

Globalisation Qualifications and Livelihoods

Report Number 16

Shifts in the Educational Structure of
Zimbabwe following Economic
Liberalisation

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Preface

This research report is one of a series completed within the DFID-funded research project 'Globalisation, Qualifications, Livelihoods and Youth'. The research examines the impact of globalisation on livelihoods, education and qualifications, and on the aspirations of youth for education, qualifications and livelihoods.

The research arises from the need to monitor the impact of globalisation – operationalised via policies of economic liberalisation – on the access of the poorest social groups to livelihoods, education and qualifications in different country contexts. Economic liberalisation is changing the nature of the livelihood structure and the economic demand for skills and qualifications. It is also changing the types of educational and qualifications provision within specific national settings. These in turn impact on the aspirations of youth for livelihoods, education and qualifications. The realisation of those aspirations is increasingly conditioned by the ability to pay, as policies of economic liberalisation encourage private sector, market driven provision, especially at the post-primary level. This research explores the impacts of economic liberalisation on the structure and volume of livelihoods, education and qualifications on the one hand, and on the aspirations of youth, on the other. In particular it seeks to explore differential impacts of economic liberalisation on members of different social groups.

The fieldwork has been undertaken mainly in Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe. A smaller study was undertaken in Zhejiang Province, China. And a study of UK suppliers of qualifications to Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe was undertaken to explore the interdependent, cross border nature of qualifications supply.

Research Report no 16, by Charles Nherera of the University of Chinhoyi, examines shifts in the education structure of Zimbabwe following the policies of economic liberalisation introduced from 1990. Because of the focus on impact and change the study necessarily examines the livelihood structure in the period prior to liberalisation. This study is based mainly on analyses of secondary sources.

This research was supported by DFID. The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily represent DFID's own policies or views. Any discussion of the content should be addressed to the author via the email address listed below.

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Shifts in the Educational Structure of Zimbabwe Following Economic Liberalisation

1 Introduction

Zimbabwe's colonial education system was based on institutionalised racial discrimination, which was characterised by glaring inequalities between the provision for European and African education. Budget allocations to the Division of European Education were much higher than those to the African Division. Only a few schools were provided for African children, and Missionaries, rather than the colonial government provided most of them. Consequently, most of the indigenous Black children had no access to school places while all their White counterparts had access to schools that were comparable, in terms of quality, to grammar schools in England at the time. Per capita expenditure in European schools was more than twelve times higher than that in African schools.

After the attainment of political independence in 1980, the dual system of education was removed, bringing both the African and European divisions under one administration. Government expenditure in the education sector increased dramatically, to cater for the large numbers of Black children who had been denied the opportunity to attend school throughout the colonial period. Expenditure on education almost doubled during the two-year period 1979/80 to 1980/81, rising from 14 percent of total Government recurrent expenditure to 23 percent. The proportion of Government spending on education in relation to other sectors remained consistent throughout the 1980s, although it fell to 17 percent in 1983/84. In 1990 however, Government adopted the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) and resolved to conform to it by not exceeding 18 percent of its recurrent budget on the education sector. Since then, spending on education has stagnated and even declined.

After it was introduced in 1991, ESAP advocated cutbacks in government spending on social services such as education and health. Besides cutting the actual budget allocation to social services, Government had to remove any subsidies and introduce cost recovery measures such as user fees. The private sector and local authorities were to play a more active role in the provision of education facilities on a cost recovery basis. These measures had a negative impact on the education structure and undermined the progress that had been made during the early years of Independence. In a funding proposal to UNICEF, the Ministry of Education and Culture (1993) acknowledges that the broad context within which the education sector operated had deteriorated since the introduction of ESAP.

This part of the study examines the shift in the educational structure in Zimbabwe in the periods before and after economic liberalisation. While the period before liberalisation covers both the colonial and post-colonial era, focus will be on the period between 1980 and 1990. The period after the adoption of economic liberalisation policies is traced from 1990 to the year 2000. Officially, ESAP was discarded in 1997 when Government introduced the Programme for Economic and Social Transformation (ZIMPREST). However, economic liberalisation policies, which were the hallmark of ESAP, continued to prevail. ZIMPREST was therefore a modification of ESAP and not its replacement.

2 Historical, socio-economic and political context

2.1 The pre-liberalisation period

The social and economic policies formulated in post-independent Zimbabwe are better understood in their historical context. Zimbabwe's current education system, is a reflection of a complex set of ideological, political, historical, social, cultural and economic factors which have exerted their influence over a long period of time. The 90 years of colonial rule have left legacies, which have a long-lasting impact on the nature and orientation of post-independence policies.

2.1.1 The Colonial Period

Successive colonial administrators restricted the access of African children to educational facilities as one of the key ways to effect and maintain a racially segregated society, in which the minority people of European origin were regarded as superior over the majority indigenous African population. The curriculum in African schools remained largely academic. It catered almost exclusively for the needs of a minute proportion of pupils who continued into higher education. Riddell (1980) remarks that the education system in Rhodesia was elitist, highly selective, economically wasteful, and geared to the needs of the small modern sector economy which was incapable of providing enough jobs for the growing population. Consequently, while there were skill shortages in the country, most of the black school-leavers, even those with secondary school education, remained unemployed. The minority White population and White immigrants provided most of the skilled labour and were mostly trained outside the country. This encouraged the authorities to discriminate against and shun any efforts to develop a sound indigenous skill base (Zimbabwe Annual Review of Manpower, 1983).

2.2 The Post-Independence Period

When the country attained political independence in 1980, the new government set out to redress the imbalances based on racial discrimination entrenched during the colonial era. The post independence period has had two distinct phases. The period between 1980 and 1990 preceded the introduction of policies of economic liberalisation and the period from 1990 to 2004 has post-dated their introduction. Education was one major instrument through which the Government sought to address social transformation during the immediate post independence period. It sought to redistribute the national wealth and resources in order to raise the standard of living of all people. The newly independent government pronounced education as a basic human right, and, regarded it as one of the key strategies not only to redress the racial imbalances that existed, but also to achieve scientific and industrial progress (ILO, 1992). Particular emphasis was placed on the provision of infrastructure and services in geographical areas and among social groups that had been marginalized throughout the colonial era. The provision of social services, particularly education and health, was the main focus although the government still sought to further develop the inherited productive sector.

