AFRICANISING THE PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS' CURRICULA THROUGH HUNHU/UBUNTU IN ZIMBABWE: A CASE STUDY

by

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submitted in accordance with the
requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PhD)

at the subject

CURRICULUM STUDIES

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

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July 2026

DECLARATION BY STUDENT

I, Sekai Munyaradzi (46712402), declare that **Africanising the private secondary schools' curricula through hunhu in Zimbabwe: A case study is** my original work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged using complete references. I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at Unisa for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.

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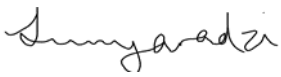

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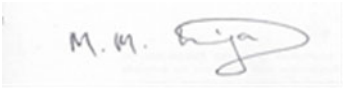

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SIGNATURE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the following people for their contribution to the completion of my thesis:

- Prof Margaret Malewaneng Maja, thank you for the mothering spirit. You were more than a supervisor. You believed in me and pushed me, even when I could not see the silver lining in my academic journey. You taught me that there is more to the role of educator; it goes beyond mere academics. You are a true role model. God bless you.
- Prof LDM Oupa Lebeloane, thank you for your eye of excellence. You did not accept anything less than excellence from me. God bless you.
- My husband, Russell Munyaradzi, thank you for being my pillar of strength and shoulder to cry on. Thank you for making the long nights bearable. You walked this journey with me through thick and thin. I could not have done this without you. I love you.
- My children Mufaro and Mudiwa, my two angels. Thank you for allowing me to take time from you to pursue my studies. Thank you for your encouragement every day. I pray that you will achieve the same and more in your academic journeys. You mean the world to me.
- Mkoma Muvhunzwi, thank you for your selflessness. You always took the time to explain academic rigour when I needed it most. God bless you.
- My three brothers, Peter, Biggie, and John, thank you for your unwavering support and for believing in me. Yes, the journey finally ended. I love you.
- My departed parents, I have finally achieved what Baba thought I could become. I only wish I could celebrate the achievement with you. Thank you for modelling unconditional love and for showing me real love. I learnt *hunhu* from you. To God be the glory forever.
- To my departed nephew, Munya, who went too soon, I could only wish that you were here to witness my Goliath coming down and see the hand of the Lord in my life; thus far, the Lord has taken me. You could have done the same in your own academic journey. I will see you one day.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to Russell, Mufaro, and Mudiwa; you are my inspiration.

To the man who, time and again, chose **love over ease** and **sacrifice over comfort,** undaunted by the size or shadows of my dreams. The one who remained steadfast when hope's song faded, my unwavering cheerleader when the world fell silent. To my soulmate, who gave me the courage to dream beyond the boundaries of reason, who found laughter for me even when my eyes brimmed with tears.

To the princess who wore **sophistication in simplicity** like a crown, refusing to settle or diminish her light. Who defied poverty's script, boldly crossing into uncharted realms, knowing always whose she was. She believed in the unrivalled power of **Yahweh**, dared to mother nations though the world called it impossible, and chose legacy over ease. Trusting the One who cannot be described, she stands, unshaken, immovable, like **Mount Zion.**

ABSTRACT

Despite government mandates for an Africanised, *hunhu*-based curriculum, many private secondary schools in Zimbabwe remain entrenched in Eurocentric models that neglect local values, histories, and languages. This study investigated the Africanisation of private secondary school curricula by integrating *hunhu* (Ubuntu) as a guiding educational philosophy. Grounded in General Systems Theory and *hunhu* philosophy, the research explored how curricula can be realigned to promote inclusivity, equity, and national identity. Using an interpretive, qualitative case study approach, data were gathered from 13 participants, including governing board members, department heads, history teachers, and the district schools' inspector for Harare's Northern Central District—through interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. Thematic analysis revealed that meaningful Africanisation requires early and sustained integration of *hunhu* principles, participatory stakeholder engagement, and ongoing professional development for teachers. Key reform areas include curriculum content, pedagogy, assessment, and the development of culturally relevant teaching materials. The study culminated in the Hunhu-Driven Curriculum Transformation Framework (HDCTF), offering structured guidelines for policy, institutional commitment, teacher capacity, stakeholder engagement, and assessment. Recommendations include coordinated policy direction from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, enhanced teacher capacity and indigenous resource development at provincial and district levels, and greater community engagement and *hunhu* integration within schools. Establishing continuous monitoring and evaluation mechanisms is essential for sustainable and effective curriculum transformation.

KEYWORDS: Africanising, curricula, decolonising education, *hunhu*, private secondary schools, *Ubuntu*

KAKARETŠO

Le ge mmušo o laetše gore go šomišwe kurikulum yeo e nago le se-Afrika, e theilwego godimo ga setho, dikolo tše dintši tša praebete tša sekondari kua Zimbabwe di sa dumele go tlogela mekgwa ya Yuropa yeo e sa hlokomelago boleng bja setšo, histori le dipolelo tša mo gae. Nyakišišo ye e lekodišitše ka fao kurikulum ya sekolo sa praebete e ka afrikanišwago ka go tsenya hunhu (botho) bjalo ka filosofi ya thuto yeo e etelelago pele. Nyakišišo e theilwe godimo ga General Systems Theory le filosofi ya hunhu, gomme e lekodišitše ka fao kurikulum e ka beakanywago ka gona go godiša go akaretša, tekatekano le boitsebagatšo bja setšhaba. Ka mokgwa wa nyakišišo ya boleng bja ditlhalošo, tshedimošetšo e hweditšwe go tšwa go batho ba 13 bao e lego maloko a boto ya taolo, dihlogo tša mafapha, barutiši ba histori, le mohlahlobi wa dikolo tša tikologo ya Harare Northern Central District ka dipoledišano, go lebelela dithuto ka phapošing le tshekatsheko ya ditokomane. Tshekatsheko ya dihlogo e bontšhitše gore afrikanišwa ya nnete e nyaka go tsenywa ga setho go tloga mathomong le go tšwelapele, go tsenelwa ga bathekgi ka mokgwa wa go tšea karolo, le tlhabollo ya mešomo ya barutiši yeo e tšwelago pele. Mafelo a bohlokwa a phetogo a akaretša diteng tša kurikulum, thutopapetšo, tekolo, le tlhabollo ya didiriswa tša thuto tšeo di amago setšo. Nyakišišo e feditše ka go hlama Hunhu-Driven Curriculum Transformation Framework (HDCTF), yeo e neago ditaelo tšeo di hlophilwego bakeng sa pholisi, boitlamo bja setheo, bokgoni bja barutiši, go tsenelwa ga bathekgi, le tekolo. Dikgothaletšo di akaretša taolo yeo e kopantšwego ya pholisi go tšwa go Kgoro ya Thuto ya Phapoši ya Motheo le Sekondari, bokgoni bja barutiši le tlhabollo ya didirišwa tša mo gae mafelong a diprovense le ditikologo, le go tsenelwa ga setšhaba le go tsenya botho ka gare ga dikolo. Go hlama mekgwa ya go lekola le go lekanyetša ka mehla go bohlokwa bakeng sa phetogo ya kurikulum yeo e tšwelago pele le yeo e šomago gabotse.

MANTŠU A BOHLOKWA: Afrikaniša, kurikulum, kholofelo ya thuto, hunhu, dikolo tša praebete tša sekondari, botho

PFUPISO

Kunyangwe hurumende ichiraira kuti kushandiswe karikuramu yakavakirwa pa hunhu, zvikoro zvakawanda zvakazvimirira zvepamusoro muZimbabwe zvichiri kusungirwa nemaitiro eEurope ayo asingaremekedzi tsika dzemuno, nhoroondo, uye mitauro. Chidzidzo ichi chakatsvaga nzira dzekuita zvidzidzo zvemu Africa kukarikuramu yezvikoro zvakazvimirira zvepamusoro nekubatanidza hunhu (Ubuntu) sechidzidzo chinotungamira. Nyaya iyi yakavakirwa pa General Systems Theory uye uzivi hwe hunhu, ichiongorora kuti karikuramu ingagadziridzwa sei kuti isimudzire kubatanidzwa, kuenzana, uye kuzivikanwa kwenyika. Chidzidzo chakashandisa nzira yekudzidza yemhando yepamusoro ine dudziro, dhata rakatorwa kubva kuvanhu gumi nevatatu, kusanganisira nhengo dzebhodhi dzinotungamira zvikoro izvi, vakuru vemadhipatimendi, vadzidzisi venhoroondo, uye muongorori wezvikoro mudunhu reHarare Northern Central District kuburikidza nehurukuro, kuongorora zvidzidzo mumakirasi, uye ongororo yemagwaro. Kuongorora madingindira kwakaratidza kuti kuita zvidzidzo zvemu Africa kwechokwadi kunoda kubatanidzwa nehunhu kubva pakutanga uye kunofanirwa kuramba kuchiitwa, kutora chikamu kwevose vanozozeya nekubatira nyaya yekushandura karikuramu, uye kudzidziswa kunoramba kuchiitwa kwevadzidzisi. Nzvimbo dzakakosha dzekugadzirisa dzinosanganisira zvirimo mukarikuramu, nzira dzekudzidzisa, ongororo, uye kugadzirwa kwezvishandiso zvekudzidzisa zvinoenderana netsika. Chidzidzo ichi chakapera nekugadzira Hunhu-Driven Curriculum Transformation Framework (HDCTF), ichipa mirayiridzo yakarongeka yezvematongerwo ezvikoro zvakazvimirira maringe nebazi redzidzo, kuzvipira kwezvikoro, kugona kwevadzidzisi, kutora chikamu kwevose vanozoshandura karikuramu, uye ongororo. Zvakakurudzirwa zvinosanganisira kutungamirirwa kwakabatana kwehurongwa kubva kuMinistry of Primary and Secondary Education kuburikidza nekupiwa kwebumbiro remitemo, kusimudzirwa kwevadzidzisi uye kugadzirwa kwezvishandiso zvemuno pamatanho edunhu nemaprovince, pamwe nekutora chikamu kukuru kwenharaunda uye kubatanidzwa kwehunhu muzvikoro. Kugadzira nzira dzekuenderera mberi dzekuongorora nekuyera kwakakosha kuti pave nekushandurwa kwekarikuramu kunogara uye kunobudirira.

MAZWI AKAKOSHA: Kuita zvidzidzo zvemuAfrica, karikuramu, kudzidzisa kusina utongi hwevatorwa, hunhu, zvikoro zvakazvimirira zvepamusoro

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CEDU	College of Education (University of South Africa)
CHISZ	Conference of Heads of Independent Schools in Zimbabwe
CIET	Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training (commonly known as the Nziramasanga Commission)
DSI	District Schools Inspector
GST	General Systems Theory
HDCTF	Hunhu-Driven Curriculum Transformation Framework
HOD	Head of Department
IKS	indigenous knowledge systems
MoPSE	Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
NCD	Northern Central District
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNISA	University of South Africa

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CHAPTER 1
ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The imperative to Africanise Zimbabwe's private secondary school curricula is not simply a matter of localising content, but of fundamentally reorienting education to serve the nation's socio-economic and cultural needs. As Adeate and Sewchurran (2023:5) contend, a curriculum's value lies in how effectively it addresses the realities and aspirations of its society, drawing on indigenous epistemologies and competencies to support national development.

Zimbabwe's new Heritage-Based Curriculum Framework (MoPSE, 2024: 9,11) formally recognises *hunhu* (Ubuntu) as the philosophical cornerstone of education, mandating that graduates embody inclusivity, equity, and fairness. Yet, in practice, many private secondary schools continue to prioritise Western curricula, marginalising these foundational African values and limiting the potential impact of education on local challenges.

