

RESEARCH ARTICLE:

Globalisation and ICT in Education through Unhu/Ubuntu African Philosophical Framework: A Case of the Zimbabwean Curriculum

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Abstract

This paper reviews the philosophical foundations of Unhu/Ubuntu in the Zimbabwean education system. The Zimbabwean curriculum underwent a comprehensive paradigm shift from a Western philosophy to an ancient indigenous philosophy of Unhu/Ubuntu. The Western philosophy was discarded on the premise that it provided an extraneous education lacking authentic existence for the people. Through the lens of connectivism, the paper answers the question of how after this removal from Western ideals, the present education impacts the country's need to be an active player in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) and global citizenship. Digital technologies are not a traditional heritage from an African epistemology. Therefore, the question remains whether the philosophy of Unhu/Ubuntu is rich enough to provide a framework for the integration of information and communication technology (ICT) and a resultant 4IR-relevant education for the country. We argue that Unhu/Ubuntu is well aligned to provide a framework for a digitalised technological education through its ethical, humanistic values. The paper concludes with a strong assertion that while both Capitalism and Unhu/Ubuntu achieve the goals of 4IR through education, one produces a competent skilled worker without the accompaniment of moral and ethical integrity which the other deliberately instils besides the skills and competences.

Keywords: *cybercrime; globalisation; ICT integration; philosophy; unhu/ubuntu*

Introduction

Zimbabwe's current education curriculum is underpinned by the African philosophy of Unhu/Ubuntu (Zimbabwe. MoPSE, 2015). The curriculum policy document claims that this philosophy prepares and guides the learners towards their roles as citizens of their societies and of the world. The preamble to this competence-based curriculum reaffirms its commitment to the provision of improved access and of quality education (Zimbabwe. MoPSE, 2015). The same document states that this curriculum is an attempt to modernise the education system and to redress the shortcomings of the old curriculum, which lacked a universal quintessential philosophy to guide teaching and learning. The current curriculum also mentions, among other matters, that it exists to bring about significant transformation in the lives of the people through developments in information and communication technology (ICT) and the global economy (Zimbabwe. MoPSE, 2015). This was observed by many as a radical reconstruction of an education system by basing a modern education on an ancient Afrocentric philosophy to compete on the global economic fora towards attainment of domestic and international agendas, especially Agenda 2030 regarding achieving middle-class economy for all Zimbabweans (Bondai and Kaputa, 2016; Gasva and Phiri, 2020; Odari, 2020). The bravery is witnessed in the way the country ignored the colonial discourse of labelling Black people from the Global South as inferior, bestial, and primitive, which view is not concomitant to academic prowess and development (Makuvaza, 2015; Nendauni, 2016).

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African philosophers agree that there is no adequate English translation of the philosophy of Unhu/Ubuntu (Ngubane and Makua, 2021). This is an ancient African philosophy known by different names in different sub-Saharan African languages. In Zimbabwean Shona, it is known as Unhu; in the southern region of the Nguni, as Ubuntu; in Zambia, as Umunthu; and in Vhenda, as Vhutu (Letseka, 2013). The philosophy is an African worldview that explains humanness that is being humane, which denotes love for others and actively seeking their good (Makuvaza, 2015). The highest achievement in this philosophy is being able to succeed as a group, winning together, collaborating, sharing and developing “our” community, shown in the proverb, *one fingernail cannot crush lice, thus we need each other for all endeavours* (Ngubane and Makua, 2021). Its place in the curriculum is to instil a sense of pride, identity, heritage, and nationalism through inculcating the African worldview of collective development (Makuvaza, 2015). Unhu/Ubuntu as a philosophy is complex and multifaceted, interpreted in different ways by different people within the region (Mugumbate and Chereni, 2020). According to Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru and Makuvaza (2014), the philosophy is based on 35 000 years of African history and is a philosophy that prioritises interpersonal relationships. It has been adopted by Zimbabwe’s education system to provide the framework which influences the aims, objectives, content, and methodologies of its curriculum and provides Zimbabwean indigenous ethos for what it means to be a human being (Gade, 2012). Underpinning primary and secondary education on the philosophy of Unhu/Ubuntu explains the inclusion of African indigenous epistemologies, moral values, socio-political values, and religious beliefs in the education of Zimbabwean youths (Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru and Makuvaza 2014).