Quantitatively, the Government achieved notable success in the provision of social services such as education and health, particularly in rural areas. Development reports indicate that a variety of social

development indicators registered improvements during the post-independence period, particularly between 1980 and 1985.

2.3 The post-liberalisation period

The post-liberalisation period referred to in this report, focuses on the years since the country adopted ESAP in 1991, up to the year 2000. Development policies and activities during this period were dominated by ESAP. The period since 2000 has been dominated by the Agrarian Reform Programme that has been met with strong opposition from some Western countries, which have imposed economic sanctions on Zimbabwe.

Though reluctant initially, Zimbabwe adopted ESAP in 1990, in the face of increasing pressure from bilateral and multilateral organisations and an economy that was declining rapidly. Since then, the country has experienced fundamental changes in its socio-economic environment. Although economic liberalisation had been regarded as the panacea to the economic woes facing the country, the introduction of ESAP actually impacted negatively on the economy. The Zimbabwe Human Development Report (Raftopoulos, 1998) observes that the country's economic performance had deteriorated since the introduction of ESAP. According to the Human Development Report, unemployment levels increased throughout the period. An ILO study noted that ESAP had severely affected urban households in Zimbabwe as a result of declining real wages, stagnant formal sector employment levels, reduced investment in education and health coupled with cost-recovery measures (ILO, 1993). Social service expenditure declined as a result of the austerity measures of ESAP, and this had a negative impact on educational provision.

The removal of subsidies from basic provisions, and the introduction of cost recovery measures in education eroded the ability of the most vulnerable groups to benefit from educational provision. In an attempt to minimise suffering brought about by the negative effects of ESAP, Government put in place safety nets to assist the very poor who were vulnerable in the harsh socio-economic environment. For instance, rural primary schools were exempt from charging school-fees. Poor urban children could apply for assistance with the payment of tuition and examination fees to the Social Development Fund (SDF). However, the vulnerable groups in both urban and rural areas remained exposed to widespread poverty as the SDF failed to reach the majority of the needy. The SDF was eventually withdrawn in 1998 due to lack of funds and administrative problems.

ESAP advocated a reduction of Government spending on social services. The private sector was expected to play a more active role in the provision of such services as health and education, on a cost recovery basis. In education and training, there was a marked increase in the number of private institutions offering a variety of courses, both at secondary and tertiary levels. However, the fee structure of such institutions was beyond the reach of the majority of pupils and students who come from poor socio-economic backgrounds. The decline in Government spending on education and training led to a marked increase in the proportion of students enrolled in private sector institutions at the

secondary, post secondary and tertiary levels (or in public institutions now charging very high fees), with a proportionately greater increase among the better off social groups.

Parents from the higher socio-economic background preferred their children to attend private schools, which had better facilities since they had more resources. The demand for places in such schools led to a proliferation of high-fee schools, particularly in urban areas. The fees for such schools were not controlled initially, in line with economic liberalisation. However, government had to intervene and impose limits to the levels of fees that schools could charge since the increases had become so high that the majority of people, even among the middle class households, could not afford to keep their children in the schools. Many parents had to transfer their children from such schools to government and mission schools whose fees had remained relatively low. Responsible authorities of the private schools contested why Government was controlling the levels of school fees that they could charge, citing high operational costs as the justification for the increases. Some of the schools defied the Government directives to keep fee levels at a given level, leading to court cases and temporary closure of a number of schools throughout the country in 2003.

The shrinking labour market also fuelled the competition for places in educational institutions as students sought higher and relevant qualifications to enhance their chances on the labour market. Unemployment levels continued to rise as workers were laid redundant and increasing numbers of school leavers joined the unemployed every year. Throughout the period, over 300,000 pupils left school annually, most of them with four years of secondary education to compete for less than 25 000 new jobs available. Paradoxically, the formal sector still faced acute shortages of skilled personnel, particularly in technological and skilled areas. Economic development remains one of the major factors influencing educational reform policies. Educational provision is perceived as a means to solve youth unemployment and develop a skilled workforce for economic progress. These goals have been implicit in successive Five Year National Development Plans.

3 Research Question

This report addresses the question: What has been the shift in the education structure in Zimbabwe before and after economic liberalisation? The analysis is mainly based on secondary data from reviewed literature and the researchers' experiences as well as observations.

3.1 Hypotheses

A number of hypotheses have been formulated to guide the study and enable a systematic analysis of the shifts in the educational structure in the period before and after economic liberalisation. The hypotheses are based on the features that emerged from the researcher's literature review as characteristics of economic liberalisation. The analysis takes cognisance of the country's historical, socio-economic and political context. With regard to its impact on the educational structure, it is hypothesised that Economic Liberalisation has led to:

- I. an increase in the proportion of students enrolled in private sector institutions at the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels (or in public institutions now charging very high fees), with a proportionately greater increase among the better off social groups;
- II. a shift of curriculum policy at secondary school level towards ICT;
- III. an increase in the number of students enrolled in post-secondary private sector institutions offering courses in ICT, Technology, Commerce, Accounting etc. with a proportionately greater increase among the better off social groups;
- IV. an increase in the use of local languages (mainly Shona and Ndebele) as potential media of instruction (together with English at primary, secondary and tertiary level);
- V. an increase in the volume and type of franchise and access arrangements with foreign universities;
- VI. stabilisation of first, second and third level education enrolments;
- VII. an increase in enrolment ratios for first, second and third level for girls;
- VIII. a proportionate increase of youth unemployment;
- IX. a higher entry qualification for teacher's training.