This study interrogates the underlying causes and implications of this persistent Eurocentrism within Zimbabwean private secondary schools. By critically examining the gap between policy intent and educational practice, the research seeks to determine how *hunhu* can be meaningfully embedded in curricula to produce school leavers who are not only academically competent but also culturally grounded and socially responsible. The analysis extends beyond outlining procedures and instead foregrounds the urgent need for epistemological transformation as a prerequisite for Zimbabwe's broader socio-economic progress.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

Despite the Zimbabwean government's formal adoption of a non-racial, egalitarian ideology in 1980, this philosophical stance was not systematically integrated into the foundations of the educational system. This omission contributed to a persistent misalignment between policy intentions and educational practices (Makuvaza, 2010:358). The Nziramasanga Commission, established in 1998 amid growing demands for educational reform, underscored the absence of a coherent, context-specific educational philosophy. In its findings, the Commission advocated for the adoption of hunhu (Ubuntu) as a culturally resonant framework to guide the nation's. Despite these intentions, post-colonial education in Zimbabwe remains heavily influenced by colonial legacies. Scholars such as Chisaka et al. (2015:3) and Ngwenya (2019:2-3) argue that the education system continues to mirror Eurocentric values, thus failing to address the lived realities and needs of Zimbabwean society. This critique underlines the persistence of neo-colonial influence and the production of graduates who are not adequately prepared to contribute to national development (Chisaka et al., 2015:3).

Government interventions such as the Zimbabwe Education Act (Chapter 25:04 of 2000) and subsequent policy circulars mandate a uniform, Africanised curriculum for all schools, including private institutions (MoPSE Secretary's Circular 29 of 2009; Circular 10 of 2024; Education Act Amendment, 2020:625). However, the practical impact of these policies is uncertain; effective implementation, particularly in elite private schools, is limited by insufficient oversight and persistent neo-colonial constraints (Maposa, 2016:14; Sango et al., 2017:20, 25; Midzi, Sibanda & Mathwasa, 2021:158). This gap between policy and practice raises critical questions about the authenticity and depth of curriculum Africanisation in private secondary schools.

While government efforts to reorient the curriculum towards African values are acknowledged (Sibanda & Young, 2020:65), the literature highlights ongoing challenges: inadequate financial resources, a shortage of textbooks, and a deficit in teacher training persistently undermine meaningful transformation (Moyo, 2014; Ngwenya, 2019; Sibanda & Young, 2020:66, 67). These structural and resource-

related barriers reveal the limitations of policy reform when not matched by practical support and capacity-building.

Furthermore, despite repeated calls for curriculum relevance, notably by former President Mugabe in 2013 and the Nziramasanga Commission. The process has been slow and fraught with implementation challenges, including insufficient stakeholder consultation and weak professional development (Sunday Mail, 2016:1; Nkala, 2017; Mangwaya, 2022). These persistent issues suggest a fundamental misalignment between national aspirations and the actual delivery of the curriculum, particularly in private schools, where the influence of foreign examinations and pedagogies persists.

1.3 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

A growing body of scholarship asserts that curriculum reform must be contextually grounded to drive socio-economic transformation (Kugara & Mdhluli, 2023:131; Agbaje, 2023:141). However, in Zimbabwe's private secondary schools, especially in the Northern Central District (NCD), curricular practice remains stubbornly Eurocentric, with foreign examinations prevailing over national ones (Ngwenya, 2019:3).

The central rationale for this study is to address the critical gap between policy rhetoric and actual practice in the Africanisation of curricula in Zimbabwean private secondary schools. Although policies advocate integrating hunhu/Ubuntu, there is little empirical evidence of its genuine implementation or impact. Given the prevalence of Western perspectives in History instruction over the past two decades, there is both a professional and a scholarly imperative to interrogate why private secondary schools persist in Eurocentric practices and to identify the barriers and opportunities for meaningful curriculum transformation.

This study directly responds to the limited research on how *hunhu/Ubuntu* can be operationalised in private secondary school curricula. By critically examining current practices, challenges, and potential strategies, the research seeks not only to fill a knowledge gap but also to inform policy and practice on authentic Africanisation in curriculum design, teaching, and assessment from Form One to Form Four.

In this context, *hunhu* is employed as the Shona equivalent of Ubuntu, while Africanisation is used synonymously with decolonisation, reflecting the broader goal of reclaiming and re-centering indigenous values and knowledge systems in education.

1.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite policy efforts to Africanise Zimbabwe's secondary school curriculum by embedding *hunhu* (Ubuntu) as its philosophical foundation, implementation remains largely superficial—particularly within private secondary schools. While Sibanda and Young (2020:65) recognise government progress in constructing a curriculum grounded in African and Zimbabwean knowledge systems, both their analysis and that of Ngwenya (2019:16) expose a persistent disconnect between curricular intent and classroom reality. In principle, educators may endorse the competence-based, inclusive curriculum, but in practice, inadequate supervision, limited professional development, and weak policy enforcement especially in private schools—undermine its impact (Midzi et al., 2021:144).

Consequently, many private secondary schools continue to prioritise foreign curricula and philosophies, thereby marginalising *hunhu* as an authentic guiding principle (Mazodze et al., 2023:71; Brás, 2021:3). While theoretical and empirical literature has explored *hunhu* within Zimbabwean education more broadly (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:8; Ngubane & Makua, 2021:4), there remains a significant gap in understanding how *hunhu*-informed Africanisation is operationalised—or resisted—in the unique context of private secondary schools. Most extant research has focused on government or community schools, leaving the dynamics, constraints, and opportunities within private education underexamined (Ridhoi, 2023:25; Garira, 2024:11).

Addressing this gap is critical. As scholars such as Mutanga (2022:17) and Brás (2021:8) have argued, privileging foreign curricula risks producing graduates who are disconnected from local realities and insufficiently prepared to address Zimbabwean societal challenges, thereby undermining national development goals and eroding cultural identity. The marginalisation of indigenous knowledge and values in private

schooling not only perpetuates epistemic injustice but also limits the transformative potential of education (Mutanga, 2022:21).

Against this backdrop, this study adopts a critical, context-specific approach, interrogating both the status and the processes of Africanising private secondary school curricula through *hunhu*. By focusing on the lived realities, institutional practices, and stakeholder perceptions unique to the private sector, the research seeks to illuminate pathways for authentic and sustainable curriculum transformation. The aim is to bridge the gap in the literature by providing theoretically grounded and empirically informed recommendations that empower private schools to advance inclusive, relevant, and culturally grounded educational practices in Zimbabwe.

1.5 THE RESEARCH MAIN AND SUB-QUESTIONS

This section presents the main research question and the study's sub-questions. Creswell and Poth (2021:130) maintain that research questions inform, shape, and focus the objectives of the research study in order to address a research problem.

1.5.1 Main question

In this regard, the main research question of this study is:

How can the private secondary schools' curricula be Africanised through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe?

1.5.2 Sub-questions

The following sub-questions were formulated to support the main research question:

- Who should Africanise the private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe?
- When should the curriculum of private secondary schools be Africanised through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe?
- What should be undertaken to Africanise the private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe?
- Which aspects of the private secondary schools' curricula should be Africanised through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe?

- Why should the private secondary schools' curricula be Africanised through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe?

6. What are the guidelines of Africanising the private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe?

1.6 RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

This section presents the aim and objectives of the study.

1.6.1 Aim of the study

The study aimed to explore how the private secondary schools' curricula can be Africanised through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe.

1.6.2 The objectives of the study were to:

- investigate who should Africanise the private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe.
- establish when the private secondary schools' curricula should be Africanised through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe.
- explore what should be undertaken to Africanise the private secondary schools' curricula in Zimbabwe.
- Identify the aspects of the private secondary schools' curricula that should be Africanised through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe.
- discover why the private secondary schools' curricula should be Africanised through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe.
- propose a framework that provides guidelines for Africanising the private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe.

1.7 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A robust theoretical framework is essential for grounding research in scholarly discourse and for guiding both data analysis and interpretation. Recent scholarship asserts that a theoretical framework is constructed from established theories pertinent to the research field, thereby offering a structured perspective that enhances the depth and contextualisation of empirical findings (Abend, 2020:177). Rather than reflecting personal viewpoints, a theoretical framework should be

grounded in authoritative academic work to inform the design, execution, and interpretation of a study (Swedberg, 2019:105).

In this study, the theoretical framework is purposefully constructed to interrogate how Africanising the curricula of private secondary schools through *hunhu* can be systematically understood and advanced in Zimbabwe. It underpins not only the interpretation of empirical data but also the critical analysis of how *hunhu* can reshape curriculum development and delivery within private education.

The research is anchored in Von Bertalanffy's (1968) General Systems Theory (GST), integrated with the African philosophy of *hunhu* (Ubuntu). GST conceptualises schools as dynamic, interconnected systems where all components comprising; students, teachers, parents, curriculum designers, and the broader community must work collaboratively to achieve educational transformation (Von Bertalanffy, 1968:39–42; Constantinides, 2022:526; Vidal, 2023:1–2). This systems perspective is especially salient for examining curriculum Africanisation, as it highlights the need for holistic, coordinated action across multiple stakeholders.

Within this theoretical construct, *hunhu* serves as the ethical and philosophical anchor, privileging collective well-being, interdependence, and inclusivity over individualism (Adeate & Sewchurran, 2023:6). The synergy between GST and hunhu offers a powerful lens for analysing how instructional leadership and curriculum design can foster communal values and drive societal development. This perspective recognises that meaningful curriculum reform in private secondary schools is not possible in isolation; rather, it requires the active engagement and collaboration of all educational subsystems to achieve sustainable impact (Mazodze et al., 2023:63; Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:11).

Thus, this integrated theoretical framework enables a nuanced exploration of the processes, challenges, and opportunities involved in Africanising private secondary school curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe. The framework's relevance and utility will be further discussed and expanded upon in Chapter Two.

1.8 LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature review is a rigorous, evidence-based synthesis of existing research that establishes the intellectual foundation for a study (Sajeevanie, 2021:2713). Its

purpose is not only to map what is already known about a phenomenon, but also to critically examine the strengths, limitations, and contested areas within the field. In this way, a literature review enables the researcher to identify theoretical and empirical gaps, sharpen research aims and objectives, and justify the necessity of new inquiry (Snyder, 2022:333).

In the context of this study, the literature review critically interrogates scholarship on the Africanisation or decolonisation of school curricula, with a particular focus on the integration of *hunhu* (Ubuntu) as a transformative philosophical anchor. While the Africanisation of education is widely debated in global and continental scholarship (Brás, 2021:3; Mutanga, 2022:15), there remains a significant gap concerning how this process unfolds within the specific context of Zimbabwean private secondary schools. Most studies have addressed public or national schools, leaving the unique dynamics, challenges, and opportunities in the private sector underexplored (Mazodze et al., 2023:70).

By systematically engaging with international, African, and Zimbabwean sources, this literature review provides a nuanced account of the theoretical, policy, and practical dimensions of curriculum Africanisation through *hunhu* (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:7; Ridhoi, 2023:25). The review is structured around sub-themes derived from the study's objectives, enabling focused analysis of key debates such as the role of indigenous values (Ngubane & Makua, 2021:4), the persistence of Eurocentric models (Mazodze et al., 2023:71; Mutanga, 2022:19), and the practicalities of curriculum reform in private education (Garira, 2024:11).

To ensure scholarly rigour and breadth, the review draws on both primary and secondary materials. Primary data include interviews, observations, and document analysis, while secondary sources encompass peer-reviewed journal articles, scholarly books, dissertations, research reports, and monographs, including national and intergovernmental policy documents. Digital databases such as ERIC, EBSCO, Informit, ProQuest, UNICEF, the World Bank, and UNESCO were systematically searched for the most current and relevant scholarship (Mazodze et al., 2023:65; Brás, 2021:2). This integrated literature review thus situates the study within a robust scholarly conversation and highlights the ongoing need for contextually grounded, culturally responsive curriculum reform in Zimbabwean private secondary schools.

This critical and comprehensive review not only situates the present research within the broader academic conversation but also identifies the precise knowledge gap addressed by this study: the operationalisation and impact of *hunhu*-informed curriculum transformation in Zimbabwe's private secondary schools. The full literature review, including thematic analysis and synthesis of findings, is presented in Chapter Four.

1.9 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section provides a detailed exposition of the research methodology, clarifying the philosophical underpinnings, design strategies, methodological approaches, data collection and analysis methods, and the criteria for trustworthiness and the ethical protocols implemented throughout the study. As articulated by Creswell and Creswell (2022: 6) and Shah (2025:389), research methodology constitutes a coherent framework that integrates the research paradigm, design, methods, and ethical considerations, systematically guiding the study from conceptualization to execution. Methodology, therefore, is not merely a procedural formality, but an organized and reflective process for addressing the central research problem with analytical rigour and clarity. Research methods, as a subset of methodology, pertain to the specific tools and instruments, such as sampling strategies, data collection techniques, and analytic procedures employed to generate and interpret empirical evidence. This thesis delineates the strategies undertaken to ensure trustworthiness and uphold ethical standards, both of which are integral to the methodological framework. A comprehensive account of the study's research methodology is presented in Chapter five, aligning with the overarching aims and analytical focus of this research.