The Western culture has for a long time followed the philosophy of capitalism. Capitalism developed in 18th century Britain during the Industrial Revolution (Dolan, 2023). Capitalism is at variance with Unhu/Ubuntu philosophy, which discourages competition and is premised on developing intrinsic humanism where there is control of freedoms (Makuvaza, 2015). Unhu/Ubuntu is more inclined to equity than equality (Ngubane and Makua, 2021); it is a philosophy of the corporate development of society, where an individual cannot develop alone, outside the group. It is the community which makes an individual and the same individual makes the community. It does not prescribe competing for resources or to make money but using the same resources collaboratively to develop all within the group (Manda, 2009). With the full awareness that the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) developed from the West under a capitalistic drive, would Unhu/Ubuntu as a philosophy of education produce graduates capable to fully participate as citizens of the 4IR global village? There has been a long-winded call by various scholars for the change of the philosophical framework for Zimbabwean education since independence from colonial rule in 1980. Mhundwa (1982) advocates for the indigenisation of the education curriculum and is against an education that imparted Western values that tended to render its products mimetic in existence and aliens in their own country. Makuvaza (2008) posits that maintaining the status quo in education was perpetuating colonialism, for the philosophy that informed it replicated the beliefs, values, and Western theories reflective of the deep-seated mental colonisation. To rescue African posterity from a dehumanising and emasculating education system, Sebedi (2012) calls for a re-look at the philosophies that informed African education in independent states. Chung and Ngara (1985) argue that there was no education that was neutral and, therefore, maintaining Western educational philosophies for the Zimbabwean education system was perpetuating colonial ideologies and worldviews. In a writing on the irrelevance of the education system soon after independence, Mudzamba (1982) argues for the need to reconstruct education to make it to the new Zimbabwe and its developmental goals.

The Western and missionary philosophies that informed the education system in Zimbabwe created an educated elite that were alienated from its people. The missionary philosophy was based on Christian doctrines that inculcated a loathing in learners of their traditions and values as barbaric and superstitious (Bhurekeni, 2020). Capitalism buttressed the system. For Black people, the curriculum focused on literacy and rudimentary practice in industry and agriculture to provide labour for the coloniser (Robinson, 2016). These philosophies inculcated Western cultural values of individualistic capitalism in the African people, rendering them unfit for their own Unhu/Ubuntu-driven societies. This subsequently caused an identity crisis among the African people, as they could only play second fiddle in the Western system (Dokora, 2015; Makuvaza, 2008). The concept of decolonialism of African education systems after independence was affected by the worldview and mindset of Western ideals lurking in the minds of the leaders in the system who underwent education premised on Western philosophies (Makuvaza, 2008). Therefore, to realise an education that liberates and allows individuals to participate in global citizenship with their divergent identities, an

education informed by an African worldview was called for, hence the philosophy of Unhu/Ubuntu in the current curriculum (Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru and Makuvaza, 2014).

A New Concept of Education

The Zimbabwe Government set up a commission of inquiry into the education system when the cry became too loud to be ignored. Among other findings, the inquiry indicated that the lack of an indigenous philosophy manifested itself through products who lacked moral focus or respect for other people and who were intolerant and corrupt (Nziramasanga, 1999). Moral decadence was evident in grades buying in schools, escalation of unpunished crime, theft, lost ideals on sanctity of life, and people dying in hospitals because caregivers need be bribed to render special care. Other signs of moral decay included intolerance of divergent views in politics, the general disrespect of the elderly, corruption in business and public offices, the presence of street kids, and drug and substance abuse (Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru and Makuvaza, 2014; Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru and Shizha, 2010; Kaulemu, 2004; Nziramasanga, 1999). It was only in 2015, 35 years after independence, that the country heeded the call for a heritage-based philosophy. The result was the current updated curriculum, which was an overhaul of the whole primary and secondary education curriculum (Dokora, 2015).