4 Discussion

4.1 Increase in the Proportion of Students Enrolled in Private Sector Institutions

4.1.1 *Primary and Secondary School Level*

Historically, the establishment and running of schools in Zimbabwe has been a shared responsibility between the State and the private sector. Included in the private sector are local government authorities (district and rural councils, city and town or municipal councils), church organisations, other private organisations (trusts and boards of governors), committees, and individuals (mainly commercial farmers and estate owners). Private schools range from the often poorly resourced Rural District Council schools to the 'high fee' private schools mainly run by Trusts or Boards of Governors, mining corporations and church organisations. 'High fee' private schools particularly became popular among the high socio-economic groups as funding of Government schools declined with the advent of ESAP. Economic liberalisation meant that the schools could charge high fees. They were therefore able to offer better facilities and attract more qualified teachers and administrators than government schools. Table 1 shows the distribution of primary schools by their Responsible Authority and location in 1997.

Table 1: Primary Schools by Responsible Authority and Location, 1997

Location \ Responsible Authority	Urban	Communal	Resettlement	Commercial Farms	Mines	Total
Government	251	2	0	11	3	267
Rural District	34	3228	126	223	5	3616
Mission/Church	27	143	7	35	0	212
Urban Council	85	1	0	5	0	91
Mine	12	5	1	5	6	29
Trust / Board of Governors	35	19	0	31	8	93
Other	71	46	2	179	64	362
Total	515	3444	136	489	86	4670

Adapted from: Ministry of Education Sport and Culture, Statistics 1997

Over 77 percent of all the primary schools were under rural district councils. This is in line with the demographic pattern of the country in which over 75 percent of the population resides in the countryside. Generally, the most expensive schools in terms of fees are those that are run by Trusts or Boards of Governors, followed by some boarding mission schools. Table 2 shows the distribution of secondary schools by their Responsible Authority and location in 1997.

Table 2: Secondary Schools by Responsible Authority and Location, 1997

Location \ Responsible Authority	Urban	Communal	Resettlement	Commercial Farms	Mines	Total
Government	129	59	1	6	1	196
Rural District	18	968	39	46	1	1073
Mission / Church	18	113	1	40	0	172
Urban Council	6	0	0	0	0	6
Mine	2	0	0	0	8	10
Trust / Board of Governors	15	8	0	7	0	30
Other	22	7	0	13	2	44
Total	210	1155	41	112	12	1530

Adapted from: Ministry of Education Sports and Culture, Statistics 1997

Economic liberalisation policies led to a rapid increase in school costs, as parents were now expected to contribute more towards the education of their children. In a 'Situation Assessment and Analysis of

Children and their Families in Zimbabwe' the GOZ / UNICEF (1999) revealed that a significant percentage of children were unable to access school due to a combination of rising poverty and increasing cost of education. A survey carried out by Nherera (2000) revealed that the tuition fees and other costs charged by different schools varied widely, depending on the location and type of school. Urban schools were generally more expensive than rural schools. Although boarding schools were also more expensive than day schools generally, those run by church organisations charged lower fees than those run by Trusts and Boards of Governors. Among urban schools, those in more affluent suburbs (low density areas) were more expensive than schools in former townships (high density areas). Generally, high-fee private schools run by Trusts or Boards of Governors were the most expensive while rural district council schools were the cheapest. Although the tuition fees were comparable within the same category of schools, levies and other charges raised by parents associations such as the School Development Committees and School Development Associations had become prohibitive to the majority of children. After the adoption of economic liberalisation policies, fees and other school costs increased rapidly, particularly at private Trust schools. Table 3 illustrates the variation in the tuition fees charged by a sample of private schools between third term 1999 and first term 2000.

Table 3: Increase In Fees Charged By A Sample Of Private Secondary Schools Per Term Between 1999 And 2000 In Harare For Forms 1 To 4

	School	3rd Term 1999	1st Term 2000	% Increase
1.	Heritage	Z\$15,000	Z\$28,000	86.7
2.	St Johns College	Z\$16,550	Z\$25,000	51.1
3.	Chisipite Senior	Z\$18,000	Z\$21,500	19.4
4.	Arundel	Z\$17,625	Z\$21,500	22.0
5.	Gateway	Z\$15,500	Z\$21,500	38.3
6.	St Georges College	Z\$12,000	Z\$19,000	58.3
8.	Eaglesvale	Z\$13,942	Z\$18,280	31.1
9.	Prince Edward	Z\$ 9,974	Z\$14,191	42.3

Source: Compiled from the information sent to parents by schools

Notes: Since compiling this table fees have increased, on average, more than 230 times. Prince Edward is a Government Boarding School, formerly attended by White children only, under colonial policies.

These schools largely cater for children from more affluent families. The high-fee private schools have managed to maintain high standards in their educational provision by recruiting and maintaining qualified and experienced teachers. They also have smaller class sizes and are well resourced generally. In addition to the fees charged, the schools raise substantial sums of money through the contributions of parents and from commerce and industry. Some of the parents who send their children to such schools have positions of influence in the private sector, and are therefore able to mobilise resources for these schools. In spite of the high fees charged, the demand for places at such schools has continued to rise as parents believe that the better facilities and lower teacher-pupil ratios improve

their children's chances to pass examinations. The high fees have squeezed out children from the lower and even middle level socio-economic backgrounds, many of whom have transferred to Government and Church boarding schools. These have in turn squeezed out children from poorer backgrounds who cannot meet the rising school costs and go to government and rural district council schools where fees have remained relatively low while some have dropped out of school.

The deteriorating economic climate, particularly after the introduction of economic liberalisation, resulted in an increase in the number of children dropping out of school. A UNICEF-supported survey conducted by the GOZ on SDA Monitoring (1996) found that failure to meet school costs was the main reason why up to 47% of children were not in school. In 1997 for instance, 237,000 pupils dropped out of school countrywide (Sunday Mail, January 10, 1999). Large numbers of children applied for the Social Dimension Fund (SDF) as the economic hardships continued to worsen since the introduction of ESAP. For instance, while the applications for those seeking assistance from the SDF averaged about 20,748 during the period 1992 to 1993, the applications had increased to 215,000 by 1995. At that time, an estimated 2000 applications were being received nationwide each week. However, this was beyond the capacity of the Department of Social Welfare, which lacked both financial and human resources. The SDF was already running out of funds and owed many schools millions of dollars in fees that it was supposed to pay for needy children. Many schools were therefore rejecting pupils on SDF aid. Consequently, high levels of dropouts and transfers were recorded especially in rural areas and among the urban poor. While this was true for boys and girls, the proportion of girls who dropped out or were transferred to less expensive schools was generally higher. This is illustrated in Table 4, which depicts the dropout rate at secondary school level for the period 1995 to 1998.