1.9.1 Research design

Research design functions as the blueprint that guides the entire research process from problem formulation to measurement, data analysis, and interpretation (Library & Information Science Academy, 2024: para. 1). It encompasses the overall framework within which research is conducted, constituting the systematic procedures for collecting, analysing, interpreting, and reporting data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018:58). As Saunders et al. (2019:157) note, research design provides the plan for connecting conceptual research problems to empirically achievable outcomes. In this study, research design is understood as the comprehensive set of

procedures and techniques employed from the inception of the research to the presentation and analysis of findings, guiding the process of answering the research question.

Research designs vary in accordance with the research approach adopted. Approaches may be qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods. Qualitative research designs are commonly applied in social sciences, where non-numerical data are collected. These designs encompass various approaches, including grounded theory, phenomenology, ethnography, narrative inquiry, case study, and action research that facilitate in-depth exploration of complex social phenomena using contextually rich methods (Weng, 2025: 1). Conversely, quantitative approaches in scientific research require the use of numerical empirical data, with corresponding designs including descriptive, correlational, quasi-experimental, and experimental (Trident University, 2026). The mixed methods approach integrates both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis techniques (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018:12). Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) further identify common mixed methods designs as embedded, exploratory, explanatory, and triangulation mixed methods designs.

For the purposes of this research, an exploratory case study design was adopted to investigate the Africanisation of private secondary schools' curricula through hunhu in Zimbabwe. Although several scholars such as Samkange and Samkange (1980:39), Nziramasanga (1999:8), Ramose (2005:37), Tatira (2013:126), Mukusha (2013:32), Sibanda (2014:28), and Ndondo and Mhlanga (2014:3) have written on hunhu, there is a noticeable gap regarding the Africanisation of private secondary school curricula through hunhu, despite the existence of such schools in Zimbabwe. The choice of design was therefore driven by the need to address this underexplored area. A detailed account of the research design is provided in Chapter five of this study.

1.9.2 Research paradigm

The research paradigm constitutes the overarching worldview that shapes the direction and approach of a study. Recent scholarship describes the research paradigm as the conceptual lens through which methodologies and the entire research process are viewed, influencing how knowledge is interpreted and constructed (Creswell & Poth, 2021:5). A paradigm is based on shared assumptions,

concepts, values, and practices. According to Creswell and Creswell (2022:37), there are two levels of paradigms: the abstract or general level and the specific level. At the abstract or general level, there are worldviews such as positivism, constructivism/interpretivism, realism, and pragmatism. According to Brown and Jones (2025: 44), interpretivist researchers in education focus on interpreting and constructing meaning from the unique lived experiences of participants, highlighting the importance of context and subjectivity in qualitative inquiry. Furthermore, Creswell and Creswell (2022:6-10) argue that constructivism/interpretivism addresses processes of interaction between individuals and allows researchers to position themselves through their background and past experiences to interpret the meaning of current experiences. A paradigm encompasses four aspects, epistemology, ontology, axiology, and methodology (Pretorius, 2024:2706; Saunders et al. 2019). Saunders et al. (2019:133) further explain that a paradigm addresses fundamental assumptions taken on faith, such as beliefs about the nature of reality (ontology), the relationship between the knower and known (epistemology) and assumptions about methodology. Thus, the interpretivist position is relativistic. Johnson and Christensen (2020:31) define a research paradigm as a worldview for research pointing to the method of how research is perceived and carried out by researchers. Johnson and Christensen (2020) assert that reality is subjective and differs from person to person. Interpretivism is regarded as the most appropriate paradigm for this study because it is concerned with revealing multiple realities rather than seeking a single objective reality in the bid to explore the Africanisation of private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe. Johnson and Christensen (2020) agree with Creswell and Creswell (2022:8) in delineating that interpretive epistemology believes that the way of knowing reality is through the experiences of others regarding a specific phenomenon. Thus, the researcher investigated how educators understand *hunhu* as a bedrock for Africanising the curricula of private secondary schools and how this understanding of *hunhu* can be inculcated in learners. A thorough description of the research paradigm is given in Chapter Five.

1.9.3 Research method

Creswell and Creswell (2022:10) qualify research methods in empirical research as a framework comprising specific processes utilised to create new knowledge. In

agreement, Dzogovic and Bajrami (2023:158) describe research methods as the processes undertaken to pursue new knowledge. In fact, Sakyi, Musona and Mweshi (2020:296) define research methods as systematic approaches to conducting research across disciplines, which facilitate informed choices about research design and implementation. The ensuing sections detail the research methods employed to investigate the Africanisation of private secondary school curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe. The sections outline the criteria and rationale for participants, the specific data collection tools and techniques used, the data-gathering procedures, and the methods chosen for data analysis. More details on research methods are given in Chapter Five.

1.9.3.1 Selection of participants

The population for this study is defined in line with recent methodological literature, which highlights that the study population establishes research boundaries and contextual relevance as the group to which findings may be generalised (Etikan & Bala, 2019:1). The general population included all secondary schools in Zimbabwe, while the target population was narrowed to private secondary schools to focus on institutions most relevant to the research objectives (Dzogovic & Bajrami, 2023:157). The accessible population consisted of educators in three private secondary schools in the Northern Central District of Harare, selected for their comparability as trust schools and their willingness to participate (Creswell & Poth, 2021:147).

The final sample comprised 13 participants: two teachers, one head of department, and one parent liaison governing board member from each school, as well as the district schools' inspector. Participants were purposively selected because they served as information-rich sources and key implementers or overseers of the curriculum. Purposive sampling was used to ensure that those with direct expertise and lived experience in Africanising curricula through *hunhu* were included (Etikan & Bala, 2019:3). The selection process also considered practical constraints of time, resources, and accessibility to maintain the study's feasibility and cost-effectiveness (Creswell & Poth, 2021:147).

1.9.4 Data collection instruments/techniques

According to Johnson and Temple (2024: 61), data collection techniques are the systematic strategies researchers use to gather information necessary for addressing research questions. According to Johnson and Temple (2024: 77), qualitative research prioritises the meaning embedded within specific contexts, requiring data collection techniques that are responsive to contextual interpretation and meaning-making during analysis. The selection of data collection methods and instruments is directly influenced by the chosen research design. In qualitative studies, the researcher often acts as the primary instrument, utilising techniques such as interviews, observation schedules, and document analysis protocols to gather and interpret data (Creswell and Poth, 2021:103; Yin, 2023:89). The practice of triangulation, which involves the use of multiple methods to examine the same phenomenon, is essential for enhancing the trustworthiness and credibility of qualitative findings (Flick, 2023a:92; Safari, McKenna and Davis, 2023:4).

For this study, data were collected through document analysis, participant observation, and semi-structured, one-on-one interviews with experienced teachers, heads of departments, school principals, school governing board members, and the district schools' inspector.

1.9.5 Pilot study

According to Van Teijlingen and Hundley (2022: 602), a pilot study is a small-scale version of a larger study designed to test the feasibility and improve the quality and efficiency of the main research. Pilot studies help refine research instruments, procedures, and clarify any ambiguities before launching the main study. A pilot study was carried, thus, carried out to investigate the feasibility of undertaking the study on a larger scale, refine research instruments, assess and eliminate researcher bias and ambiguities, and streamline methods and procedures for the main study (Creswell & Creswell, 2017:165). A pilot study was thus conducted to ensure that the instruments aligned with the research objectives and would yield the desired results (Barker et al., 2025: 5)

1.9.6 Data analysis

Qualitative data analysis is synonymous with data interpretation and involves a systematic process of coding, organizing, categorizing, interpreting data and making sense of participants' definitions of a situation for a phenomenon of interest. This process often includes selecting, simplifying, focusing, and abstracting data from interviews into meaningful findings (Bingham, 2023: 2). Bingham (2023) further highlights that analysis typically progresses through distinct phases, combining inductive and deductive coding, supported by memoing and analytic questioning to ensure transparency, trustworthiness, and alignment with research objectives (Bingham, 2023: 4–6).The purpose of data analysis is to foster understanding of the phenomenon under study (Creswell & Creswell, 2017:195). Qualitative data analysis involves coding the data, dividing the text into smaller units, assigning a code to each unit, and then grouping the codes into themes (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018:206). Thematic data analysis, as proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) was used in this study. Braun and Clarke (2006:77) argue that thematic analysis identifies, analyses, and reports data trends and may be employed across multiple theoretical and epistemological perspectives. In fact, Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) point out that not only does the process of developing themes answer the research question, but it also enhances understanding of the phenomena under study. Krippendorf (2018: 22) agrees with Braun and Clarke (2006) in explaining the systematic steps in data analysis. According to Braun and Clarke (2006:82), thematic data analysis comprises six steps: familiarisation with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and compiling a report. Below is a summarised elaboration of each step.

Step 1: Familiarisation with data

Step one began with the researcher transcribing the audio recordings into textual data, which involved repeatedly listening to them. This first step of the analysis provided an in-depth understanding of the data.

Step 2: Generating the first codes

During this process, each unit of data was assigned its code, with some pieces of data sharing similar codes. General thoughts were recorded in a reflexive journal.

Step 3: Searching for themes

Once all the text had been coded, the process of reviewing the coded data and identifying areas of similarity and overlaps between codes commenced. This process ended with a table of possible themes and subthemes, along with excerpts from the data coded to each theme.

Step 4: Reviewing themes

This step entails refining the list of themes identified in step 3 and a close exploration of each theme. During the review process, some themes were collapsed into a single theme, while others became sub-themes.

Step 5: Defining and naming themes

In this phase, the final themes were refined and named, and a detailed analysis of each was provided. The themes reflected the participants' verbatim. The themes described reflected the stories and accounts of the participants and cannot be generalised to Africanising private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe.

Step 6: Compiling a report

The final step was to interpret the themes. The interpretation of the research findings was reported in narrative form, substantiated by direct quotes from the participants.

The process of data analysis and interpretation was described in detail in Chapter six.

1.10 MEASURES OF TRUSTWORTHINESS

According to Gonzalez (2026: para. 1) interpretivist researchers prioritize understanding how individuals make sense of their lived experiences by interpreting and constructing meaning within their social contexts. Thus, the researcher must ensure trustworthiness by asking themselves how they can persuade the audience, including themselves, that the research findings are worth paying attention to and considering. According to Niure and Sapkota (2025: 38), a research paradigm is a philosophical framework that guides researchers to declare their ontological, epistemological, and axiological positions, thereby shaping how they formulate research questions, choose methodologies, and interpret findings in educational

research. The four criteria, according Niure and Sapkota (2025), include credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability. Trustworthiness in qualitative research is defined as the overall quality of data collection and analysis, ensuring that findings are credible, dependable, and authentic (Stahl & King, 2020b:26). Recent literature affirms that robust measures of trustworthiness confirm the authenticity and credibility of qualitative data and ensure that the study is reliable and can withstand critical scrutiny (Birt et al., 2020:1807).

1.10.1 Credibility

Credibility in qualitative research is closely aligned with the concept of internal validity in quantitative paradigms and refers to the believability and trustworthiness of data analysis and findings (Adu & Ravitch, 2023:56; Flick, 2023a:92). Credibility is established when the study's findings accurately reflect the realities constructed by both the researcher and the participants (Carter et al., 2021:670). Similarly, Morse (2024:12) defines credibility as the degree of confidence in the truth, neutrality, and consistency of a study's results. To ensure the validity of this research, triangulation was imperative, as it strengthens credibility by integrating multiple data sources and perspectives (Flick, 2023a:93).

1.10.2 Transferability

The transferability criterion in interpretivist research functions similarly to external validity in positivist paradigms, focusing on the applicability of research findings to other contexts (Drisko, 2025:102; Birt et al., 2020:1808). Transferability addresses how well study results can be relevant in different settings. Transferability thus answers the question of how applicable the research findings are to other settings. In this study, detailed (thick) descriptions and sufficient contextual data were provided to support this criterion.

Even though the findings of this research cannot be generalised, detailed descriptions will ensure that recommendations and findings are applied to other private secondary schools in the Africanisation of their curricula, as well as in further research (Korstjens & Moser, 2018:222).