The new curriculum was envisaged as providing access to the teaching and learning of science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and vocational skills lacking in the old, to meet emergent 4IR demands (Chigamba and Ngara, 2017). At the centre of the curriculum was the need to maintain the learners' appreciation of their unique identity within the strong scientific and technological bias that the content had, to enable globalisation by inculcating 21st century skills to all learners grounded on the philosophy of Unhu/Ubuntu (Dokora, 2015). The curriculum further claimed to be on a mission to develop young Zimbabweans who would be able to compete with the best globally. This development would involve the youth being knowledgeable, creative critical thinkers and effective communicators and having leadership skills, coupled with African values, ethics, patriotism, and national identity, without losing their individual identities (Makuvaza, 2015). Through the new curriculum, the Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) claimed that it demonstrated its commitment to provide an education that had both integrity and acceptability globally. It assumed that it had a competence-/practical-oriented approach that was outcomes based as opposed to an exclusive examination-oriented approach (Dokora, 2015). The educational philosophical framework expresses societal ideals and practices and attempts to clarify an African worldview into the curriculum. It guides the preparation of learners for appropriate roles in their society. African beliefs and values underpinning the curriculum include sovereignty, inter-dependence, mutual support, respect, discipline, and readiness to help others (Makuvaza, 2015). Furthermore, moral uprightness and pride in Zimbabwean identity and heritage permeate the curriculum to counter the corrupt professionalism draining the country's resources. Zimbabwean's rootedness in the foregoing beliefs and values reflects the pan-Africanist philosophy even in the face of globalisation. Unhu/Ubuntu epitomises universal human inter-dependence, solidarity, humanness, and the sense of community common in African societies (Kaulemu, 2004).

As a result of the adoption of the new curriculum, a significant paradigm shift was realised in the way exit examinations were conducted. This time, the focus was on the continuous assessment of learning activities (CALA) component that dealt with the practical component of each learning area and the requisite ICT implementation without which learners would not be able to fulfil exit requirements (Dzinotywei and Taddese, 2020). To support ICTs for education, government embarked on several initiatives, which included the Platform 2016 for Computerisation Programs in Schools across the country. A lot still needed to be done, though, as resource shortages were still a reality in the generality of public schools (World Bank, 2020). However, government envisions the full application of ICTs in teaching and learning in all schools across the country as espoused by its national ICT policy. The goal of the policy is to provide internet connectivity to all schools as a way of scaling the digital divide (Zimbabwe. MoPSE, 2019). To this end, government has installed free internet in 3200 rural schools to enable technology-integrated teaching and learning (Chirume, 2022). However, more rural schools than those connected are still in need of internet. Government linked the ICT policy for education to both domestic and international agendas for the country (*ICT Policy for Primary and Secondary Education 2019–2023*). This was proof of commitment towards citizen participation in the 4IR through education as a vehicle. Thus, the emphasis was on ICTs in teaching and learning across the curriculum, with a demand

for proof of active integration as part of exit profiles for learners through CALA activities (Zimbabwe. MoPSE, 2019). This is evidence of the broad-based views of the philosophy of Unhu/Ubuntu. The widespread unemployment of graduates from the education system indicated a need to change the philosophy informing such an education, hence Unhu/Ubuntu philosophy, which has an industrialisation-oriented worldview (Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru and Makuvaza, 2014)

According to Retyunskikh (2020), community of inquiry was a Socratic way of initiating children into the ethics of social life. This was done through dialogue and questioning. It was valued as offering democratic settings for free discussions in classroom setups. Stories were also generally used in community of inquiry. A story would be told with learners in a circular setting, denoting equality of participants, thereafter learners would suggest questions for discussion. Learners would also participate in question-and-answer sessions. Scholars concur that this is how critical thinking is developed and fostered in children (Golding, 2015; Ndofirepi, 2011; Ndondo and Mhlanga, 2014; Oparinde and Govender, 2019; Pardales and Girod, 2006). The tenets of community of inquiry are found in the philosophy of Unhu/Ubuntu as a methodology traditionally used by the storyteller with children, as stories were used extensively to teach morals and to pass on societal values (Ndondo and Mhlanga, 2014). As Unhu/Ubuntu informs the education system in Zimbabwe, community of inquiry informs educational methodologies in the new curriculum. At the same time, Unhu/Ubuntu speaks to issues of cultural pluralism, religious diversity, tolerance, and democratic dispositions, without which the world will lack peace and harmonious living (Letseka, 2013).