Table 4: Dropout Rates At Secondary School Level From 1995 to 1998

FORM YEAR	FORM 1		FORM 2		FORM 3		FORM 4		FORM 5	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1995	7.7	9.1	2.7	5.8	6.1	11.1	91.4	93.0	1.7	0.2
1996	7.6	7.9	4.5	7.6	9.8	14.0	91.5	92.8	4.8	8.6
1997	6.6	8.1	1.7	6.9	6.9	11.9	91.6	92.5	3.7	4.7
1998	6.1	7.8	4.8	6.6	8.4	13.5	95.3	95.9	9.7	15.3

Source: Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture (unpublished statistics, 2000)

The seemingly high dropout rate at Form 4 is a misnomer since progression to Form 5 is restricted significantly due to the availability of places.

Examination fees for those 'O' and 'A' level subjects that have not yet been localised are charged in British Pounds and therefore susceptible to exchange rate fluctuations. Even with Government subsidy, the examination fees are too high for most parents and guardians in low-income brackets. School uniforms present another significant school cost to parents. The cost of uniform depends on particular

schools. High-fee paying schools require more than one set of normal school uniform as well as sports uniforms. The cost of uniform and other school requirements such as books, stationery, transport have led to an increase in the number of children dropping out of school. The rising cost of living has therefore resulted in most parents and guardians finding it difficult to send and keep their children in school, leaving those from affluent families to benefit from the well resourced private schools.

4.1.2 Tertiary Level

Tertiary institutions comprise of: Vocational Training Centres (VTCs), Teachers' Colleges, Polytechnic Colleges, and Universities. These are either government or private. The number of students entering private colleges and universities has increased significantly since the introduction of economic liberalisation. The Ministry of Higher Education and Technology (1996) acknowledges the significant role played by privately owned colleges in human resource development. The proliferation of these colleges offering a variety of academic, technical and vocational courses has been particularly spurred by the huge demand from thousands of school leavers seeking opportunities for economic survival. Education and training has become a lucrative business, particularly since the adoption of economic liberalisation. Many technical training colleges have been opened, offering a wide range of courses, from the National Certificate (NC) to the Higher National Diploma (HND) level. Teachers training colleges probably account for the biggest expansion at this level. According to the Ministry of Higher Education and Technology statistics, in March 1996 there were 190 registered private colleges operating in the country, mainly in urban areas. The courses offered include technical and vocational, business, commercial and secretarial. It was estimated then that private colleges were enrolling an average of 70,000 students. Table 5 illustrates the transition from school to tertiary institutions during the ESAP years 1994 to 1997.

Table 5: Transition From School To Tertiary Institutions From 1994 to 1997

YEAR	'O' & 'A' LEAVERS	TERTIARY			TOTAL	%
		TEACHERS	TECHNICAL	UNIVERSITIES		
1994	138,555	16,212	13,222	8,858	38,292	28
1995	141,971	14,741	13,612	12,442	40,795	28
1996	147,906	17,762	14,761	13,670	46,193	31
1997	163,098	18,901	17,496	13,664	50,061	31

Source: MOHET and MOESC Statistics Units in Zimbabwe Country Report, 1998

The size of the tertiary institutions, their capacity and quality of training varies from the well established and reputable to those whose activities, charges and service leave a lot to be desired. Because of the huge demand for training in the country, some of the colleges seem to be taking advantage of the desperate school leavers by charging exorbitant fees. They claim that their fees are high because their courses are international and therefore appeal to employers both within and outside the country. Although all private institutions are required to register with the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education as a quality control mechanism, many unregistered private colleges have been established, particularly since the introduction of economic liberalisation. There does not seem to be an effective mechanism to

monitor the activities of these colleges and prevent continued exploitation of students. Yet, the role played by the private sector in human resources development is very important, given the limited capacity of Government to meet the phenomenal demand for education and training.

The number of students enrolled in universities has increased significantly since the mid-1980s. While the University of Zimbabwe was the only one operating at Independence in 1980, thirteen new universities have since been established, most of these since the adoption of economic liberalisation. Out of the thirteen universities in operation in the country, five of them are private. These are: Africa University in Mutare, and Solusi University near Bulawayo, the Catholic University in Harare, the Women's University in Africa in Marondera, and the Great Zimbabwe University in Masvingo. The general increase in enrolment figures at university level for the period 1980 to 1998 is illustrated in Table 6.

Table 6: Summary of Enrolment Statistics at Universities From 1980 to 1998

YEAR	UZ	NUST	SOLUSI	AFRICA	BINDUR A	TOTAL
1980	2240	0	0	0	0	2240
1981	2525	0	0	0	0	2525
1982	3091	0	0	0	0	3091
1983	3620	0	0	0	0	3620
1984	4131	0	0	0	0	4131
1985	5162	0	0	0	0	5162
1986	5843	0	0	0	0	5843
1987	7622	0	0	0	0	7622
1988	7385	0	0	0	0	7385
1989	9073	0	0	0	0	9073
1990	9017	0	0	0	0	9017
1991	8635	256	0	0	0	8891
1992	8385	293	0	0	0	8678
1993	7231	534	0	64	0	7829
1994	7199	1119	451	89	0	8858
1995	10606	1268	469	99	0	12442
1996	11378	1359	537	396	125	13795
1997	11203	1359	530	396	176	13664
1998	9582	2127	777	929	364	13779

Source: Chombo, (2000)

Note: Solusi and Africa University are private, while the others are State institutions.

