

Chapter 7: The Higher Education Landscape in Zimbabwe: Locating ZEGU as an Entrepreneurial University

The chapter explores the critical role of the Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education (ZIMCHE) in shaping the landscape of higher education within Zimbabwean universities, particularly in relation to their mandates and the challenges they face. ZIMCHE was established to regulate and maintain educational standards, ensuring that institutions provide quality education and meet the evolving needs of the economy (ZIMCHE, 2006). This section will also examine specific cases, such as the ZEGU, to illustrate how universities are responding to the national policy framework and addressing issues like the Matarenda phenomenon that highlights the need for universities to align their outputs with market demands and contribute effectively to the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Zimbabwe.

The Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education (ZIMCHE) is crucial in regulating and ensuring the quality of higher education in Zimbabwe. Established in 2006, ZIMCHE was created to address the challenges posed by the rapid expansion of universities since the 1980s that raised concerns about educational standards (Dzvimbo & Kwandayi, 2020). Its primary mandate includes the registration and accreditation of higher education institutions, ensuring they meet national standards, and advising the government on educational policies (ZIMCHE Act, 2006). ZIMCHE's establishment reflects a significant shift in governance, aiming to coordinate efforts among institutions and maintain educational quality amidst increasing enrolment (Nherera, 2000). As a regulatory body, ZIMCHE not only monitors compliance but also promotes collaboration among universities to enhance the overall educational landscape in Zimbabwe (Moyo, 2018). This role is essential for developing a higher education system that meets the demands of a changing global environment while fostering local socio-economic growth (ZIMCHE, 2020).

ZIMCHE employs various mechanisms to fulfil its mandate, notably through institutional and program accreditation processes. All higher education institutions in Zimbabwe, whether public or private, must undergo rigorous

accreditation to ensure they meet predefined quality assurance standards (ZIMCHE, 2020). This process evaluates critical aspects such as faculty qualifications, infrastructure, and student support services (Dzvimbo & Kwandayi, 2020). Furthermore, ZIMCHE conducts academic audits that play a vital role in the continuous assessment of educational quality and institutional performance (Nherera, 2000). These audits help identify areas for improvement, ensuring that institutions remain accountable for their educational outcomes. By fostering a culture of quality assurance, ZIMCHE aims to produce graduates equipped with the necessary skills for the modern workforce, thereby contributing to Zimbabwe's socio-economic development (Moyo, 2018).

Despite its significant role, ZIMCHE faces various challenges that hinder its effectiveness in ensuring quality in higher education. Limited resources, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and the rapid growth of institutions create a complex environment for ZIMCHE to navigate (Dzvimbo & Kwandayi, 2020). The council's ability to adapt to these challenges is crucial for maintaining oversight and ensuring uniform quality across diverse educational offerings (ZIMCHE, 2020). Moreover, the increasing number of institutions has led to concerns about the adequacy of ZIMCHE's regulatory framework, necessitating ongoing evaluation and reform to address emerging issues (Moyo, 2018). As the higher education sector in Zimbabwe continues to evolve, the effectiveness of ZIMCHE's regulatory efforts will be instrumental in shaping the future of university education, ensuring it meets both national and international standards (Nherera, 2000).

ZEGU has established itself as a model entrepreneurial university in the Global South through its unique integration of Christian values with entrepreneurial development. Founded by the late Archbishop Ezekiel Handinawangu Guti, ZEGU's approach to education is deeply rooted in the principles of Christianity, aiming to develop not just the minds but also the hearts and hands of its students. This holistic approach is designed to foster a well-rounded individual capable of contributing positively to society. As emphasised by Professor Sunungurai Chingarande-Mutanga in an article in *The Herald* (19 March 2019), ZEGU's efforts to transform and enrich students' lives through Christian teachings highlight the university's

commitment to grafting, akin to turning lemon trees into orange trees, thereby instilling strong moral and spiritual values alongside academic excellence.

ZEGU's educational philosophy is further reinforced by the remarks of Professor Evelyn Garwe, who stated that innovation, sustainability, entrepreneurship, and spirituality are inseparable and essential for societal betterment. This philosophy aligns with the university's mission to develop outstanding graduates through the total person philosophy within the Education 5.0 framework. This framework emphasises the importance of producing graduates who are not only academically proficient but also spiritually grounded and capable of driving sustainable development and innovation. Professor Garwe's remarks were highlighted in an article on Nehanda Radio (24 May 2021), emphasising the integration of these principles in the university's curriculum and various programmes aimed at fostering entrepreneurial skills and ethical leadership among students.

ZEGU has shown a strong commitment to developing quality, outstanding, and transformational leaders. This commitment is exemplified by the achievements of its graduates and the recognition of its founder, Professor Ezekiel Handinawangu Guti, who was awarded a Doctor of Philosophy in Social Entrepreneurship for his global contributions. The university's focus on nurturing leadership qualities is evident in its innovative educational programmes and the emphasis on combining entrepreneurial skills with social, moral, and spiritual responsibility. Professor Garwe's emphasis on this philosophy was reiterated in the Nehanda Radio article (24 May 2021), showcasing ZEGU's holistic approach to leadership development.

