms which the MDC Minister was initiating. One respondent who is also a senior director with the ministry stationed at the head office mentioned that, “There was a sense in which the PS wanted to show to the staff and teachers that ZANU PF is still in control and the bureaucrats and teaching staff shouldn’t get excited with the transitional arrangement.” This statement brings up the notion of bureaucratic obedience as explored in the analytical framework chapter. In the words of the 6th Minister of Education “The permanent secretary ruled his

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

domain using fear and intimidation and kept as much power as he could ... the notion of autonomy was an anathema". The second Minister concurred with the view but added that the Permanent Secretary, "was out of depth in this role" and the only way to survive was to suck up upwards and rule with iron fist downward. The tragedy of the GNU for the education bureaucracy was the cost of doing what is right and working with the Minister at the expense of incurring the Permanent Secretary wrath who was the executive of the ministry and as such could make or unmake careers in the sector.

The SDC initiative suffered relentless onslaught from not only reactionary bureaucrats but from the whole ZANU PF machinery which includes the state media. An article in the state-owned newspaper, the Herald, captures the general disdain from the system; the reporter states "These SDCs that are receiving training from a Netherlands-based NGO, SNV, have become so powerful that they can hire and fire non-academic staff." (The Herald 27 May 2013). Further, whenever there was a conflict between the minister and the PS, the state media escalated it insinuating that the drive for increased autonomy was a broader agenda to weaken the state. The media campaign against the programme started in 2011 gaining momentum in 2013. Some respondents felt that the media was being fed this information from the ministry head office. The previous chapter cited a senior bureaucrat denouncing the governance reforms by the Minister. The official likened the changes envisaged by the Minister to Rhodesian era legislation (the Herald newspaper article on the 4th of September 2011). The comment was part of a carefully choreographed media crusade to whip up emotions against the reforms.

The 6th Minister of education mentioned that reform efforts came up against a whole established system in place for close to thirty years beyond the Permanent Secretary's resistance. The most resisted reforms by the establishment according to the former Minister were on school governance and debate around schools autonomy. The Minister described how the Ministry of Justice blocked the proposed revised legislative reforms,

"One of the things I tried to do not just in terms of pedagogy but also in terms of governance I reviewed all the education regulations With intense policy debate around autonomy; how much autonomy do you give to schools and how much autonomy do you give to headmasters. I produced entirely new regulations but then ran into politics... I was in essence blocked by the Ministry of Justice. You cannot get any regulations published without the buy-in of

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

Attorney General... Those regulations are there but have never become law (6th Minister of Education)

The notion of autonomy was an abomination not only to the education ministry but the whole ZANU PF establishment. The resistance to reforms is explained in two ways, on one hand it was the political game of sabotage between competing political foes. The establishment could not allow MDC ministries to out-perform the ZANU PF predecessors as this would pose a serious challenge with the electorate. The ZANU PF system could risk improving quality education if that ensured they retained power. The second explanation was that the establishment generally viewed autonomy as anathema. One of the most recurring phrases during the interview was 'tight control' in reference to the PS management style from the head office to the classroom.

The July 2013 harmonised elections sealed the fate of the GNU. ZANU PF won a clear victory and with it a clear mandate to govern unencumbered by opposition power sharing. The 7th Minister of Education (now rebranded Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education MoPSE) put a stop on the SDC capacity reinforcement efforts and reversed the decisions taken by his predecessor to give parents greater say. Both the Minister and the new PS believed that the role of the parents should be limited. One respondent described the new PS as 'centralist'. The survival of the SDCs initiative was always precarious because the bureaucracy did not own it and the legal instruments that would have institutionalised the reforms suffered a stillbirth at the hands of the Ministry of Justice. The challenge with the SDC reforms was that it went against the grain of what the whole system believed should be the role of the parents. The most telling aspect revealed during the study was that the PED who had worked hard to pilot the programme would not be drawn to comment on its lack of traction beyond the GNU.

The 7th Minister of Education's first actions in office was to shelve the SDC capacity reinforcement programme, reverse parents influence in schools by putting a moratorium on teacher incentives which parents used to give as a way of motivating schools. The Minister also closed the SDCs school accounts which had been established to accord parents authority over school levies and development planning.