The enrolment at the University of Zimbabwe increased to a peak of 9288 in 1989 then dropped for the following four years before picking again in 1995. This is the time when new Universities such as the National University of Science and Technology (NUST), Africa University, Solusi University and Bindura

University of Science Education were established. At the same time, new private colleges were also being established as a result of economic liberalisation. Generally therefore, enrolment at tertiary level continued to increase and even accelerated after liberalisation. Even at the University of Zimbabwe, enrolment figures have since risen to over 14,000 students, while the Zimbabwe Open University now enrolls over 25,000 students and continues to expand. In 1997, the total enrolment at the UZ was 13,664 out of which only 4,121 (30%) were women (Zimbabwe Country Report, 1998).

In its attempts to involve the private sector more in the development of human resources, the Government established the Zimbabwe Manpower Development Fund (ZIMDEF). Established as a parastatal, ZIMDEF operates through the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education. It collects a levy based on the wage bill of business enterprises. The funds raised are used to sponsor students and provide facilities and equipment for training. Also, commerce and industry is increasingly taking an active role in providing work-experience to school pupils as well as college and university students, to expose them to the realities of the world of work. Colleges and universities are increasingly sending their students for periods of industrial attachment ranging from a few weeks to the whole year as part of their training. The limited capacity of the formal sector, however, means that only a small proportion of students can get such exposure.

Other contributions from the private sector come in the form of in-house training offered at some companies as well as donations to schools, colleges and universities in cash, kind or equipment. The National Manpower Advisory Council (NAMACO), which is comprised of representatives from the private sector, advises Government on matters of human resource development and acts as a link for consultation and communication between the private sector and Government in policy matters.

It is true that there has been an increase in the proportion of students enrolled in private sector institutions at secondary and tertiary institutions, both private and public. However, it cannot be concluded that a proportionately greater increase is among the better off social group since public sector institutions, whose fees have remained relatively low and offer Government grants, attract larger numbers of students from low socio-economic backgrounds too. Although economic liberalisation has increased the number of institutions that charge high fees, the public sector has also continued to expand.

4.2 Shift Of Curriculum Policy At Secondary Level Towards Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

The European Commission (2000) observes that advancement in ICT is now regarded as a strong indicator of the quality of education from a global perspective. In Zimbabwe, the demand for personnel with computer skills on the labour market has increased since the introduction of economic liberalisation. Companies faced stiff competition from both within and outside the country, in marketing their goods and services as new players joined the market. The use of the Internet and other facilities that come through information and communication technology (ICT) has become imperative in this environment. In response, schools and tertiary institutions have responded by providing training in these areas. Because of the high costs of purchasing the hardware required to offer such courses, the

expansion of ICT courses has been mainly evident in the private sector institutions. For most rural schools however, computers are a luxury they cannot afford as they lack basic necessities like classrooms, desks, teaching and learning materials, and have no electricity.

There is no official documented national policy on the introduction of computers and information technology (IT) in Zimbabwean schools. Sithole (1998) argues "The 'policy' currently guiding IT in education in Zimbabwe reacts to the needs now, and has few mechanisms in place to predict and prepare for future IT-related needs for the country's education and training". Since the mid-1980s, Zimbabwe has changed from its pre-occupation with the quantitative expansion of the education system that it embarked on at independence. It is now focusing on the improvement of quality in educational provision. However, the integration of computers as an essential component of school curricula has become widespread in private schools, even at primary level. Some of the computer laboratories in private schools are even better equipped than public sector colleges and universities.

In the mid-1980s, the Zimformatics project was launched as a joint venture between the University of Zimbabwe and the Ministry of Education Sport and Culture. It was aimed at creating an awareness of information technology in secondary schools throughout the country. Its attempts to develop both the courseware and software locally were however hampered by the lack of financial resources. Also, around the same time, the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) in the Ministry of Higher Education and Technology appointed an officer to monitor the introduction of computers in schools. The subsequent newsletter that was launched, entitled 'Microcomputer Users in Zimbabwean Education System' only ran for two years even though it provided a useful forum for teachers.

Gumbo (1998) observes that only 1.6 percent of the 6187 primary and secondary schools in the country had computers. These were mainly private schools, and their use of computers varied from computer clubs to formal education classes. At primary school level, computer classes are mainly restricted to computer appreciation and basic understanding of operating systems. At secondary school level however, the three common syllabi on offer are Pitman, Cambridge Computer Studies Syllabus or the Zimbabwe National Craft Certificate (ZNFC), which is a pre-vocational course examined by the Higher Examinations Council under the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education. Only a handful of schools offer computer studies courses at Ordinary or Advanced level. A few offer their own courses in ICT in either the first or the last year of secondary schooling. Schools decide which courses they want to offer, taking into account the availability of the hardware and software as well as that of qualified teachers. Almost all schools that have computers for use by pupils, run clubs in which programming in BASIC is the dominant student activity.

4.3 Increase In The Number Of Students Enrolled In Post-Secondary Private Sector Institutions Offering Courses In ICT, Technology, Commerce, Accounting etc. With A Proportionately Greater Increase Among The Better Off Social Groups

At post-secondary level, both private and Government colleges and universities offer various computer courses. The cost of computer equipment, aggravated by the shortage of foreign currency to import the

necessary hardware and software has restricted the number of places that can be offered for computer training. University enrolment in Computer Science, for instance, increased from 86 in 1995, to 98 in 1996 and remained at 98 in 1997 (Table 2.7). And not more than three female students were enrolled in each of these years. Computer courses that have expanded with the advent of economic liberalisation are those of short duration, such as word processing and the use of spreadsheets for accounting and bookkeeping as well as other software used for financial management. There was an influx of private colleges offering such courses after liberalisation. Short courses were popular because many employers were computerising and wanted personnel with computer skills urgently.