1.10.3 Confirmability

In interpretivist qualitative research, confirmability aligns with the positivist concept of objectivity and refers to the extent to which research findings are shaped by participants' perspectives rather than researcher bias. This is demonstrated through strategies such as audit trails, member checking, and triangulation (Yıldırım-Taştı & Engin, 2024: 87). Confirmability serves as the counterpart to objectivity in positivist paradigms. Confirmability refers to the extent to which study findings are shaped by participants' perspectives and not researcher bias, and whether findings can be verified by others through audit trails and transparent documentation (Chakma & Li, 2025: 237). In educational research, confirmability is enhanced through strategies such as reflexive journaling, member checking, and peer debriefing to ensure that results are grounded in participants' realities rather than the preconceptions of the researcher (Yıldırım-Taştı & Engin, 2024: 99).

1.10.4 Dependability

In interpretivist qualitative research, particularly within education and curriculum studies, dependability serves as the qualitative counterpart to reliability in positivist paradigms. It emphasizes the consistency, transparency, and traceability of the research process rather than identical replication of outcomes (Lim, 2025:2). Dependability is established through rigorous documentation, including maintaining an audit trail, applying triangulation, and using inquiry audits to ensure the research process is logical and defensible Although findings may vary in interpretivist research because human behaviour is continuously variable, detailed documentation of data will bolster dependability. Korstjens and Moser (2018:121) explicate dependability as consistency. Dependability ensures that the research process is logical, transparent, and can be followed by others, enhancing the study's trustworthiness in educational contexts. Chakma and Li (2025: 233) affirm that dependability ensures that the research process is sound, traceable, and documented in detail, providing an audit trail that allows further research to obtain similar findings.

1.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical considerations in educational research encompass awareness of ethics and academic honesty. They refer to the moral principles that guide researchers in

distinguishing right from wrong throughout the research process, including issues such as informed consent, academic integrity, and ethical decision-making frameworks (Haneef & Agrawal, 2024: 230; Dahal, 2024: 169). These principles align with the axiology of research, its values, and morality by addressing privacy, accuracy, data ownership, and participant accessibility (Pretorius, 2025:298). The researcher maintained transparency and integrity by avoiding plagiarism and by fully informing participants of potential risks and benefits, while safeguarding their confidentiality and anonymity. Number and letter codes were used to refer to participants and sample schools, aligning with best practice in educational research (BERA, 2024: 10). The researcher made it clear to the participants, in writing and verbally, that they are free to withdraw from the research at any time. The University of South Africa has established an ethics review committee for the College of Education (CEDU), which convenes to review each research project before data collection begins. Upon approval of the research, letters were issued to the MoPSE head office in Harare for approval to undertake research in the NCD. Upon MoPSE's approval, the researcher visited the NCD offices to inform them of the research's intentions. The interviews, observations, and document collections were administered after authorisation from the District Schools Inspectors (DSI) to the school heads. The researcher informed participants of the possible risks and benefits of participating and ensured their confidentiality and anonymity for participants. The researcher sought the participants' permission to record the interviews.

1.12 Definition of Key Terms

The key terms will be operationally defined as used in the study. These terms include Africanisation, private schools, private secondary schools, curriculum, curriculum review, curriculum implementation, and *hunhu*.

1.12.1 Africanisation

Africanisation involves aligning educational practices with African epistemologies and contexts. As Kugara and Mdhluli (2023: 132) argue, it entails integrating African indigenous education into the curriculum to ensure relevance to learners' cultural realities. Similarly, Sonkqayi (2023: 1315) critiques superficial inclusion of indigenous knowledge in school curricula and calls for meaningful curricular integratio**n** that avoids tokenism and reinforces authentic African epistemic grounding. In fact, Ndilile

(2020:34) states that the Africanisation of education is associated with the reform and transformation of the curricula used in formal schools to suit African needs. Africanisation of the curriculum requires that instructional resources and pedagogical practices are liberated from colonial legacies and instead foster the transmission of African values, culture, and worldviews. Recent research describes Africanisation as the systematic inclusion of African philosophies, languages, and indigenous knowledge systems within both formal and hidden curricula in educational institutions (Mokgolodi, 2022: 49; Ndlovu, 2021: 112).

1.12.2 Private schools

The term “private schools” is subject to varying interpretations in the literature. Recent studies note that the concept of private schooling in Africa retains traces of its historical roots, with some private schools still perceived as exclusive institutions serving social elites (Joubert, 2022: 239). However, other research highlights that private schools today are diverse and are not always elitist; many are recognised for their adaptability in addressing learners’ needs and often demonstrate higher academic performance compared to public schools (Khumalo, 2023: 88). Midzi et al. (2021:144) argue that in Zimbabwe, there are both elite and low-cost private schools that charge lower school fees than the elite private schools. Forsey, Proctor and Stacey (2017:53) explicate that private schools in Australia are independent, fee-paying, and exclusive schools that operate primarily on private funding. Central Square Foundation (2020:22) states that India’s private school sector is the third largest school system in the world, accounting for 47.5% of total enrolment in the country’s education sector. Private schools are independent schools that may or may not receive government funding but are accountable and responsive to parents. Pretorius (2019:95) agrees with Alam and Tiwari (2021:2) and explains that in South Africa, independent schools are also known as private schools and are not operated by the government but controlled by private entities for profit or non-profit purposes. For this study, private schools are defined as in the Zimbabwe Education Act (2006 Chapter 25:04). The latter Act defines private schools as non-government schools, whether they receive state aid or not. According to the Zimbabwe Education Act, private schools are further classified according to the social and economic standards of the communities in which the schools are situated.

1.12.3 Private secondary school

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (2020:5) shows that secondary schools enrol learners who have completed primary school. However, in Zimbabwe, secondary schools start at Form one and end at Form six. The secondary phase is divided into junior secondary (Forms one and two), ordinary level (Forms three and four), and advanced level (Forms five and six). The MoPSE (2020:2) explains that the secondary education system comprises the lower and upper secondary levels, comprising six years after primary school. Lower secondary culminates in the ordinary level, while upper secondary offers advanced level studies in preparation for tertiary and university education. Midzi et al. (2021:143) describe a private secondary school as a formal educational institution that offers secondary schooling to learners under the administration of private entities. Private secondary school is defined, for purposes of this study, as in the Zimbabwe Education Act (2006 Chapter 25:04). The latter Act defines a private secondary school as a non-government secondary school under the registration and control of the Ministry of Education.

1.12.4 Curriculum

Curriculum is defined differently in many sources. Agbaje (2023:141) defines a curriculum as a systematic and planned way in which policies and strategies are amalgamated to support the transmission of knowledge, values, and systems relevant to society in the teaching and learning space. Recent scholarship describes curriculum as encompassing the beliefs, values, attitudes, skills, and knowledge that underpin educational processes (Wiles & Bondi, 2022: 4). Similarly, O'Sullivan et al. (2021: 12) define curriculum as the sum of planned learning experiences provided to learners by educational institutions. For this study, curriculum is understood in line with the latest Zimbabwean education policy, which frames curriculum as the integrated body of skills, knowledge, and attitudes acquired in formal schooling, intended to drive socio-economic transformation (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, Zimbabwe, 2024: 9).

1.12.5 Curriculum review

Curriculum review (or curriculum evaluation) can be formative when it is conducted before the end of a curriculum cycle to respond to economic, political, technological,

or societal changes (Chimbi, 2024: 2). It may also be summative when conducted at the end of a curriculum cycle, assessing the overall effectiveness and relevance of the curriculum (Ndlovu & Sibanda, 2022: 14). In the context of this study, curriculum review is defined in line with the Zimbabwe Education Act (Chapter 25:04) and the latest policy guidance from MoPSE (2024: 11) as the summative assessment of private secondary schools' History curricula conducted at the end of its cycle for the purpose of aligning with the national curriculum philosophy of *hunhu*.

1.12.6 Curriculum implementation

Recent literature defines curriculum implementation as the process of translating a planned course of study into classroom practice. Maphosa (2021: 145) describes curriculum implementation as the enactment of curriculum ideas through the collaborative efforts of teachers, school leaders, and the wider community. Similarly, Chikombingo and Maredza (2023: 57) view curriculum implementation as the operationalization of curriculum policy and content, relying on the joint contributions of educators, parents, and learners. Moyo and Sibanda (2022: 218) emphasize that effective curriculum implementation requires active engagement by all stakeholders, including parents, to ensure contextual relevance and learner-centred outcomes. Furthermore, Mabuto (2020: 94) highlights the importance of cultural values such as *hunhu* in shaping the successful delivery of the curriculum in Zimbabwean schools. In this study, curriculum implementation is understood as the process of curriculum delivery, supported by *hunhu*, through the combined efforts of educators and parents.

1.12.7 Integrated curriculum

An integrated curriculum refers to teaching and learning that brings together multiple learning areas and experiences through a unifying concept, allowing themes and skills to cut across disciplinary boundaries (Drake & Reid, 2021: 33–34). Such an approach enables learners to perceive knowledge as interconnected, seeing various subjects as parts of a larger whole (Jacobs, 2022: 89). Jacobs (2022) further notes that well-designed integrated curricula foster meaningful, value-based application of skills and knowledge in real-world contexts. Mokiwa and Phasha (2023: 15) emphasize that integration in curriculum design supports the development of critical thinking and the holistic growth of learners. Similarly, Bruce and Chikunda (2020: 44)

highlight the importance of culturally relevant integration, showing how African philosophies such as *hunhu* can guide the synthesis of curriculum content. In this study, an integrated curriculum is conceptualized as a set of synthesised teaching and learning strategies grounded in the African philosophy of *hunhu*, purposefully constructed to enhance learners' capacity to transfer their learning to new settings.

1.12.8 *Hunhu*

Recent scholarship highlights that it is through *hunhu* (Ubuntu) that communities such as the Shona achieve group solidarity and mutual interdependence, built on principles of reciprocity, respect for human life, and human dignity (Mugumbate & Nyoni, 2022: 5). Mavhunga (2021: 22) agrees that Ubuntu provides African people with identity, self-worth, and a sense of accomplishment as they embody the ethos of *hunhu* within educational contexts. These values cultivate a strong sense of community, brotherhood, and support, which are reflected in the cultural and linguistic practices of the Shona. Chitando and Manyonganise (2023: 211) further support the view that *hunhu*/Ubuntu is foundational in promoting inclusivity and a sense of belonging in educational settings, while Sibanda and Sibanda (2020: 141) emphasize the role of *hunhu* in fostering collaboration and collective growth among learners. In this study, *hunhu* is defined as a worldview that celebrates individual learner competencies while emphasising teamwork and collective effort within educational practice.

1.13 OUTLINE OF RESEARCH CHAPTERS

An outline of the study is presented in Chapter One. The study's theoretical framework is described in Chapter Two. The philosophy of *hunhu*, its philosophical framework and significance in Africanising the private secondary schools' curricula are elucidated in Chapter Three. The literature review of the study is conducted in Chapter Four. Chapter Five features the research methodology. Chapter Six is data analysis and interpretation. A summary of the findings, recommendations, and conclusions are presented in Chapter Seven.

1.14 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presented the introduction and orientation to the study of Africanising the curricula of private secondary schools through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe. The

background, study rationale, problem statement, and research questions were highlighted. A preview of the theoretical framework, literature review, and research design and methodology was provided, and the study's chapters were ultimately outlined.

The next chapter, therefore, presents a comprehensive description of the study's theoretical framework.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter provided an overview of the research focusing on Africanising private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe. This chapter provides an outline of the theoretical framework supporting the research. It provides a thorough grasp of the underlying ideas of general systems theory while highlighting and illuminating the concept of theory. The study at hand provided an explanation of the components of the general systems theory within its framework. Additionally, the chapter explicates the justification and significance of the general systems theory.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A robust theoretical framework is fundamental for transforming research from descriptive accounts into analytical, evidence-based inquiry. Recent scholarship positions the theoretical framework as a foundation built on established theories and key concepts that guide systematic data analysis and interpretation (Leedy & Ormrod, 2023: 110). According to Creswell and Creswell (2022: 208), a theoretical framework is not simply a collection of the researcher's ideas, but a structured lens drawn from disciplinary scholarship that anchors the research and guides meaning making.