The success of ZEGU's educational approach is highlighted by the achievements of its students, such as Tanaka Mazoredze, a Bachelor of Science in Social Work student. Tanaka's selection and participation in the YALI Regional Leadership Centre – Southern Africa _Business and Entrepreneurship Online Cohort 2023 demonstrate the practical application of ZEGU's ethos of developing a total person and promoting entrepreneurship. Through this program, Tanaka was able to merge his passion for social work with his professional goals, creating a hybrid model

that integrates profit generation with social responsibility. Tanaka's experience and the impact of the YALI Program were detailed in a LinkedIn article by ZEGU (2023), underscoring the university's ability to equip students with the skills and mindset needed to think creatively and solve complex problems, thereby preparing them to be effective leaders in their fields.

The issue of Matarenda, as conceptualised by Ezekiel Guti, founder of the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa (ZAOGA), is a faith-based entrepreneurship model that is claimed to have a positive impact on the lives of poor Zimbabweans (Anderson *et al.*, 2018). This model is rooted in the Christian faith and translates into practical entrepreneurship activity that is integral to the sustainability of the model in terms of economics, finance, human capital, and theology. The Matarenda model emphasises the central role of education in entrepreneurial ventures and is a notable example of the intersection between sustainability and the humanities within the Pentecostal faith (*ibid.*). Maxwell (2000) found that, while the Matarenda model is designed to empower individuals economically, ZAOGA's relationship with politics and the state has evolved over time that may influence the implementation and perception of such faith-based initiatives. Moreover, the church's emphasis on health and wealth, and its engagement in the economy through the establishment of schools, colleges, a hospital, and a university, reflects the broader Pentecostal agenda on health and wealth that has shaped ZAOGA's doctrine as articulated by (Biri 2018).

Matarenda that translates to "talents," plays a significant role in the context of Zimbabwean Pentecostalism and has emerged as a vital concept within the educational framework of the ZEGU. Musoni (2021) argued that, this term, rooted in the biblical Parable of the Talents, emphasises the importance of utilising one's abilities for personal and communal development (Musoni, 2021). At ZEGU, Matarenda is integrated into the curriculum as a university-wide course that aims to cultivate entrepreneurial skills among students, thereby promoting self-reliance and economic empowerment (*ibid.*). This initiative reflects a broader movement within African Pentecostalism, that seeks to address socio-economic challenges through the empowerment of marginalised groups, particularly women (Chingarande *et al.*, 2021). By

fostering a culture of entrepreneurship, ZEGU not only contributes to individual growth but also aims to stimulate local economic development, aligning with the university's mission to produce graduates equipped to tackle contemporary societal issues (Musoni, 2021).

The implementation of Matarenda as an educational framework at ZEGU underscores the intersection of faith, education, and economic development. This approach encourages students to recognise and harness their unique talents to create sustainable livelihoods (Chingarande *et al.*, 2021). The university's curriculum is designed to provide practical skills and knowledge, enabling students to engage in entrepreneurial ventures that can uplift their communities (Musoni, 2021). Moreover, the emphasis on Matarenda aligns with the Pentecostal ethos of stewardship and responsibility, urging individuals to actively participate in their economic environments (Anderson, 2021). By integrating these principles into higher education, ZEGU promotes a holistic understanding of entrepreneurship that transcends traditional business models, encouraging students to consider the social impact of their ventures (Musoni, 2021). This educational philosophy not only prepares students for the workforce but also empowers them to become agents of change within their communities.

Despite its potential, the Matarenda initiative faces challenges that could impede its effectiveness. One significant issue is the need for adequate resources and support systems to facilitate entrepreneurial education and training (Musoni, 2021). Many students may lack access to funding or mentorship opportunities necessary for launching their ventures that could limit the practical application of their learning (Chingarande *et al.*, 2021). Furthermore, there is a need for continuous evaluation of the curriculum to ensure it remains relevant to the evolving economic landscape of Zimbabwe (Anderson, 2021).

Addressing these challenges is crucial for maximising the impact of the Matarenda initiative and ensuring that it effectively contributes to poverty alleviation and sustainable development in the region. By fostering an environment conducive to entrepreneurial growth, ZEGU can enhance the overall effectiveness of the Matarenda framework, ultimately benefiting both

students and their communities. The Matarenda model by Ezekiel Guti represents a faith-driven approach to entrepreneurship that seeks to improve the economic well-being of its adherents through education and practical application of Christian principles. However, the church's evolving political relationships and its broader doctrinal emphasis on health and wealth may also play a role in shaping the implementation and outcomes of the Matarenda model.

The chapter explored the role of the Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education (ZIMCHE) in shaping the higher education landscape in Zimbabwe, focusing on its impact on quality assurance and institutional standards. Established in 2006, ZIMCHE is pivotal in regulating educational institutions, ensuring they meet national and international standards through rigorous accreditation processes and academic audits. The chapter examined ZIMCHE's mechanisms for maintaining educational quality, including institutional and program accreditation, and the challenges it faces such as limited resources and bureaucratic inefficiencies. It highlighted ZEGU as a case study of a university navigating these regulatory frameworks while integrating Christian values into its entrepreneurial model. ZEGU's approach to education, blending Christian principles with entrepreneurial development, underscored its role as a model entrepreneurial university. This integration aims to produce graduates who are not only academically proficient but also ethically and spiritually grounded, contributing positively to society. The chapter discussed the Matarenda model, a faith-based entrepreneurial framework introduced by ZEGU, and its impact on economic empowerment and local development. Despite its successes, the Matarenda initiative faces challenges such as resource limitations and the need for continuous curriculum evaluation. The next chapter will revisit the teachings of Ezekiel Guti and analyse their influence on ZEGU's identity as an entrepreneurial university. It will examine how these teachings have shaped the university's educational philosophy and practices, further exploring their impact on ZEGU's role in the higher education sector.