The International Labour Office (1992) observed from their assessment of the skills mix and training requirements of the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe that there was a shortage of engineers, technicians, and artisans in most companies within industry. Most of the labour force they found in industries was either unskilled or semi-skilled. Throughout the colonial period and in the pre-liberalisation period, such personnel were preferred by many private sector companies whose main concern seemed to be getting cheap labour and keeping operation costs low. However, with the opening up of markets and the resulting increasingly competitive economic environment following liberalisation, industry needed a higher proportion of highly skilled personnel to enable it to increase efficiency and productivity. Many companies were now recruiting graduate trainees and apprentices whom they could further train on-the-job to meet their specific requirements. Banks and other financial institutions also found themselves in a similar situation, as new and higher skills in computer technology, accounting, international marketing, shipping and other competencies required by the modern sector were no longer optional but necessary. What is of particular interest is that many companies actually put aside budgets to upgrade their human resource bases through both recruitment and retraining or in-servicing. Yet, one of the principles of economic liberalisation was the cutting down of operational costs. It meant therefore that companies had to trade off by retrenching their large pools of unskilled and semi-skilled labour-force to replace it with fewer and more qualified personnel. Alternatively, many of the companies opted to downsize their workforces then upgrade the skills of the remaining experienced staff. Trade-testing, which was introduced after Independence, was used to facilitate the upgrading and certification of workers who were classified as semi-skilled but had enough experience to be graded as skilled personnel (International Labour Office, 1992). Faced with the possibility of being retrenched, many workers enrolled privately in colleges to upgrade their skills before their employers could get rid of them.

The labour market influenced the courses that became popular in post-secondary institutions after economic liberalisation. Government institutions such as the Harare and Bulawayo Polytechnics, other public provincial polytechnics, technical colleges and universities as well as private colleges responded by introducing a wide range of new courses that were in demand in the liberalised economy. Table 7 illustrates the increased enrolment in specific areas at universities from 1995 to 1997.

Table 7: University Enrolments By Sex And Area Of Study, From 1995 to 1997

AREA OF STUDY	1995	1996	1997
	Enrolment	Enrolment	Enrolment
Industrial Technology	67	964	904
Science	1295	1285	1334
Agriculture	108	443	513
Computer Science	86	98	98
Accountancy	328	1182	1208
Medicine	930	1068	1043
Water Engineering	67	107	107
Home Economics	55	65	65
Law	274	253	243
Social Studies	1232	1372	1461
Veterinary Science	140	122	142
Education	782	4623	4318
Banking	73	79	79
Finance	115	128	128
Insurance	63	60	60
Arts	1401	1464	1612
MIS Special	68	85	79
Business Management	864	176	176
Theology	108	96	94
TOTAL	9177	13670	13664

Source: Ministry of Higher Education and Technology (1998)

The areas that experienced the biggest increase during the period 1995 to 1997 at university level are Industrial Technology, Agriculture, Accountancy and Education. With the new emphasis on new production and manufacturing systems and the need to improve quality and productivity, it is not surprising that enrolment in Industrial Technology increased by more than 1249%. These were all enrolled at two state universities, (UZ and NUST). The increase in Agriculture (375%) is in line with the new emphasis that was put on strengthening the agricultural sector as the backbone of the country's economy. Enrolment in Accountancy increased by 268% in response to the expansion of the financial

sector after liberalisation. Not only did the existing financial institutions expand in anticipation and to cater for a rejuvenated liberalised economy, but also new banks and finance and discount houses were actually established following deregulation in that sector. The Metropolitan Bank, the Jewel Bank, First Bank and Agri-Bank as well as a number of insurance companies were all established after the adoption of economic liberalisation policies and created a demand for personnel with Accounting and Computer qualifications. However, enrolment in Banking and Finance programmes did not increase significantly. This could be due to the fact that most of the Banks provided in-house training themselves. It is not clear why enrolment in Business Management dropped by approximately 391%.

Data could not be obtained regarding the socio-economic background of students enrolled in such courses. However, because public sector institutions offer such courses, students from both high and low socio-economic backgrounds had access to them, especially at universities, polytechnics and technical colleges. Access to private colleges however, is mainly accessible to students from higher socio-economic backgrounds, who can afford the high fees that are charged. Exceptions would be in cases where students from lower socio-economic backgrounds are sponsored by companies to attend courses at private institutions after they have demonstrated potential through their performance either at school or at the work place.

4.4 An increase in the use of local languages, (mainly Shona and Ndebele) as potential media of instruction (together with English at primary, secondary and tertiary level)

After the attainment of political independence, attempts were made to use local languages as the medium of instruction, in addition to English. It became policy for the mother tongue to be used as a medium of instruction in Grades one to three, in order to make learning more relevant and meaningful. This would make it easier to understand concepts during this critical stage of their education. While significant progress was made at primary school level in the use of local languages, little progress was made at secondary school and tertiary levels. Emphasis was placed instead on subjects and courses that were perceived to appeal to employers, such as ICT, commercial and business studies.

The move towards more use of indigenous languages as media of instruction, together with English at primary, secondary and tertiary levels has been further hindered by the emphasis of the liberalised economy being ability to compete globally. Employers tend to be interested mainly in languages that enable personnel to communicate beyond national borders. Hillside Teachers College and the University of Zimbabwe, for instance, offer Portuguese and French, for the increasing number of candidates needed in the industry. Zimbabwe has a lot of trade dealings with Mozambique, whose official language is Portuguese. The hospitality industry, particularly hoteliers and safari operators need personnel that can communicate in as many languages as possible, to cater for the diverse clientele it deals with. More recently, the increased flow of tourists from China has encouraged some institutions to consider offering Chinese as part of their language training in the hospitality and tourism industry.

Local languages have however benefited from the large number of Government projects that were embarked upon, particularly in the provision of social services such as schools, hospitals, housing, water, roads and more recently, rural electrification. The tendency after economic liberalisation was to

out-source non-core functions of most institutions, particularly in the public sector. Government therefore subcontracted private sector companies to work on a lot of its projects, such as construction of dams, bridges, roads and buildings. Since most of these projects are in rural areas where the majority of people use their local languages, many companies wanting to win tenders for such projects tend to recruit personnel who can speak these local languages.