In educational research, the theoretical framework defines the relationships among core concepts and ensures the study's coherence and analytical depth (Kivunja, 2018: 51). Constructing this framework involves logically organizing and connecting

theoretical propositions to provide clarity and direction throughout the research process (Onwuegbuzie & Frels, 2022: 142). For this study, the theoretical framework underpins the critical investigation of Africanising private secondary school curricula through *hunhu*, guiding both data interpretation and the broader analysis of curriculum transformation in Zimbabwean private schools.

2.3 THE SYSTEMS THEORY

This study is anchored in Von Bertalanffy's (1968) General Systems Theory (GST). Bertalanffy conceptualised GST as a framework for understanding systems as integrated wholes, where all elements are interrelated and interdependent (von Bertalanffy, 1968: 14). This theoretical stance allows for the exploration of educational organisations including private secondary schools as dynamic entities whose components continuously interact to maintain cohesion and achieve common objectives. This section begins by defining general systems theory. Next, it examines the key characteristics and functions of the theory. The discussion then outlines the structural composition of general systems theory. Finally, the components of the theory are contextualised by analysing how the relationships among subsystems and stakeholders in private secondary schools reflect the principles of systems theory within the scope of this study.

2.3.1 Definition of general systems theory

In 1968, Ludwig von Bertalanffy introduced Allgemeine Systemlehre, or general systems theory (GST). This theory conceptualises a system as an integrated whole, analogous to the way parts of the human body function together in coordination. Von Bertalanffy (1968: 14) defines general systems theory as a set of elements in standing relationships, asserting that GST can be applied to study organisational principles present at different levels across various systems. He concluded that GST is uniquely positioned to cut across disciplinary boundaries within science.

Recent scholarship builds on this foundation by describing a system as an arrangement of interconnected and interdependent components, linked through a network of relationships (Demir & Sezgin, 2021: 201). In educational contexts, GST is particularly valuable for analysing schools as social systems comprising groups of

individuals who interact with each other and their environments. This approach moves beyond mechanical models by incorporating human behaviours and organisational relationships, positioning schools as dynamic learning organisations (Mills & Treagust, 2022: 5).

Accordingly, this study views general systems theory as a framework for understanding interacting processes and analysing the ways in which these processes mutually influence one another over time to ensure the continuity and adaptability of the whole system.

2.3.2 Characteristics and functions of the systems theory

Building on Bertalanffy's (1968) foundational ideas, contemporary research confirms that systems are characterised by holistic interaction among their units, with key components identified as inputs, transformational processes (throughputs), and outputs (Mills & Treagust, 2022: 5). The interdependence of these components is central to system functioning, and system boundaries are understood as permeable, facilitating the import of resources and ideas and the export of outcomes. This permeability enables both positive feedback, which drives growth and development, and negative feedback, which supports correction and stability (Demir & Sezgin, 2021: 203).

The systems approach is particularly valuable in education, where it addresses the complexities of dynamic school environments. In this context, feedback mechanisms ensure that changes in vision, policy, or resource allocation are communicated and enacted among all stakeholders, fostering adaptability and continuous improvement (Koutsoukos & Fragoulis, 2023: 22). Systems theory thus complements traditional scientific inquiry by enabling holistic investigation of the relationships, interactions, and contextual factors that shape educational practice and outcomes.

Recent literature on holistic education highlights that meeting diverse learner needs and preparing them for responsible citizenship requires attention to interdependence, community, and environmental connectivity (Omodan & Ige, 2022: 39). Teachers, therefore, are encouraged to incorporate learners' family and societal contexts into curriculum development and instructional practice, enhancing understanding and engagement (Mills & Treagust, 2022: 6).

Given these insights, the Africanisation of private secondary school curricula in Zimbabwe must be analysed as a systemic process. Private secondary schools are not isolated entities but subsystems within the broader Zimbabwean education system, itself part of the global educational structure. Each school, in turn, comprises classrooms and organisational units that function as both systems and subsystems interacting towards shared educational goals and reflecting the interconnected, hierarchical nature of systems theory.

2.3.3 Components of the systems theory

Recent scholarship highlights that the components of a system are organised hierarchically and interconnected in ways that foster strong interdependence, meaning that no individual element can function effectively in isolation (Robertson & Kim, 2022: 23). In educational settings, these components can be tightly coupled, with high levels of mutual dependence, or loosely coupled, where subgroups maintain some autonomy but are still connected to the broader system (Luo & Hogan, 2020: 314). At the school level, this interdependence is evident in the relationships among the school, the Ministry of Education, parent liaison groups, and professional associations, all of which function as subsystems within the larger educational environment.

A defining feature of social and educational organisations is the presence of permeable boundaries, both internally and externally. These boundaries enable schools to acquire resources and export educational outcomes, supporting ongoing survival and adaptation (Robertson & Kim, 2022: 25). Inputs such as curricula, funding, teaching staff, and learning materials are supplemented by community and societal support, ensuring that schools can fulfil their mandate to provide quality education (Cai & Liao, 2021: 119).

The systems perspective maintains that underperformance or failure in one component can disrupt the effectiveness of the entire school system. The system's environment—which includes all factors that affect or are affected by the school—plays a vital role in shaping organisational behaviour and outcomes (Griffiths, 2022: 64). This environment operates at multiple levels: the immediate school context, the broader educational system, and the societal supra-system in which schools are embedded.

Transformation of inputs into outputs is achieved through collaborative processes, with feedback mechanisms providing the means for continual monitoring and improvement. Negative feedback helps correct errors and sustain equilibrium, while positive feedback promotes innovation and growth. In the context of education, ongoing assessment and curriculum evaluation serve as critical feedback processes (Cai & Liao, 2021: 122).

As environments become increasingly complex, adaptive capacity referred to as requisite variety becomes essential for institutional resilience and effectiveness. Through these integrative and adaptive processes, educational systems develop emergent properties that are greater than the sum of their parts, illustrating the holistic focus of systems theory (Griffiths, 2022: 66).

The biblical axiom “Five can chase a hundred, ten a thousand” (Leviticus 26:8, Holy Bible), emphasises the inherent power of collective effort and the notion that the overall efficacy of a system exceeds the sum of its parts. This concept aligns closely with the foundational attribute of *hunhu*, which encapsulates the principle that “I am because we are,” emphasising interconnectedness, communal support, and unity as essential to individual and collective well-being.

A holistic understanding of systems emphasises how unique system properties and behaviours arise not from individual components but from the complex web of their interactions—an effect known as emergence. Rather than merely describing system structure, an analytic perspective reveals how emergent properties can generate higher-level patterns and outcomes that are not predictable from the characteristics of parts alone. Recent research by Chikowore and Mutekwe (2021:28) suggests that collaborative learning environments break down individualistic barriers, fostering conditions for the Africanisation of curricula and supporting equitable access to educational success. In the absence of *hunhu*, classrooms are at greater risk of becoming fragmented and lacking in compassion and mutual support.

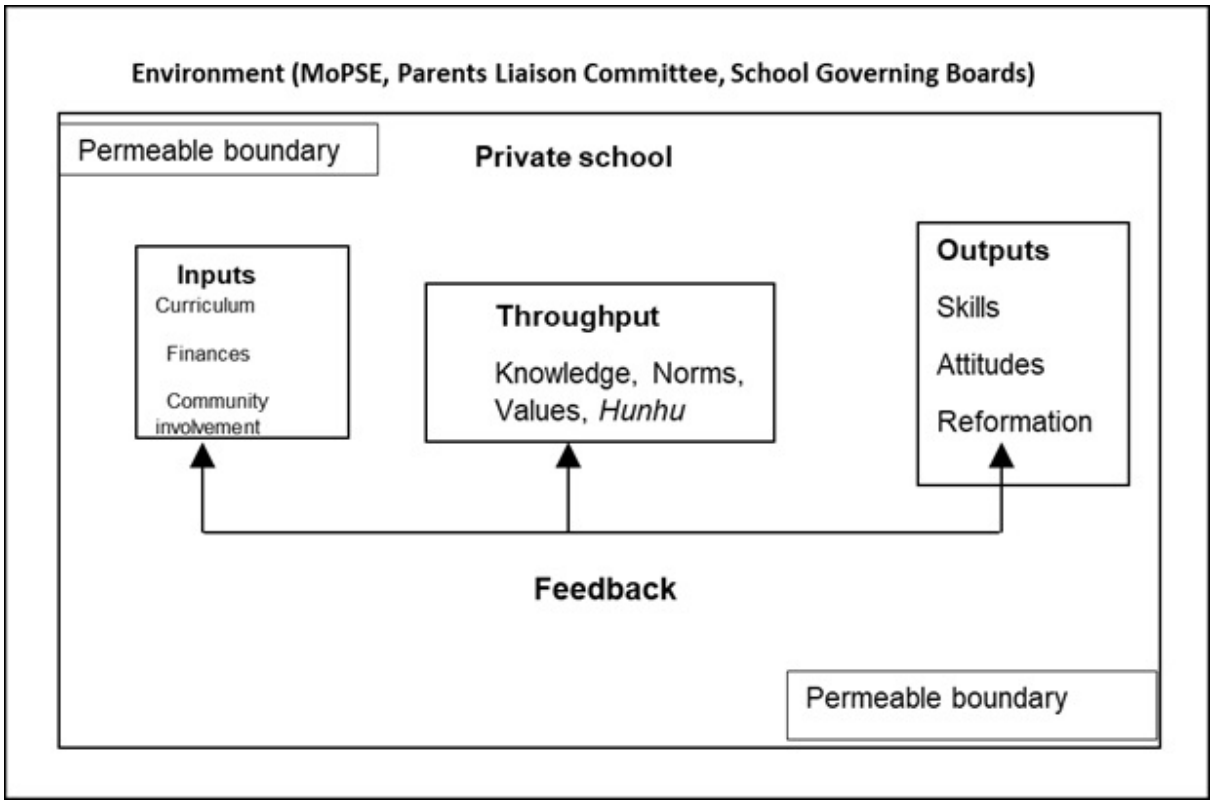
Within this framework, equifinality becomes a key analytic tool, highlighting that private schools may achieve similar educational outcomes through diverse pathways, depending on how their internal processes, resources, and stakeholder inputs interact (Shaw et al., 2024: 2358). This insight challenges simple input-output models and underscores the necessity for ongoing assessment and feedback, as different

combinations of factors may lead to comparable levels of graduate readiness or school effectiveness.

The system's ability to adapt and sustain itself—that is, to counteract negative entropy depends on its openness to the environment and capacity to learn from feedback (Arnold & Wade, 2019:670). For private schools, this translates to a proactive stance, continuously monitoring external conditions, importing new resources, and refining internal processes to support both growth and relevance. Homeostasis, or the maintenance of a steady state, is not a passive equilibrium but an active balancing of internal and external pressures, as seen in the ongoing professional development of educators in hunhu principles, which directly links curriculum transformation to societal advancement (Teachers Institute, 2023:1).

Analysing the direction of system change, Khuzwayo (2020:4) draws attention to the multi-layered influence of both internal sub-units (such as teaching teams or curriculum committees) and supra-systems (like parent groups and regulatory bodies). The dynamic interplay between these levels determines how private schools respond to challenges, allocate resources, and sustain educational quality. Supra-systems, therefore, are not just peripheral influences but are embedded in the very processes that drive school improvement and innovation, shaping outcomes through ongoing interaction with both the internal organisation and the broader educational ecosystem.

2.3.4 Relationships of components of private schools using systems theory



Source: Researcher's conceptualisation

Figure 2.1: Relationships of components of private schools using systems theory

As illustrated in Figure 2.1, the operation of private secondary schools in Zimbabwe is analytically best understood as a network of interdependent relationships with key organisations—including the Ministry of Education, parents' liaison committees, and the Association of Trust Schools. These entities, constituting the school's environment, do not merely provide peripheral support; rather, they form an essential ecosystem whose collaboration is critical for advancing the Africanisation of curricula through the philosophy of *hunhu*.

This interdependence is operationalised through permeable system boundaries, enabling the continual exchange of resources, expertise, and cultural capital. Inputs such as curriculum content, financial resources, human expertise, and teaching materials are dynamically shaped by both the school's internal priorities and the broader community's influence. The throughput process, as conceptualised by Von

Bertalanffy (1968: 15), involves the transformation of these inputs into educational outputs, with a central analytic focus on embedding African epistemologies, norms, and *hunhu* values at every stage.