Various studies have been conducted in Zimbabwe on the sufficiency of Unhu/Ubuntu as a philosophical framework for the secondary and primary education, as stated by the new curriculum of the country. Mutanga (2022) investigated where Unhu/Ubuntu philosophy had been applied as an evaluative and conceptual framework for inclusivity issues within the new curriculum and concluded that the philosophy has the potential to decolonise education in Zimbabwe. In reflection on Unhu/Ubuntu philosophy, Kumbirai (2021) concluded that it was not sufficient as a philosophy of education and needed to borrow some aspects from the Western Booker T. Washington's philosophy of the grand trinity. Musingafumi (2017) found in an empirical study that Unhu/Ubuntu philosophy was the proper framework for the teaching and learning of moral education for pre-school classes. In another study, Kwaira (2023) argues that the learning area wood and technology has its roots in African traditional education and concluded that the philosophy of Unhu/Ubuntu was a sufficient framework for its teaching and learning in schools. Another study worth mentioning is that of Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru and Makuvaza (2014), who argue that the philosophy of Unhu/Ubuntu should be the foundation of Zimbabwean education.

The above studies have made contributions to the relevance and adequacy of the philosophy of Unhu/Ubuntu as a philosophical framework for the primary and secondary education in Zimbabwe. However, none have yet focused on its adequacy as a framework through which learners can acquire 21st century digital life skills and attain participatory global citizenship. Considering the foregoing, this paper aims to discuss the place of Unhu/Ubuntu philosophy as an enabler for ICT-integrated education that meets global standards for Zimbabwean learners. We argue that Unhu/Ubuntu is sufficient and relevant as a framework for the 21st century digital education for global citizenship.

Theoretical Framework

The theory adopted in this study is connectivism learning theory. This is an emerging theory that explains education in the digital age of the 4IR. George Siemens and Stephen Downes are credited with evolving the theory in 2005 (Tschofen and Mackness, 2012). Siemens (2005) refers to the theory as a learning theory for the digital era. The theory was a result of the perceived inadequacy of the traditional theories of education to accommodate the dramatic rise of the digital technologies impacting teaching and learning and all other aspects of knowledge acquisition in education and of life itself (Ottestad, 2013). Proponents argued that theories of learning needed to explain the current ever-changing digital milieu for educational practice in a way that gives direction and understanding to the field (Siemens, 2005). Thus, connectivism as a theory of learning presumes to examine trends in technological developments, evolution of learning, organisational changes and the source and nature of knowledge (Corbett and Spinello, 2020). Connectivism is a theory that purports to explain the central role that technology plays in the 21st century classroom and the speed with which learners have access to information (Siemens, 2005). Unlike the traditional theories of learning whose focus was on mental processes for digital learning, knowledge acquisition is both internal and external

(Attar, 2018). Learners are referred to as nodes in a network, where the nodes are any object (or person) connected to another object, such as a web page, a book, or another person. Thus, knowledge and learning happen through connections to other entities, human or nonhuman, through nodes (Siemens and Downes, 2009).

Four fundamental principles for learning have been proposed as a part of this new learning theory for the digital age: autonomy, connectivity, diversity, and openness. The foundation of connectivism is the idea that every learning process begins with a connection (Siemens, 2005). In connectivism, the ability to create, maintain and navigate connections is what constitutes learning (Downes, 2012). These connections take place on the neurological, intellectual, and social levels (Siemens, 2005). According to connectivism, learning is a phenomenon of networks that is influenced, facilitated, and improved by socialisation, technology, diversity, the quality of relationships and the environment in which it occurs (Downes, 2010; Siemens, 2005). In this theory, focus is on the networked and shared (or sharing) experiences, which is a significant distinction from other learning theories (Tschofen and Mackness, 2012).