One of the major drawbacks that delayed the use of indigenous languages as media of instruction, was the lack of dictionaries with commonly agreed translations of concepts that have always been expressed in English. This is especially problematic in scientific and technological areas where some concepts do not have readily and commonly accepted translations from English to Shona, Ndebele or other local languages. Books used in schools and tertiary institutions are therefore written in English. The Department of Linguistics at the University of Zimbabwe has gone a long way towards resolving this problem by producing dictionaries for Shona and Ndebele against English. The next major step therefore is to write textbooks and other school materials in the indigenous local languages. Even the use of Shona and Ndebele cannot be said to be the end of localising the medium of instruction since some parts of the country use different languages. At least sixteen indigenous minority languages have been identified and some of them are already used on some radio stations in the country in an effort to promote them and cater for those who speak the minority languages. However, economic liberalisation has tended to thwart rather than enhance the adoption of indigenous languages, since their economic value is not readily apparent to most employers. Even many parents and pupils seem to prefer that their children take language subjects such as English and French that they perceive to offer more career opportunities than their indigenous languages.

4.5 Increase In The Volume And Type Of Franchise And Access Arrangements With Foreign Universities

The increasing participation of the private sector in education and training has not only attracted local providers, but also international colleges and universities. Institutions in South Africa and abroad, especially in the United Kingdom and in America now advertise their courses regularly through Newspapers, the Internet, and other media. A wide range of courses, particularly ICT, commercial and business related courses are being offered through such advertisements. The acute shortage of foreign currency has meant that many pupils cannot afford to go and undertake studies outside the country. Yet the appeal of foreign-based qualifications continues to rise. An increasing number of local institutions have entered into franchise arrangements with institutions abroad. A recent example is the University of Zimbabwe that has entered into an arrangement with an institution in Malaysia to offer computer-training courses up to certificate level. The Africa Virtual University, which offers courses on-line is another example where the 'e.learning' is gradually enabling local students to acquire qualifications accredited abroad or jointly with local institutions without having to leave the country to attend such courses. The Specciss College in Harare and many other institutions have taken advantage of the liberalisation of the economy to create linkages with foreign institutions and offer a wide range of second and third level courses. Although their fees are higher than those charged in public institutions, they are still not able to cope with the huge demand that exists for their courses, especially those in computing and commercial

areas. These institutions offer both courses from local and foreign accreditation boards and charge in local and foreign currency respectively. Fees for foreign examination and accreditation boards are paid collected by the local institutions and repatriated to the respective home countries. Parents also have the option to pay to the foreign countries through their commercial banks.

4.6 Stabilisation Of First, Second And Third Level Education Enrolments

The massive expansion achieved in the education sector following the attainment of political independence in 1980 has been well documented (Nherera 1994). The number of schools and enrolments at all levels of education and training increased phenomenally, particularly during the period 1980 to 1990. However, enrolment figures have stabilised since the adoption of economic liberalisation as reflected in Table 8.

Table 8: Primary and Secondary School Enrolments From 1980 to 2000

Year	PRIMARY		SECONDARY	
	Enrolment	% Increase	Enrolment	% Increase
1980	1 235 994	Base	74 321	Base
1985	2 229 396	80.4	497 766	569.8
1990	2 119 865	- 4.9	672 656	- 35.1
1991	2 294 934	8.3	710 619	5.6
1992	2 305 765	0.5	657 344	- 7.5
1993	2 436 671	1.6	635 202	- 3.4
1994	2 476 575	2.0	679 416	7.0
1995	2 482 508	0.2	711 094	4.7
1996	2 499 381	0.7	760 576	7.0
1997	2 510 605	0.5	806 126	6.0
2000	2 460 669	- 2.0	844 183	4.7

Source: Ministry of Higher Education and Technology 1998

As indicated earlier, the stabilisation in school enrolments after liberalisation is partly attributed to the rising fees and other school costs against a background of declining real incomes in most households. Also, after the massive expansion of primary and secondary education after the attainment of political independence in 1980, enrolment figures reached a peak in relation to the general demography of the country. Nevertheless, the rising dropout rate indicated earlier is testimony of the negative impact of economic liberalisation. While enrolment figures at first and second levels have stabilised, at third level the figures are still rising rapidly as a result of the increase in the number of colleges and universities, which have been opened during the period following economic liberalisation. Expansion at this level is likely going to remain high as more and more people are seeking higher qualifications that enable them to compete for jobs on the local and international labour market and employers continue to demand higher qualifications.

4.7 Increase In Enrolment Ratios For First, Second And Third Level For Girls

Throughout the colonial period, more boys than girls attended school. Dorsey (1989) observed that from a 3:1 enrolment ratio of boys to girls during the colonial era, the situation improved significantly after Independence. Since 1980, the proportion of girls and boys in primary school has been almost at par. As depicted in Table 9, the parity index between boys and girls at primary school level moved from 0.91 in 1980, to 0.97 by 1996.

Table 9: Gender Participation Ratios at Primary And Secondary School Level

From 1980 - 1996

YEAYear R	PRIMARY			SECONDARY		
	% Female	% Male	Parity Index	% Female	% Male	Parity Index
1980	47.59	52.41	0.91	43.31	56.69	0.76
1981	47.95	52.05	0.92	41.79	58.21	0.72
1982	48.03	51.97	0.92	41.10	58.90	0.70
1983	48.15	51.85	0.93	40.72	59.28	0.69
1984	48.32	51.68	0.94	40.42	59.58	0.68
1985	48.46	51.54	0.94	40.44	59.56	0.68
1986	48.78	51.22	0.95	40.31	59.69	0.68
1987	49.08	50.92	0.96	41.42	58.58	0.71
1988	49.25	50.75	0.97	41.81	58.19	0.72
1989	49.54	50.46	0.98	42.30	57.70	0.73
1990	48.51	51.49	0.94	42.83	57.17	0.75
1991	49.09	50.91	0.96	44.01	55.99	0.79
1992	49.58	50.42	0.98	44.00	56.00	0.79
1993	48.35	51.65	0.94	44.55	55.45	0.80
1994	49.18	50.82	0.97	45.00	55.00	0.82
1995	49.25	50.75	0.97	45.61	54.39	0.84
1996	49.24	50.76	0.97	46.18	53.82	0.86

Source: Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, Education Management Systems Section (2000)

At secondary school level, the parity index is much lower than that at primary level, but has been improving steadily from 0.76 in 1980 to 0,86 in 1996. The ratio of girls in school continues to increase even though the harsh economic environment, exacerbated by economic liberalisation might undermine the progress made so far. The rising dropout rate that has been experienced after the adoption of economic liberalisation has affected more girls than boys. Girls, particularly from lower socio-economic backgrounds, are more likely to be pulled out of school when parents fail to raise school fees.