Such a process is not static: it requires ongoing methodological innovation and pedagogical alignment with *hunhu* principles to ensure that learners not only acquire academic knowledge but are also socialised into the values and attitudes necessary for meaningful societal transformation (Adeate & Sewchurran, 2023: 15). The effectiveness of this transformation hinges on continuous feedback cycles with the environment, enabling schools to recalibrate inputs and processes in response to evolving community needs and policy imperatives. Ultimately, this analytic approach underscores that the survival and success of private schools are contingent on their capacity to adapt through active engagement with, and reflective integration of, their wider systemic context.

2.4 ANALYSIS AND SYNTHESIS USING SYSTEMS THEORY

Alter (2018: 4) contends that the meaningful application of systems theory in complex organisational contexts demands a genuinely holistic perspective—one that not only recognises the interconnectedness of all system components but also rigorously investigates the patterns and processes that emerge from their interactions. This analytic stance moves beyond surface-level description, requiring scholars and practitioners to interrogate how individual elements both shape and are shaped by the broader system's dynamics. In educational settings, this means examining not just the curriculum or teaching staff in isolation, but understanding how these elements interact with governance structures, community stakeholders, and prevailing cultural values.

Systems theory, as articulated by Von Bertalanffy (1968: 14), provides a robust methodological framework for both analysis and synthesis. Analysis involves deconstructing the system into its constituent parts to reveal underlying relationships, dependencies, and feedback loops, while synthesis integrates these findings to construct a comprehensive model of organisational behaviour. This dual process is critical when seeking to understand and reform curricula, as it exposes the multi-layered influences that shape educational outcomes from policy formulation to classroom practice.

Recent scholarship reinforces the importance of such an approach. For example, Robertson and Kim (2022: 26) highlight that effective systems-based educational reform requires ongoing cycles of diagnosis, reflection, and adaptation, supported by continuous data collection and stakeholder feedback. Similarly, Griffiths (2022: 69) argues that holistic systems thinking in education not only illuminates how school subsystems operate but also identifies leverage points for systemic improvement—where targeted interventions can produce cascading positive effects throughout the organisation.

Moreover, the analytic application of systems theory is especially pertinent to curriculum Africanisation efforts. Here, the synthesis of diverse epistemologies, including *hunhu*-based values, cannot be achieved simply by layering new content onto existing structures. Instead, it necessitates a careful, system-wide negotiation of meaning, power, and identity, involving all actors from teachers and learners to parents and regulatory bodies (Cai & Liao, 2021: 124). This approach ensures that curricular transformation is sustainable, contextually relevant, and capable of fostering both individual and collective development.

In sum, the effective use of systems theory in the context of educational transformation relies on a rigorous analytic process, one that honours the complexity of organisational life, foregrounds the dynamism of component interactions, and continually synthesises insights to inform strategic decision-making at every level of the system.

2.4.1 Embedding context.

Identifying and situating the underlying phenomenon is foundational to systems-based educational research. In this study, the phenomenon of interest—the Africanisation of private secondary school curricula through *hunhu*—is examined within the multi-layered context of Zimbabwe's education system. The national education system serves as the suprasystem, establishing the overarching policy and regulatory environment within which all schooling operates. Within this framework, private secondary schools represent a distinct subsystem, characterised by their unique governance structures, resource bases, and historical legacies.

Further complexity arises as private secondary schools themselves comprise multiple internal subsystems, including administrative units, academic departments, and various stakeholder groups, thus functioning both as systems and as elements of a broader suprasystem (Robertson & Kim, 2022: 24). Historically, private secondary schools in Zimbabwe were established as exclusive institutions serving elite populations during the colonial era. While they now operate independently of direct government funding, they remain subject to state policy and curricular mandates (Midzi et al., 2021: 144). This dual positioning requires private schools to continuously negotiate their autonomy with compliance, balancing tradition with the imperative to reflect contemporary societal values and the transformative goals of Africanisation (Cai & Liao, 2021: 120).

This nuanced, multi-layered context underscores the importance of systems thinking in analysing curriculum reform, as changes at the level of private schools are both shaped by and, in turn, influence the broader educational and sociopolitical environment.

2.4.2 Sub-whole

A critical analytic step in systems-based research is the identification and examination of sub-wholes—distinct, semi-autonomous entities that exist within and contribute to the functioning of a wider system (Robertson & Kim, 2022: 26). In this study, the private secondary schools' system in Zimbabwe is conceptualised as the embedding whole, while various organisations and structures within and around it constitute the sub-wholes. These include the Conference of Heads of Independent Schools in Zimbabwe (CHISZ), teacher training symposiums such as the Cambridge subject-specific workshops, sports leagues and professional associations, school governing boards, and parent liaison committees.

Although these sub-wholes operate with a degree of independence, their contributions are indispensable to the private schools' overall effectiveness and sustainability. The relationships among these entities and the schools are characterised by interdependence; the success of curriculum Africanisation through *hunhu* depends on collaborative engagement and mutual reinforcement among all parties (Griffiths, 2022: 65). Analysing these relationships provides deeper insight into how policy, pedagogy, governance, and community practices converge to

shape educational transformation. The implication is clear: sustainable curriculum reform cannot occur in isolation but requires the active participation and alignment of all sub-wholes within the system, each bringing unique expertise, resources, and perspectives to the process.

2.4.3 Specialised parts

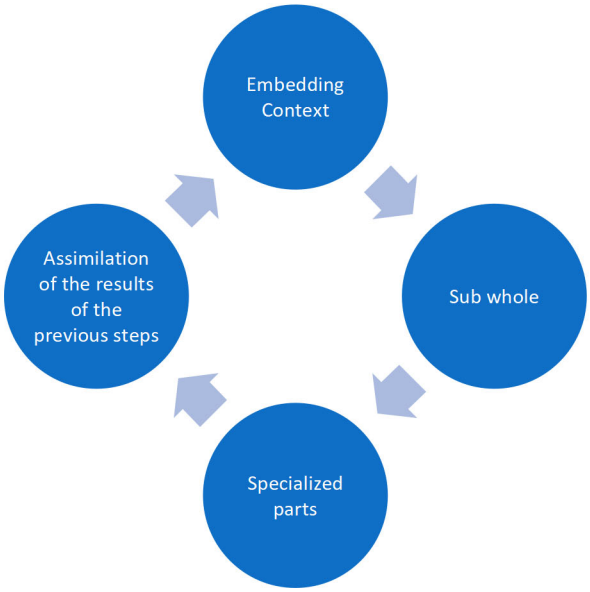
The third stage of systems analysis involves a deep examination of the specialised components within a system—its internal structures, operational dynamics, and functional roles—rather than treating them as isolated elements (Griffiths, 2022: 68). In this study, the focus is on the history curriculum in private secondary schools (Form One to Form Four), interrogating how its structure, content, and pedagogical approaches reflect and reinforce the philosophy of *hunhu*.

This analytical lens enables a deeper understanding of how *hunhu* is woven into curriculum delivery—not merely as an add-on principle, but as an integral value system that shapes teaching methods, assessment practices, and content selection. For instance, embedding indigenous philosophies like *hunhu* into subject curricula enhances cultural relevance and holistic learner identity, thereby transforming how knowledge is framed and internalised (Govender & Mutendera, 2020: 2).

By analysing these specialised curriculum components, the research reveals the mechanisms through which curriculum Africanisation is either enabled or constrained. It highlights how the alignment—or misalignment—of content, pedagogy, and cultural philosophy can serve as either a lever for meaningful educational transformation or a barrier to achieving it.

Synthesising findings from the previous analytic stages demands an ongoing, iterative engagement with the study's embedded context. To fully capture the dynamics of Africanising private secondary school curricula through *hunhu*, it was essential to repeatedly revisit and reinterpret both the internal operations and the external environment of the schools under investigation. This cyclical approach aligns with best practices in educational systems research, which emphasise continually situating findings within the broader social, organisational, and cultural context of the phenomenon (Biesta, 2020: 25).

In particular, understanding the social context of private secondary schools in the NCD proved critical. Analysing the district's unique social fabric and the patterns of interaction among sub-wholes such as governing boards, parent committees, and networks of collaborating schools provided nuanced insight into how curriculum Africanisation is enacted on the ground. Revisiting the embedding context and critically assessing the roles, impacts, and interrelationships of these sub-wholes was not a one-time process but an essential, recursive element that underpinned the research design and analysis throughout.



Source: Researcher's conceptualisation

Figure 2.2: Cycle of analysis and synthesis of the impact of relationships in private secondary schools using systems theory

2.5 RATIONALE FOR THE USE OF THE GENERAL SYSTEMS THEORY

Von Bertalanffy (1968: 15) observes that institutions such as schools often embody multiple, overlapping purposes. To analyse such complexity, it is essential to understand the system's own purpose, the purpose of its components, and the purpose of the larger system or suprasystem it belongs to (Juvonen et al., 2024: 392). Systems theory provides a powerful transdisciplinary lens for scrutinising the interplay between perceptions, conceptions, and the realities they shape, enabling both critical and prescriptive analysis (McGregor, 2023: 58).

As a holistic framework, systems theory addresses both epistemological and ontological dimensions by illuminating the dynamic functions, properties, and relationships that define systems internally and in relation to their environments (Ramirez & Johnson, 2023: 114). This theoretical orientation is particularly valuable for understanding the Africanisation of curricula in Zimbabwe's private secondary schools, as it requires an integrated analysis of educational policies, cultural values, and institutional practices. Accordingly, the present study probes both the knowledge landscape surrounding curriculum Africanisation and the lived experiences and perceptions within private schools, recognising that meaningful reform must permeate all sub-wholes interacting with these institutions.

Moreover, systems theory is uniquely suited to elucidate the complex bio-psycho-socio-cultural processes underpinning educational change (Melton et al., 2022: 47). Educational phenomena are rarely the product of singular factors; rather, they emerge from complex interactions within fields of influence. Thus, a holistic systems approach is essential for analysing and addressing multifaceted educational challenges.

Within this systems framework, the Africanisation of private school curricula through *hunhu* must be understood as an emergent phenomenon arising from the interplay of subsystems and supra-systems. Investigating these relationships enables analysis of how *hunhu* is manifested institutionally and pedagogically. Finally, this perspective underscores the critical importance of contextual understanding—particularly of learners' socio-cultural environments—in shaping curriculum development and effectiveness (Sugurzhanova et al., 2024: 63).

2.6 SOME CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON GENERAL SYSTEMS THEORY

General systems theory (GST) is often critiqued for its conceptual vagueness and lack of universally agreed definitions, which can undermine its utility in complex organisational settings (Walden University, 2024: 11). While GST encourages a holistic view that considers all system components, it sometimes assumes an unrealistic equality of influence among those components. In practice, certain actors such as the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) exert significant control over aspects like statutory compliance, while governing boards retain

considerable authority over operational and financial matters in private secondary schools.

Another significant critique of GST is its tendency to underemphasise the centrality of human agency. Social systems are fundamentally composed of individuals whose physiological and emotional needs shape collective action, yet GST sometimes treats people as interchangeable components, neglecting the importance of human experience and motivation (Roth, 2019: 3). For system change to be meaningful, it must originate with, and include those individuals most affected by the transformation.

Furthermore, GST's theoretical status is sometimes unclear. Rather than providing a unified, predictive theory, GST can function as a broad heuristic or catalogue of systemic properties, which may reduce its practical power in specific contexts (Walden University, 2024: 13). This ambiguity is particularly problematic in organisational research, where systems are often compared to biological organisms experiencing cycles of adaptation and decline (National Academies Press, 2023).

Participation is another area of debate: while GST posits that participatory processes are necessary for effective systemic change, real-world power dynamics frequently inhibit genuine stakeholder involvement (Montenegro, 2026: 2). Thus, applying GST to curriculum reform and educational transformation requires a nuanced, context-sensitive approach that accounts for these limitations.

2.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter outlined the theoretical framework supporting the study, highlighting the key concepts, principles, and perspectives relevant to the research. It has shown general systems theory as a prescriptive framework for conceptualising the phenomenon of Africanising the curricula of private secondary schools through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe. The chapter clearly outlined the characteristics of systems theory, its rationale, and its relevance.

