

DEVELOPMENT IN ZIMBABWE



'Education is the hammer of skill'

The Role of the University

A Lecture Series at the University of Oslo
June 1 st — June 8 th, 1983

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F O R E W O R D

This is a compilation of a series of lectures given at the University of Oslo in June 1983 by staff members of the University of Zimbabwe. They participated in a delegation to the University of Oslo to explore the opportunities for building academic contacts between individuals and departments at the two Universities. Their visit constituted one important step in a long process of developing the content and format of a collaborative program between the University of Oslo and the University of Zimbabwe, the first "case" in the general efforts of the University of Oslo to establish new forms of academic cooperation with the third world.

It was felt natural at the time of this first extended visit from Zimbabwe that the 9 members of the delegation should provide information about the current activities and plans of their respective departments/faculties. The lectures were given over five consecutive days and were open to anyone interested. All contributors agreed to the proposal of having the lectures distributed afterwards, first and foremost at the University of Oslo as a contribution to the mutual exchange of information among staff and students.

Due to logistic and administrative reasons it took much longer than intended to get the various papers ready for presentation. In the period that has passed, many developments have taken place at the rapidly expanding University of Zimbabwe. The papers should therefore not be taken as reflecting the situation today in all aspects. Nevertheless, the broad lines of the basic philosophy of and challenges to the University of Zimbabwe are well reflected in the papers even if certain specific informations may be somewhat outdated.

The Center for International Development Studies (SIU) is pleased to submit this one very concrete expression of the efforts of many individuals, departments and university officials towards an experiment in academic contribution to "the North-South dialogue". The thrust of this experiment is how to break with the dependency model typical also of so many intellectual relations between the North and the South in the past, and how to replace it with a model based on equality and mutual benefit in whatever relationship that may evolve.

The volume also contains the contribution of the late professor W.Kekulawela, Vice-Chancellor at the University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka, at the time. He was invited as a representative of the university milieu in Sri Lanka to observe the process that was to take place between colleagues at the University of Oslo and the University of Zimbabwe, with a view to possible similar ventures that could be opened up with university milieus in Sri Lanka (the second of the "priority countries" originally chosen by SIU). Professor Kekulawela made a number of contacts in various departments particularly within the arts and humanities, and was to write his own report and suggestions during the following autumn term. SIU deeply regrets his sad and untimely sudden death only three months after his visit to Oslo. We appreciate professor Kekulawela's contribution to the lecture series in 1983 and thereby also to the enrichment of this volume, pointing to the possibilities of interesting South-South-North relationships in future university collaboration.

It is a privilege for SIU to help strengthen the ties between the University of Oslo and universities in the third world. We thank everybody who has contributed to this volume, and all others who have supported the idea of egalitarian university relationships which we are trying to promote.

August 1985

Wenche Barth Eide

Chairperson

Center for International Development Studies (SIU)

Education and Development

Ms. O. Muchena, lecturer, Faculty of Education

1. Introduction

The Faculty of Education is probably the first in the University of Zimbabwe to undergo considerable re-organisation since Independence. The re-organisation of the Faculty started in 1981 and implemented in May 1982 was prompted by the strong desire by the Faculty of Education to participate in and contribute to the new national development projects in both the formal and non-formal education system. This desire centred around a number of identified national educational needs which are quantitative and qualitative in nature. The quantitative needs are those related to producing large numbers of teachers for both the secondary and primary schools, and the production of inexpensive locally written books to meet the large numbers in the school systems. The qualitative needs include knowledge about the context of teaching and learning in Zimbabwe bearing in mind the large numbers of pupils now having access to secondary education; innovative and adaptive expertise in the sense that middle level and high level expertise is desirable to adapt the educational system to meet the new Zumbawean realities and circumstances; expertise in teacher education; expertise in administration at middle

and high levels to administer the rapidly expanding and increasing complex education system; expertise in skilled manpower training; training across the whole field of urban and rural development.

The acceptance of these urgent new tasks means the Faculty must be more involved in national issues which in turn imply an invigorated thrust in both empirical and applied research, new patterns of extension activities, and a stronger impulse toward giving innovative leadership in the field of education.

With restructuring, six departments came into being - Department of Educational Foundations, Department of Educational Administration, Department of Curriculum Studies, Department of Adult Education, Associate College Centre, and Centre for Educational Technology. Now that the process of rationalising departments has been completed, staff members are busy overhauling courses and updating teaching materials. This is being done in the light of the new socio-economic and political order. It is intended that the courses should reflect the changes that are taking place in the University and the country as a whole.

There are six departments in the Faculty of Education and one distinctive feature of this Faculty compared to other faculties at the university is that the majority of the courses are conducted on a part-time basis as a form of in-service training and continuing education programme. The following gives a glimpse of what is taking place in some of the Departments:

2.1. Department of Educational Foundations

The Department of Educational Foundations comprises of units on the Sociology of Education, the Psychology of Learning and Philosophy of Education. One of the major tasks currently under-way in this department is the production

of cassette-tape recorded lectures which are accompanied by additional duplicated learning materials for the distance teaching programme of in-service training of secondary school teachers. 310 taped lectures have been produced, and it is hoped that by 1984 3.000 taped lectures will have been produced.

2.2. Department of Curriculum Studies

Despite the fact that the department has been busy with internal changes, programmes which are in the main designed to meet the immediate demands of the rapidly expanding educational system have been undertaken. These include:

- a) The Zimbabwe Science Project which involved the developing of a science curriculum using simple instruments designed in the department to service rural secondary schools where elaborate and fully equipped laboratories do not exist.
- b) Primary School Curriculum Analysis, the result of which are being used in the revision of the Primary School Curriculum by the Ministry of Education and Culture.
- c) Running a full time M.Ed. course in Curriculum Development to meet the demands of the Ministry of Education and Culture.