Autonomy: Autonomy is about self-directed learning, learner behaviour towards it and autonomy over own knowledge, its distribution and velocity (Siemens and Downes, 2009). Learners choose their own connections and information sources relevant to them without the control of teachers. Autonomy in education is identified with ideas of choice, independence and control and the development of the skill to be able to choose when to choose (Ottestad, 2013). Every opportunity should be used to ensure that students are guided and equipped to guide themselves in accordance with their own aims, purposes, objectives, or values. Connectivism acknowledges that knowledge is acquired to the extent that a person associates with and shares values with other community members. Such association and sharing are done voluntarily and based on the facts, logic and beliefs the individual deems credible (Downes, 2010). In connectivism, autonomy is also understood to mean always actively participating and contributing knowledge to the community of connections. According to Siemens (cited in Tschofen and Mackness, 2012:131), one should avoid self-focus, that is being connected without contributing to the community of learners, lurking, or just taking without giving. Even newcomers to the network must contribute by creating and sharing within the community of learning.

Openness: In connectivism, openness relates to being open-minded; opening engagements within individual pace or preferences; and exchanging ideas, artefacts, and resources within the network community. It includes expertise in communicating, creating new information and insights through networks. This contrasts with the traditional schooling of closed classrooms, lectures, and approved textbooks, bringing in more collaboration and communalism of knowledge (Ottestad, 2013). According to Downes (2010), the educational system and its resources should be set up to enhance openness. People should have the freedom to enter and exit the system, and ideas and artefacts should be able to move freely throughout the system. This is not intended to rule out the possibility of privacy or the potential that certain groups could want to distinguish themselves from the community. Openness works both ways, and one should be able to opt out as well as in. However, it is more accurate to say that the system's structure does not prevent openness and that there are no barriers preventing people from participating in the system.

Diversity: Traditional definitions of diversity in education focus on the measurably visible disparities among students, particularly those based on gender, race, culture, financial background, and possibly aptitudes. In the theory of connectivism, Downes (2010) presents diversity as a concept which states that the framework of the educational system and the educational materials should be designed to maximise variety. The goal of such a system should be to promote creativity and diversity among its participants rather than to somehow homogenise the population. In this way, each member of a society can express their own distinct viewpoint, informed by their own experiences and insights, and make a valuable contribution to society as a whole (Duke *et al.*, 2013). Thus, connectivism has the potential to support diversity, which is a significant strength and skill needed for the 4IR. In demographic diversity, learners are encouraged to make connections across that divergent milieu, seeking knowledge or ideas, without banking on teachers as sole sources of knowledge (Siemens, 2005).

Connectedness: Connectedness is central to connectivism. It refers to the networking learners do with computers and people. It posits that learning occurs when peers are connected and collaboratively share viewpoints, opinions, or ideas outside the authoritative control of the teacher, yet the teacher participates as a connected peer in the process (Siemens, 2005). Digital connectivism demands from learners the ability to develop agreeableness and amicability in online settings, which determines sustained connectedness, interactivity, and relatedness. The concept is premised on

the idea that the higher the number of connections or, rather, the greater the opportunities for connections, the higher the opportunity for learning (Ottestad, 2013). This is in line with connectivism imperatives of sharing and interactivity. Collaboration is key to connectivism. In Siemens' (2005) explanation, it sounds almost as if he is explaining the philosophy of Unhu/Ubuntu. He explains that there is never a good moment to be a lurker, and that being connected without producing and contributing is a self-focused, self-centred condition. Furthermore, taking is lurking. The idea of acceptable peripheral engagement is harmful. Instead, there should be development and sharing within the group, expanding understanding even where a member has just joined the network.

Connectivism views technology as part of the teaching and learning process that promotes constant connectedness for optimum learning choices. The theory promotes the idea that learning also happens outside an individual in a technology society, such as through blogs, social media, databases, and online networks (Downes, 2022). The central idea is that people learn when they make connections either with each other or with their roles and obligations (Tschofen and Mackness, 2012). Connectivism as a theory fills in the gaps created by the change in the teaching and learning landscape through ICT and the traditional methods that need replacement with new ones. The theory enables teachers to create conducive environments for technology-assisted learning. One of the strengths of connectivism is that it is premised on collaboration. Learning takes place when learners as peers are connected for the purposes of sharing ideas and viewpoints and collaborating in research and on implementation of ICT tools in education.