The next chapter presents a review of the literature on the philosophy of *hunhu* as it relates to the Africanisation of curriculum.

CHAPTER 3

THE PHILOSOPHY OF *HUNHU* IN EDUCATION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter positioned general systems theory as the conceptual scaffolding for analysing the Africanisation of private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe. In this chapter, the philosophy of *hunhu* is critically examined as a dynamic and integrative framework for educational reform. Rather than treating *hunhu* as a static cultural artifact, the discussion interrogates its potential to drive substantive change in Zimbabwean schooling by reorienting educational practice, curriculum content, and the broader social purposes of education.

Persistent concerns among African scholars highlight the inadequacy and irrelevance of curricula shaped by colonial legacies, which have eroded indigenous values and knowledge systems in African schools. Sigauke (2016:28) underscores that Western education imposes hegemonic and often oppressive models, privileging individualism at the expense of communitarian values historically central to African societies. This is manifested in educational environments that prioritise competition and high-stakes assessments—values that may be antithetical to the relational ethos of *hunhu*.

The disconnect between formal schooling and indigenous African philosophies is further evidenced by the contradictions between values promoted in schools and the core principles of *hunhu* (Chimbi & Jita, 2022a:440). Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru and Makuwaza (2017:85) argue that these tensions contribute to a crisis of purpose in sub-Saharan African education, where the system risks producing learners who merely simulate Western norms rather than cultivating authentic, contextually grounded individuals. The persistence of Eurocentric curricula and the dominance of foreign languages perpetuate this misalignment, systematically marginalising *hunhu* and its communitarian orientation (Chimbi & Jita, 2022a:439).

Against this backdrop, the chapter critically analyses the principles, characteristics, and practical benefits of *hunhu*—not only as a set of cultural values but as a transformative force for curriculum Africanisation. It explores how

embedding *hunhu* can reconcile the purpose of education with the lived realities and aspirations of Zimbabwean learners, teachers, and communities. By foregrounding these issues, the analysis aims to illuminate both the promise and the challenges of re-centering *hunhu* in Zimbabwean private secondary schools.

3.2 THE PHILOSOPHY OF *HUNHU*

Gutek (2021: 3) asserts that philosophy is the foundational layer of research methodology, driving the development of research questions and critically shaping the orientation and scope of academic inquiry. Far from being an abstract exercise, philosophy is paradigm-setting, as Bołtuć (2023: 1) explains, structuring the theoretical frameworks that approximate valid worldviews. Ueberweg (2023: 1) echoes this perspective, describing philosophy as the science of principles and highlighting its centrality in systematically identifying and addressing knowledge gaps. The close relationship between philosophy and science is evident in the continual process of knowledge generation, where ontological (the nature of reality) and epistemological (the justification of knowledge) commitments shape both research design and interpretation (Sol & Heng, 2022: 80).

These philosophical considerations are especially salient when addressing the role of *hunhu* in curriculum reform. Ontology—one's conception of reality—directly influences how *hunhu* is defined and enacted within educational settings. Epistemologically, the view that knowledge is constructed through communal engagement rather than individual pursuit resonates with the fundamental tenets of *hunhu* and informs the methodological underpinnings of research into the Africanisation of Zimbabwean private secondary school curricula.

Within this framework, *hunhu* is defined as an articulation of African humanness, rooted in a communal and interdependent worldview (Sibanda, 2014: 28). Far from static, *hunhu* functions as both a marker of African identity and a living ethical philosophy that foregrounds social solidarity, mutual respect, and collective well-being (Mazodze et al., 2023: 69). Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru and Makuwaza (2014: 7) further argue that *hunhu* has served as the underlying spiritual and social foundation of African societies long before the advent of colonialism.

By situating *hunhu* at the core of this analysis, the study not only acknowledges its historical and cultural significance but also uses its principles to interrogate and critique curricula still influenced by colonial legacies. This approach enables the identification of persistent knowledge gaps and supports the formulation of contextually relevant strategies for genuine curriculum Africanisation in Zimbabwe's private secondary schools.

3.2.1 The origin of the philosophy of *hunhu*

Hunhu represents a foundational Shona principle, encapsulating the moral quality and ethical character of an individual. Its origins are deeply entrenched in African metaphysics, axiology, and epistemology, collectively shaping the worldview and value systems of Bantu-speaking communities in Zimbabwe (Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru & Makuwaza, 2014:2). Tracing the intellectual development of *hunhu*, Sibanda (2014:26) identifies it as a form of collective consciousness that long predates colonial encounters—a consciousness shared widely across Bantu societies as a lived and communal ethic.

Analytically, the roots of *hunhu* have been linked by some scholars to ancient Egypt's Pharaonic era, considered the cradle of civilisation and philosophical thought in Africa (Onebunne, 2023:22). This perspective suggests that the philosophical heritage of Africa not only predates but also influenced later intellectual traditions in Greece, where, as Onebunne (2023) argues, Greek thinkers reputedly studied in Africa before returning to Athens to develop their own philosophies.

The debate over origins is further complicated by Letseka's (2016:83) claim that *hunhu* can be read as an extension of Aristotle's theory of personal morality, and by Mahaye's (2018:15) assertion that Aristotle's notion of virtue and friendships resonates with the communal and relational values central to *hunhu*. However, this line of reasoning is vigorously contested. Parker (2023:75-76), echoing James (1954:158), posits that Greek philosophy was fundamentally appropriated from African sources, making it foreign to traditional Greek culture and values. Osei (2020:71) expands on this critique by highlighting the transfer of knowledge from Egypt to Greece, particularly through Aristotle's reputed use of texts acquired during Alexander the Great's conquest of Egypt. This perspective challenges the

Eurocentric claim to intellectual primacy, arguing instead for the deep African roots of these philosophical traditions.

James (1954:164) further supports this view by noting how Athenian authorities regarded Greek philosophy as foreign, leading to the persecution of its leading figures, such as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. *Hunhu*, or humanness, therefore emerges not as a recent innovation or a reaction to colonialism, but as a longstanding philosophical tradition in sub-Saharan Africa—one that was already fully developed and widely practised among Bantu communities before colonial incursion (Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru & Makuwaza, 2014:7; Madzore, 2024:286). Its later embrace across Africa underscores its centrality to indigenous African identity, ethics, and community life long before external influence.

This analytic perspective foregrounds *hunhu* as a contested yet enduring philosophy, one that is essential to understanding both the historical trajectory and the contemporary project of Africanising educational curricula in Zimbabwe and beyond.

3.2.2 An analysis of the philosophy of *hunhu*

Critical analysis of *hunhu* consistently foregrounds the principle that self-actualisation is inseparable from the quality of interpersonal relationships. As Ngubane and Makua (2021:2) argue, *hunhu* functions as an African indigenous philosophy, cultivated over centuries as both a cultural compass and a practical framework for fostering positive human interconnections and collective well-being. This communal worldview stands in marked contrast to individualistic paradigms prevalent in Western educational models.

The ethos of *hunhu* finds resonance not only in African oral and philosophical traditions but also in scriptural wisdom, such as that articulated in Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 (Holy Bible). The verse's insistence that "Two are better than one... if either falls, one can help the other up... a cord of three strands is not quickly broken," mirrors *hunhu*'s emphasis on mutual support, interdependence, and resilience through cooperation. By integrating both scholarly and scriptural perspectives, it becomes clear that *hunhu* underpins a vision of personal and societal flourishing rooted in harmonious relationships, collective responsibility, and the nurturing of social bonds (Ngubane & Makua, 2021:2).

Analytically, the legacy of colonialism has complicated the enactment of *hunhu* in education. Maluleka (2020:37) highlights the profound sense of alienation experienced by Africans as colonial authorities systematically suppressed indigenous educational principles and cultural identity. The project of decolonising the curriculum, therefore, is not simply additive but transformative, requiring the intentional re-integration of culturally relevant content that promotes humanisation and authentic identity formation.

Waghid and Hungwe (2023:223) extend this analysis by emphasising that the common good, a defining feature of traditional African communities, is indispensable for nurturing communal identity and shared achievement—qualities that must be central to any meaningful process of curriculum Africanisation. Proponents of *hunhu*, such as Chidziva (2021), further contend that its foundational maxim, “I am because we are, we are because I am” (Makalela, 2016:191), radically reorients educational aims away from atomistic success towards collective empowerment and solidarity.

Thus, an analytical engagement with *hunhu* reveals it not as a nostalgic ideal, but as a dynamic, contextually grounded philosophy with profound implications for reimagining both educational purpose and practice in Zimbabwe and beyond.

3.2.3 The aim of the philosophy of *hunhu*

An analytical exploration of the philosophy of *hunhu* reveals that its central aim is not merely the preservation of tradition, but the active promotion of a shared African identity and the fostering of unity amidst diversity. Mangena (2023:111) articulates that *hunhu* seeks to broaden intellectual horizons by highlighting commonalities that bind African peoples, asserting that these shared elements are more significant than the divisions imposed by geography or history.

This perspective is echoed by Mangena (2023:112) and Mlambo, Chikondo and Maririmba (2022:118), who argue that the philosophy of hunhu is instrumental in cultivating a sense of individual and collective self-worth, granting African learners both a rooted sense of identity and a sense of accomplishment as they enact the ethos of humanness within educational settings. Such an approach stands in deliberate contrast to individualistic models of education, foregrounding the interplay between self-actualisation and communal responsibility.

Monthalu (2023a:577) extends this analysis, emphasising that *hunhu* redirects educational goals towards values that are fundamentally centred on the "other"—prioritising empathy, solidarity, and mutual upliftment alongside personal fulfilment. Importantly, Monthalu (2023b:58) notes that while *hunhu* education maintains a global perspective, it simultaneously recognises and respects the specific distinctions that define both individuals and cultures. This dual awareness enables *hunhu* to function as a philosophy that is both unifying and sensitive to difference—an essential foundation for curriculum Africanisation that aspires to be relevant, inclusive, and transformative.

3.2.4 Characteristics of the philosophy of *hunhu*

A critical analysis of *hunhu* epistemology reveals its central role in instilling humanitarian values that extend far beyond individual moral conduct. According to Mazodze et al. (2023:63), *hunhu* education aims to cultivate responsible and dignified members of the community by embedding principles such as compassion, empathy, humility, and respect within the learning process. This approach shifts the focus of education from personal achievement towards the formation of ethical citizens equipped to contribute meaningfully to communal well-being.

Sande (2023:79) reinforces this perspective, contending that genuine decolonisation of learner development necessitates the prioritisation of indigenous knowledges such as *hunhu* which are instrumental in nurturing positive behaviour and fostering a sense of civic responsibility. This positions *hunhu* not merely as a moral code, but as an epistemological framework that shapes how knowledge is acquired, valued, and enacted.

Dhliwayo and Jita (2023:2) further characterise the philosophy of *hunhu* as an intrinsically African worldview, one that fundamentally redefines humanness through the lens of love, care, and proactive advocacy for the well-being of others. The success it envisions is collective, as encapsulated by the Shona idiom, "one fingernail cannot crush lice," underscoring the indispensability of mutual support and interdependence (Ngubane & Makua, 2021:3).

In this sense, the imperatives of *hunhu* are not only ethically desirable but are strategically essential for the Africanisation of Zimbabwean private secondary school curricula. They provide the philosophical backbone for transformative educational

practices that seek to build community, foster inclusion, and promote sustainable social progress.

3.2.5 The importance of the philosophy of *hunhu* amongst learners in the Zimbabwean education sector.

A critical examination of the philosophy of *hunhu* reveals its foundational role in embedding humanistic values that are crucial for both personal development and social cohesion. As Chimbi and Jita (2022a:440) highlight, the philosophy's emphasis on solidarity, benevolence, cooperation, respect, and compassion forms the bedrock for nurturing learners who are not only academically capable but also morally anchored and community oriented.

Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru and Makuwaza (2017:87) extend this analysis, positing that *hunhu* defines the ideal of the virtuous human being or model citizen—an individual whose conduct exemplifies accountability, honesty, fairness, trustworthiness, diligence, integrity, cooperation, hospitality, and a deep commitment to both family and the wider community. The transformative potential of *hunhu* is evident in its capacity to instil these principles within learners, thus shaping them into responsible and dignified community members (Mazodze et al., 2023:69).