4.8 A Proportionate Increase In Youth Unemployment

According to a survey conducted by the Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries (2001), over 400 companies in the manufacturing sector alone folded in the year 2000, because of the difficult economic

environment. The sectors hardest hit were the motor trade with 171 shutdowns, steel manufacturers with 92, and 45 in the textile industry. As a result, 10 000 people lost their jobs in the year 2000 alone from the manufacturing sector. In an article entitled, “No jobs for graduates and school-leavers,” John Kipps, the Managing Director of Kipps Employment Agency and Executive Appointments, said that there were too many graduates chasing very few jobs (The Daily News, 30/01/01). Over 300 000 school-leavers join the labour market every year, most of them with at least four years of secondary education. In addition, thousands of students leave colleges and universities annual, in search of employment that does not exist. The youths in the age range of 15 to 24 years of age comprised almost 30 percent of the unemployed. Table 10 shows that out of the total labour force, the rate of unemployment was highest among those aged between 15 and 29 years of age. The rate for males increased for both the 15 to 19 years and the 20 to 24 years age groups when we compare the periods before economic liberalisation (1986/87 and 1993) and after the introduction of economic liberalisation (1993). However, This could be explained by the fact that more youths remained in institutions of higher learning after the establishment of more colleges and universities during the 1990s. Also, the youths were more vulnerable as the less experienced labour force when retrenchments were effected during economic liberalisation.

Table 10: Rates Of Unemployment As A Percentage Of The Labour Force, By Age And Sex, For The Periods 1986/87 And 1993

Age Group	1986 / 87			1993		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
15-19	11.4	11.9	11.6	21.0	11.8	15.9
20-24	20.6	16.5	18.4	21.3	10.6	16.3
25-29	3.6	5.6	4.6	10.1	4.2	7.5
30-34	4.0	6.3	5.1	5.5	2.1	3.9
35-44	2.5	4.8	3.6	3.5	1.0	2.2
45-59	2.1	2.8	2.4	2.0	0.4	1.2
60+	1.0	0.0	0.4	0.7	0.2	0,5
Total	6.5	7.7	7.2	9.1	4.5	6.9

Source: CSO: Labour Force Survey, 1986/87; Indicator Monitoring Survey, 1994.

4.9 Higher Entry Qualifications for Teachers’ Training Programmes

The massive expansion that took place at primary and secondary level after Independence in 1980 had a ripple effect on higher education, particularly starting from the early 1990s. There was a phenomenal increase in the number of students seeking places at tertiary level. As the competition to enter higher education institutions intensified, increasingly higher grades were required to secure places at colleges and universities. Teacher training colleges, which previously required five passes at ‘O’ level started to demand ‘A’ level passes. Stiffer competition was also experienced at universities since they were even fewer than colleges. The competition for places did not only come from students leaving high school, but also from temporary teachers who had been accepted to teach without the requisite qualifications. The Ministry of Higher Education and Technology (1998) observed that out of the 92,554 teachers in post at secondary school level in 1996, 18,224 (22%) of them were either untrained or under-qualified. It is

important to note that untrained teachers also included those who had university degrees in specific subject areas but did not have teaching qualifications. The Post Graduate Certificate of Education at the University of Zimbabwe catered for such people and was oversubscribed by applicants.

Higher entry qualifications to enter teachers' training institutions also came about because of the changing curricula in schools. Government shifted its shift from the quantitative expansion that was the focus from 1980 to the improvement of quality. At secondary school level, teachers with degrees rather than diplomas and certificates were now required. Many teachers who had qualified earlier were admitted back for in-service training at degree level. Table 11 shows the enrolment at teachers colleges and the Bindura University of Science Education from 1991 to 1997:

Table 11: Enrolment At Teachers Colleges And The Bindura University Of Science Education (BUSE) From 1991 To 1997

Level	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Primary Gvt.	5088	5375	6034	5046	5887	6210	6448
Primary Pvt.	2330	2332	2492	1117	2336	2268	3700
Second ary	5073	5350	5890	6072	5903	5852	5463
BUSCE	-	-	-	-	-	534	597
TOTAL	12491	13057	14416	12235	14126	14864	16208

Source: Ministry of Higher Education and Technology, 1998

These figures do not include enrolments at universities such as the University of Zimbabwe, Midlands State University, Solusi University, National University of Science Education and Africa University. Even with all these institutions operating as well as new ones established later, the competition for places has remained high. Since the introduction of economic liberalisation, an increasing number of graduates with general degrees such as Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Arts, are failing to secure employment and are increasingly going for teacher training to enhance their chances of securing employment. Such candidates get a preference in teacher training institutions, thereby further raising the entry qualifications demanded by the institutions. Hundreds of thousands of Zimbabweans who would normally qualify to enter university with two 'A' level passes (at least two points) fail to get places because universities have raised their entry qualifications to between 10-15 points (based on a sliding scale in which an 'A' grade equals 5 points down to an 'E' grade worth only one point).

5 Conclusions

Having examined the various hypotheses, it is evident that there has been a shift in the educational structure in Zimbabwe when we compare the periods before and after economic liberalisation. While the shift may not be fully ascribed to economic liberalisation, some of the effects of the liberalisation policies had an impact that affected educational provision and its direction. The major forces that impacted on education directly emerged from the removal of subsidies and reduction in government spending on

social services such as schools. While private sector participation increased in the liberalised economy increased the number of places at all levels of education and training, it also resulted in higher fees that have gone beyond the reach of most parents. Government has had to step in to control the fees that are charged at first and second levels (primary and secondary schools) and force private schools. High-fee private schools have also been directed to guarantee a proportion of places to children from lower socio-economic backgrounds through grant and bursary schemes. Nevertheless, school costs have remained the major obstacle why many children are dropping out of school and cannot access training opportunities at tertiary institutions, as the harsh economic environment continues to prevail.

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