2.3. Department of Adult Education

This department (known in other places as the Department of Continuing or Non-formal Education) is responsible for training professional adult educators (androgogy) at Diploma and Degree levels. Most of the students in the department are in charge of the training departments in industry and government ministries such as agriculture, health, rural community development. The result of this has been that because these individuals are in positions of responsibility, they have a multiplier effect through the training of trainers who in turn train more people at local level and thus teach the masses. Distance teaching

and development of learning resource materials are important aspects of this department since all students are part-time. The part-time and in-service aspect has several advantages which include immediate reinforcement of what is learned in the work situation, and gives opportunity to acquire new skills for career changes and promotion that is quite common in Zimbabwe these days. Students at diploma and degree levels undertake applied or action oriented research of relevance in their field of practice. Faculty members are involved in research projects of their own or in consultancy projects of government and other agencies. Some of the recent research in the department include:

- a) A survey of the Learning Needs of Under-educated Adults in Rural and Urban Areas of Zimbabwe.
- b) The Development of Appropriate Materials and Methods for Training Health Care Workers.
- c) Women's Education: The Participation of Women in Rural Resettlement Schemes.
- d) Survey of Workers Education Activities in Zimbabwe .

2.4. The Centre for Educational Technology (CET)

The CET has just started to be a teaching department, as well as providing audio-visual services for the faculty. With only one permanent member of academic staff and two expatriate technicians the process of designing courses is likely to take long. The immediate needs of CET are for experts who can help in teaching and organizing courses in communication skills and use of media in education. The emphasis needed is on appropriate educational technology suitable to the needs of Zimbabwe as a developing country.

2.5. Associate College Centre (ACC)

ACC has a supervisory responsibility over Associate Colleges like Mkoba, Hillside, Mutare, Gweru, Seke and Nyadiri,

and this involves a total of well over 6.000 students undergoing teacher training programmes. Staff members in ACC monitor professional progress of the Associate Colleges and also act as external examiners. Students in the Associate Colleges receive the University Certificate in Education after they complete their period of training.

One of the major activities of ACC is the promotion of the Staff Development Scheme among various institutions and organisations which are concerned with teacher training. People involved in this scheme include teacher educators, education officers, headmasters, school teachers, lecturers in associate colleges and university academics. In addition the associate college centre has the overall responsibility of the post graduate certificate in education that is required for graduates in different fields who go into teaching at secondary school level.

2.6. The Department of Educational Administration

This is a fairly small department which has students in 1982 for the first time. 12 students are doing M.Ed. Out of these 6 are part-time while the rest are full-time. The department also has 32 students on the M.Ed. qualifying course.

A notable innovation in the curriculum of the Master degree programme has been the emphasis on research methodology. The Faculty aims at producing graduates with statistical facility and competency to tackle problems logically, systematically and critically. This new emphasis in training resulted in a number of valuable researches undertaken by the 1982 M.Ed. graduates. These researches include: Women Administrators in Zimbabwean Schools; Decision Making in Primary Schools; School Heads Role perception; School Control Structure as a factor of job satisfaction. In the world of work the studies will help trainers, supervisors, managers and decision makers in their administrative capacities.

3. Extension Work

Individual members of the Faculty are constantly called upon by government and nongovernmental organisations to act as consultants in research workshops, and other activities. In April 1983 the Department of Adult Education held a workshop on the Role of University Adult Education in Zimbabwe. One recommendation coming from the participants (representing various Non-Formal Education Agencies), was that the Department of Adult Education should establish an Extension Unit to service the various agencies in training and research. Many agencies and institutions are involved in training of trainers, and more often than not, the trainers have no previous experience of formal training in adult education. In such instances extension services could take the form of short duration courses, seminars, conferences to meet the specific demands and needs of given agencies.

The need for extension services is made even more urgent by the forthcoming National Literacy Campaign which is jointly organised by the Ministries of Community Development and Women's Affairs and Education and Culture. The Department of Adult Education is involved in the planning processes and will be expected to provide intensive crash courses in various aspects of the campaign as well as monitor and evaluate the different stages of the campaign.

The Department of Adult Education is currently examining what mode of operation and organisation such an extension unit would take, what resources (capital, personnel and financial) would be needed in this effort to take the University to people.

Possible areas of Cooperation

The Faculty would benefit from the University of Oslo's experiences in the various areas indicated above, but more specifically in the areas listed below.

1. University Extension - what are the experiences of the University of Oslo in this? How is University research translated or fed into the national system for policy, planning and implementation. How are extension activities funded and organised?

2. Educational Technology --what experiences can CET draw from in their effort to design relevant courses? What training programmes for technicians and professionals in the area of the media and education are available? What research has taken place or is underway in the field of educational technology?

3. Distance Teaching
Since the majority of students in this Faculty are part-time students, emphasis is on distance teaching. Information on preparation of materials for distance teaching; studies on various aspects of this method of delivery and its supervision would be possible areas of research cooperation.

4. Women in University
The proportion of women academics and administrators at the University of Zimbabwe is still very small. Analysis of problems or occupational barriers faced by women in University and identification of strategies for change is a research area of interest and possible cooperation.

The foregoing summary of activities of the Faculty of Education illustrates that the University of Zimbabwe from being an ivory tower, is seeking very much to be a university of the people within the new political and socio-economic order.

Conclusion

Zimbabwe is seeking to develop her training capacity at various levels of the educational system. Through the staff development and exchange programmes the University of Zimbabwe and the Faculty of Education in particular want to build local training institutional capacity to reduce dependence, increase relevance of curricula and develop flexibility to meet the demands of the situation. We hope the University of Oslo through this cooperation venture can help us achieve our objective of establishing strong training institutions.



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