Digitalisation makes it easy to share and spread knowledge very fast and knowing and knowledge are defined by how far and how much an idea is spread and accepted by others. Another strength is its ability to empower the learners to take control of their learning and to be able to create own knowledge experiences without the teacher telling them. Learning becomes individualised and allows for achievement at individual pace and abilities, yet all learn in the end through the connections and networks. The teacher's role becomes that of creating a conducive learning environment and to release the learner to do the learning. Finally, connectivism embraces diversity. Knowledge is not tiered; individual perspectives are accepted in the community of learners and networks and connections keep building upon those divergent ideas and to make own experiences of them as a learning process. Connectivism theory is relevant for this paper because it explains the application of ICT in education and its relevance for the 21st century learners. We find it is the most suitable theory to use as a lens to critique the relevance and suitability of an ancient, African-born philosophy of education of Unhu/Ubuntu buttressing a digital-integrated system of education.

Sufficiency of Unhu/Ubuntu Philosophy through Connectivism

Connectivism is a broad and emerging theory. In this section, we focus on its main principles of autonomy, connectedness, diversity, and openness as a lens through which we critique the founding of a 21st century education system on the ancient African philosophy of Unhu/Ubuntu. We will analyse the principles of Unhu/Ubuntu versus those of connectivism. For the philosophy of Unhu/Ubuntu, we also focus on its four key principles; humanism, openness, interconnectedness, and group cohesion/collaboration (Mabvurira 2020; Mluleki and Motlhabi 2005; Mugumbate and Chereni 2020).

Humanism

Unhu/Ubuntu is an African thought emphasising *being self through others*. It is a type of humanism that is exemplified by the Zulu proverbs *I am because of who we all are* and *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* (*A person is a person through other persons*) (Mugumbate and Nyanguru 2013). Ubuntu echoes what the acceptable ideas and deeds are for the African person. It is an African worldview of social relations – a social, humanistic ethic. It is opposed to the Western, *I think, therefore I am* (Hailey 2008) and says, *I am human because I belong* (Mugumbate and Chereni 2020). The term emphasises group concept, solidarity, community and belonging together and is well expressed by an expression among Southern African Black people: *A person is a person through other persons* (Mangena, 2012). Central to the philosophy is the concept of the sharing of the burdens and benefits of the society, with no one being prejudiced and the community coming first over and above the individual (Okoro, 2010). The proverb among the people espousing that a person is made a person by other persons expresses the idea in this philosophy that a person's humanity is expressed dependent on the preservation, appreciation, and affirmation of other persons with whom they share their

social space (Eze, 2008). The idea is that no one can be healthy when the community is sick. Ubuntu says that *I am human only because you are human; If I undermine your humanity, I dehumanise myself* (Mangena, 2012).

The 4IR and the widespread use of ICTs have brought with them new forms of evil, such as cybercrime, pornography, and unethical practices in the treatment of others and their data. Concepts of Unhu/Ubuntu philosophy such as humanism and socialism may help to curb such evils. In this philosophy, social harmony is the paramount or ultimate good. Fundamentally, Unhu/Ubuntu is founded on interactions that prioritise respect for one another, human dignity, integrity, harmony, and care (Mluleki and Motlhabi, 2005). People act to benefit one another and the group. Therefore, putting the interests of the community above one's own defines one's value as a human being (Eze, 2011). These are core values in African ideological thought. Making Unhu/Ubuntu philosophy the framework that informs education in Zimbabwe ensures that as learners interact with ICTs in the classroom, these values are ingrained at the earliest possible age. In addition, learners will be in harmony with the African epistemological heritage and worldview by being humane and trustworthy with others' information. Steve Biko (cited in Forster, 2007:245) states that, while it was true that the world's powerful countries contributed immensely through industrial and military wonders, Africa will make the greatest contribution of a human face for the world.

Openness

Openness denotes a free flow of ideas between and among connections (Downes, 2010). Openness in connectivity involves exploration, creativity, and curiosity within a community of connected learners. It can be enhanced if the free exchange of ideas is informed by trustworthiness, moral values, and interdependence. Unhu/Ubuntu philosophy advocates doing to others what one wants done to self, including with sharing of information and personal data. Values of ethics, compassion, morality, and trustworthiness are basic to the philosophy of Unhu/Ubuntu (Mugumbate and Chereni, 2020). However, the Western concept of openness also includes the choice to remain or to opt out at any given time from the network, which is against the values of compassion, fairness, and group solidarity.