From these findings, one can safely conclude that at the core, the bureaucracy is coherent in service of other goals beyond learning. Coherence in Zimbabwe's education system is established around (i) fear - the fear by officials over the

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

uncertainty of tenure and result of falling out of favour with superiors who hold the key to one's career advancement. There is also fear of experimentation or trying out new ideas "The bureaucrats have learned its safe to keep to the road well-travelled" that's according to education research officer based at the national head office. (ii) obedience – obedience to the President's directive through the party, and obedience to each vertical level of authority (iii) supremacy of the President- "that everything exists in service of his excellence" according to one governance expert.

The evidence gathered from the case study supports the second hypothesis that a bureaucracy that is coherent but not oriented to learning will resist learning supportive reforms. The case study shows that the efforts aimed at reforming the governance of schools in Zimbabwe during the GNU faced a stonewall from the bureaucratic machinery that had been established for three decades and had become coherent around maintaining and supporting the status quo. In the same manner, we fail to support the alternative hypothesis that competitive and fragmented space provides an opportunity for innovation and that innovation can take root in a mess. We find that while indeed the GNU did provide that space the dominant characteristics and the bureaucratic culture of obedience and fealty were far much stronger than developmental forces in the sector.

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

Chapter 5: Conclusions

Zimbabwe lauded for the impressive strides with regards to increase access to primary education at one point achieving over 200% increase in enrolments for both primary and secondary education. The country's success has been referred to as an education miracle. However, the achievements of the first decade were not sustained into the future, and 20 years into independence the country's education system was on the brink of total collapse. There was what has come to be dubbed the lost decade in education, in 1999 - 2008 many schools reached as low as 0% pass rates. Many explanations have been given for this collapse. Almost all explanations border around resource constraints as a result of macroeconomic instability.

This study sought to explore the events from a Political Settlement Analysis. The endeavour was to try and unpack the relationship between the political framework and the development trajectory in the country to try and explain the collapse at a sector level. The point of departure was that the education sector was designed for various reasons that might not necessarily be easily aligned to learning goals and these contradictions became clear when supportive learning reforms such as decentralisation of school governance were attempted.

From the empirical case study, it is clear that the pervasive bureaucratic culture is that of obedience. There is a strong sense of loyalty to both hierarchy and national political leadership from a dominant party. As a result, the bureaucracy has become coherent around the obedience to leadership dictates even at the expense of learning-oriented reforms. The reforms attempted during the GNU were resisted both at a sector level and at the government system level. The key respondents mentioned how the gatekeepers of the system at the Ministry of Justice blocked regulatory reforms in the education sector.

Another key finding from the empirical research is that the bureaucracy, because of the politics, a culture of self-preservation and a desire to control all levels of the sector would resist reforms that would otherwise be designed to increase inclusive participation and accord greater autonomy to the frontline production units.

From the research findings, coherence in Zimbabwe's education sector is a by-product of command and control model of governance. This is different from coherence that is informed by shared values which everyone subscribes to. The effect of such a model is

Education in Service of Patronage? An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

that the system would reject any reform that attempts to increase multiple layers of accountability.

The study's main conclusion is that the core interest of the education system clashed with progressive reforms of increasing autonomy and localised layers of accountability. Statutory Instrument 87 of 1992 is itself a progressive piece of legislature towards the decentralisation of education governance as well as giving more voice to the parents and citizens in the day-to-day running of the schools. It, in essence, creates a closer relationship between the clients, parents and communities, and the frontline education service providers namely teachers and school principals. However, a closer look at the SI exposes its limited scope. The purpose of and the intention was not necessarily to foster horizontal governance but rather to create a partnership where parents more and more take up the role of education financing without commensurate obligation from the ministry such as including them in governance and have them hold the schools accountable for education delivery. Such restructuring of state/ citizen relationship is perceived to have potentially wide-ranging implications that would challenge the hegemony of ZANU PF as a party.

Education in Service of Patronage?
An Analysis of the Collision Between Learning-oriented Reforms and a
Cohesive and Coherent Education Bureaucracy System in Zimbabwe

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