Interconnectedness

Education as informed by Unhu/Ubuntu philosophy is well placed to embrace the tenets of connectivism and ICT integration in teaching and learning. This is because such an education prioritises the social foundation of human life across learning activities (Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru and Makuvaza, 2014). Manda (2009) explains the philosophy of Unhu/Ubuntu as espousing that to be human is to be in participation with others. Hence, connections are plugged in and maintained through principles of the same philosophy of consideration and friendliness, an awareness of the needs of others, trustworthiness, a cooperative spirit, ethical responsibility that flows from interconnectedness, and networking. Consequently, connectivism is seen to embrace tenets of Ubuntu in that, according to Attar (2018), connecting forces are achieved through establishment of a knowledge- and experience-sharing network between school, teacher, and students. He further argues that the requisite skills to meaningfully perform in the contemporary world of knowledge are connective knowledge, meaning-making, pattern recognition and absolute collaboration. Interconnectedness affirms the idea that 21st century education through ICTs demands teamwork, group collaboration, openness in sharing, support of one another and organisational linkages, all of which are basic creeds of the African philosophy of Unhu/Ubuntu. In the African traditional education system, through constant connectivity to the teachers who were the storytellers, the experts, and the communal "dare" members, and to peers, learners were assured of knowledge transmission and chances to choose what to learn at the individual level (Eze, 2008). This aspect and skill are required, as learners need to be more and more autonomous in their learning process through ICT-integrated learning.

Group cohesion/collaboration

The philosophy of Unhu/Ubuntu is premised on teamwork and collaboration, group cohesiveness and group support. It is founded on a deep sense of belonging to a group, as the African is generally born into one, be it extended family, clan, or community (Mugumbate and Chereni, 2020). This principle promotes the value and dignity of all, with the emphasis on self-respect. The principle of Unhu/Ubuntu is that everyone must be seen to contribute to community initiatives and, by implication, to national development (Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru and Makuvaza, 2014). In the spirit of

Unhu/Ubuntu, as learners acquire 4IR skills through ICT integration, teachers inculcate in them these values that are not opposed to their day-to-day home African worldview. One of the advantages of connectivism is that it is founded on collaboration. This would merge well with modern classroom activities that incorporate ICT, as both connectivism and Unhu/Ubuntu philosophy share the same worldview of collaborative associations. Thus, when students engage one another as peers with the goal of exchanging ideas and opinions, and on research projects through adoption of ICT tools in the classroom, knowledge is acquired (Mupedziswa *et al.*, 2019). With Zimbabwe's adoption of new 4IR theories of education which demand teamwork and collaboration, such as connectivism, no conflict is created in learners. This is because school becomes a continuation of home and the African worldview of group consciousness: *I am because we are* (Ndondo and Mhlanga, 2014). A spirit of solidarity is concurrently encouraged, and the educated Africans can live a full life both at home and globally.

Conclusion

Zimbabwe should be applauded for heeding the call to decolonise school curricula by founding them on the African philosophy of Unhu/Ubuntu for sustainable change in education for its posterity. This breaks the cycle of colonial-value transmission that has proved extraneous for African societies (Mavhunga, 2006). While both capitalism and Unhu/Ubuntu achieve the goals of 4IR through education, the one produces a competent skilled worker without the accompaniment of moral and ethical integrity which the other deliberately instils besides the skills and competences. We argue that the greatest attraction of the philosophy are its values of love, honesty, tolerance, sharing, collaboration, empathy, integrity, self-discipline, and dignity of labour. Without these values, humanity has deteriorated to the existing sorry state of moral decadence, drug abuse, cybercrime, disease, rampant corruption, and disregard for human life. The content and methodologies seen in the current competence-based curriculum, exemplified by community of inquiry, go a long way in proving that the indigenous philosophy of Unhu/Ubuntu is in tandem with contemporary 21st century digital global society.

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