The importance of *hunhu* is further underscored by the recognition that education, at its core, seeks to equip individuals with universal knowledge and skills, while also being inseparable from the socio-cultural context in which it is practised (Manthalu, 2023:58). This contextual dependency affirms that educational philosophies must be grounded in the metaphysical and ethical realities of their setting if they are to be truly relevant and impactful.

Moreover, scholars agree that a key dimension of *hunhu* is the facilitation of self-actualisation through interpersonal relationships. As Ngubane and Makua (2021:2) argue, *hunhu* has long functioned as an African indigenous philosophy, guiding the development of positive human connections and communal welfare within and across generations. Collectively, these insights affirm that embedding the philosophy of *hunhu* within Zimbabwean education is not only a matter of cultural preservation

but a strategic imperative for fostering resilient, ethical, and socially responsible learners.

3.2.6 How the philosophy of *hunhu* cuts across society

A critical appraisal of the philosophy of *hunhu* highlights its pervasive influence across all layers of Zimbabwean society, particularly when education is rooted in an African worldview. Dhliwayo and Jita (2023:3) argue that a curriculum inspired by such a worldview is essential for authentic educational liberation, enabling learners to navigate global citizenship whilst maintaining strong ties to their diverse identities. This makes the integration of *hunhu* within the curriculum not merely desirable but imperative for holistic development.

Mugumbate and Chereni (2020:9) observe that the current curriculum framework in Zimbabwe, at least notionally, attempts to reflect societal values and practices, simultaneously striving to embed an African perspective. In practice, this means educational programmes are designed to prepare learners for meaningful roles within their communities, emphasising African principles such as sovereignty, interconnectedness, mutual support, respect, discipline, and service to others (Gasva & Phiri, 2020:87; Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020:9).

Despite these intentions, there remains a gap in the practical emphasis on collective solidarity, with individualistic tendencies still present within the educational system. The African philosophical stance, however, positions the group as integral to individual fulfilment and well-being. As Chikoko (2017:72) notes, when education authentically incorporates the communal and socio-ethical dimensions of African epistemology, it fosters a learning environment where knowledge and insights are selflessly exchanged among learners, thus reinforcing a collective ethos.

This communitarian outlook is further reflected in the broader social structures of African societies, where inclusion and mutual responsibility are prioritised. The ontological underpinning of these communities rejects the notion of isolated individual existence, instead privileging interconnectedness and the pursuit of collective welfare. In this way, the philosophy of *hunhu* is not confined to the realm of education but is deeply embedded in the very fabric of social life, shaping attitudes, relationships, and responsibilities across Zimbabwean society.

3.2.7 The use of the philosophy of *hunhu* to Africanise the school curriculum

A critical analysis of curriculum Africanisation foregrounds the impact of colonial legacies, which fostered alienation among Zimbabweans by systematically suppressing their indigenous educational values (Maluleka, 2020:137). The process of decolonising the curriculum, therefore, is not simply additive, but transformative demanding the reintegration of culturally relevant content to enable genuine humanisation and the reclamation of African identity.

Central to this transformative agenda is the incorporation of *hunhu* values through both curriculum reform and implementation. As Waghid and Hungwe (2023:221) argue, the infusion of indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) ensures the curriculum is tailored to African aspirations, realities, and challenges, rather than being a derivative of external models. This requires a holistic approach, in which educational content and pedagogical methods are derived from and remain responsive to learners' cultural backgrounds. Tekeste (2019:4) further supports this view, contending that culturally grounded education not only nurtures a strong sense of identity and patriotism but also equips learners with the skills and confidence to address African issues with contextually relevant solutions.

Despite widespread disruptions caused by colonialism, the resilience and persistence of *hunhu* values remain evident in African communities. Chikoko (2017:71), alongside Mwinzi (2016:277), insists that the integration of African epistemologies must move beyond superficial representations—such as symbols and rituals—to become the guiding principle of curriculum frameworks. Embedding the communal, socio-ethical dimension of African epistemology fosters collaborative learning environments, where knowledge-sharing and collective benefit are prioritised (Chimbi & Jita, 2022b:141).

The adoption of *hunhu* in educational contexts is thus fundamental to safeguarding cultural identity, cultivating communal solidarity, and fostering coexistence and interdependence (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021a:7). Ngubane and Makua (2021:4) highlight that *hunhu* offers a philosophical blueprint for reimagining and revising curricula—anchoring transformation not just in content, but in the underlying logic and practices of communal life. Ultimately, the role of *hunhu* in the decolonisation of education is pivotal, as it underpins the transformation of

Zimbabwean society and sustains communal success for present and future generations.

3.2.8 *Hunhu* as an integrative philosophy in the field of education

A critical analysis of *hunhu* as an integrative philosophy reveals its transformative potential in challenging the dominance of Western epistemologies and reorienting educational systems towards African aspirations and realities. Mwinzi (2016:382) underscores the necessity of creating coexistence between African and Western knowledge systems, arguing that only through such integration can curricula become both relevant and valuable for African learners, equipping them for meaningful participation in their communities and economies. Historically, missionary-driven education in sub-Saharan Africa introduced foreign languages and cultural frameworks, embedding Western ideologies at the very heart of African schooling.

Ali and Shishigu (2020:5) and Mulenga (2019a:3) critically highlight that the curriculum is never neutral; it inevitably serves as a vehicle for the transmission of particular values, ideologies, and worldviews. This recognition has fuelled a growing movement across African countries advocating for the decolonisation and Africanisation of curricula, often grounded in the philosophy of *hunhu*. Such efforts seek not only to reclaim indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) but also to promote self-worth, identity, and practical competence among learners (Tekeste, 2019:4).

The Ethiopian case is particularly instructive. Despite its avoidance of formal colonisation, Ethiopia has grappled with the vestiges of Western educational models, which have been criticised for their lack of relevance (Ali & Shishigu, 2020:1; Aweke et al., 2017:61). The call for a *hunhu* (or medemer)-based curriculum in Ethiopia centres on embedding socio-cultural realities and promoting holistic, inclusive, and contextually meaningful education. The Education and Development Forum (UKFIET) affirm that Ubuntu-informed approaches, such as community-based Speed Schools, have yielded transformative outcomes by honouring local knowledge, utilising home languages, and fostering inclusive learning environments.

However, the challenge remains that, across Africa, the full realisation of an Africanised curriculum is often constrained by persistent reliance on colonial models,

limited practical implementation, and ongoing socio-political and economic barriers (Kwarteng, 2019:12; Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2020:184).

The philosophy of *hunhu* is key in strengthening learners' cultural pride, identity, and sense of personhood, with Ali and Shishigu (2020:5) positing that transformative education must rest on acquiring knowledge, practical skills, and social cohesion.

In Kenya, the philosophy is known as asutu, munto, omundu, or mondo (Africa Social Work and Development Network, 2023), yet its absence from the curriculum is linked to rising individualism and the erosion of communal values (Odari, 2020:58; Soyinka & Amin, 2016:171). The consequences are manifest in academic dishonesty, social discord, and lack of empathy among learners. Scholars such as Mahaye (2018:16) and Odari (2020:59, 65) argue that embedding *hunhu* in teacher education and school culture is essential for cultivating integrity, respect, and collective responsibility.

Namibia's history of extreme colonial violence and division further complicates efforts to embed *hunhu* (or Omundu). Despite formidable obstacles, ranging from poverty to linguistic and cultural diversity—the unifying ethos of *hunhu* is recognised as vital for fostering inclusion, equity, and social justice in the Namibian curriculum (Josua et al., 2022:1164–1167; Brás, 2021:2, 14). Yet, as Josua et al. (2022:1166) note, much of the rhetoric around decolonisation has yet to translate into genuine curricular transformation.

In the South African context, *hunhu* (Ubuntu, botho) has been effectively integrated into teaching practices, particularly in Mathematics and through indigenous games, promoting collaboration, selflessness, and teamwork (Chidziva, 2021:276; Nxumalo & Mncube, 2019:113). However, Chimbi and Jita (2022b) caution that persistent colonial pedagogies continue to alienate learners from indigenous values and knowledge systems. Makhonza, Lawrence and Khoane (2019:13527) suggest that this may be due in part to the ongoing transition from apartheid and the search for a new national identity.

Overall, the analytical evidence suggests that while *hunhu*-based education has significant potential to transform African curricula, its success depends on deep

integration into educational philosophy, teacher training, and classroom practice—addressing not only what is taught, but how and why education is delivered.

3.3 CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF *HUNHU* IN ZIMBABWE'S EDUCATIONAL REFORM

The aspiration to reform Zimbabwe's education system along decolonial lines has been a persistent theme in national discourse, yet persistent challenges remain regarding the system's social relevance and transformative potential (Mutanga, 2022:3; Sibanda & Young, 2020:65). Recognising the inadequacies of colonial-era education policy, the Ministry of Education and Culture initiated a comprehensive curriculum overhaul, culminating in the explicit adoption of *hunhu* as the guiding educational philosophy (experts).

The 2017 curriculum reform marked a significant policy shift, embedding the philosophy of *hunhu* across both primary and secondary learning areas (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021b:3). This move was widely welcomed by scholars as a positive and necessary step towards educational Africanisation (Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru & Makuvaza, 2014:5-8; Chimbi & Jita, 2022b:440). The Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education 2015–2022 formalised this commitment: education was now tasked with shaping individuals who internalise and enact the Zimbabwean philosophical perspective of *hunhu* (MOPSE, 2015:5), aligning curriculum reform with pan-Africanist ideology even in the context of globalisation.

Despite these policy intentions, the translation of *hunhu* from a guiding ideal into classroom reality has been uneven, particularly within private secondary schools, where implementation remains largely undocumented (Chimbi & Jita, 2022b:440). Earlier, the 1998 Commission of Enquiry into Education and Training (Nziramasanga, 1999:8; Nziramasanga, 2018) had identified a troubling decline in moral values, recommending *hunhu* as the philosophical anchor for urgent curriculum reform. The commission's findings pointed to a broader societal malaise: the absence of a coherent educational philosophy not only produced learners lacking moral focus, but also contributed to a general erosion of moral integrity in public life (Nziramasanga, 1999:63; Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru & Makuvaza, 2014:5; Josua, 2022:165).

In practice, the failure to institutionalise *hunhu* has been linked to political and socio-economic instability, as well as to insufficient commitment and knowledge among educators (Viriri & Viriri, 2018:111; Mutanga, 2022:3). Teachers and headmasters are often more preoccupied with logistics than with the substance of what is taught, reflecting a broader reluctance to embrace and manage change. Risiro (2019:35) notes that inadequate training in indigenous knowledge and the lack of comprehensive reference materials further hinder the effective integration of *hunhu* in teaching practice. Economic constraints, particularly low salaries and deteriorating working conditions, exacerbate these challenges.

Cultural and religious dynamics also play a role: while Christianity remains dominant in Zimbabwe, it is sometimes positioned in opposition to indigenous traditions such as *hunhu*, which are often mischaracterised as unscientific or outdated (Chimbi & Jita, 2022b:142). However, as demonstrated in biblical teachings which emphasise love for one's neighbour (Matthew 22:39, Holy Bible), there are significant overlaps with *hunhu*'s core values.

Despite these obstacles, there have been commendable government efforts to craft a curriculum responsive to Zimbabwe's specific needs, blending African and local knowledge systems (Sibanda & Young, 2020:65; Ngwenya, 2019:16). Yet, findings from Midzi et al. (2021:144) indicate that neo-colonial influences and limited governmental capacity—especially in supervising private secondary schools—have impeded full compliance with policy, and as Chimbi and Jita (2022b:141) conclude, the project of Africanising the curriculum through *hunhu* continues to face more challenges than successes.

These realities underscore the complexity of embedding *hunhu* as a transformative educational philosophy. While the ideals are articulated at policy level, meaningful realisation requires ongoing political will, educator preparation, socio-economic support, and cultural negotiation to bridge the gap between vision and practice.

3.3.1 Benefits of *hunhu* in the Zimbabwean curriculum

A critical analysis of *hunhu* pedagogy reveals its transformative potential within Zimbabwean education, primarily through its commitment to humanising the teaching and learning process. Blackwood (2018:30) demonstrates that *hunhu*-informed

pedagogy goes beyond content delivery, prioritising genuine learner engagement and fostering environments in which all students are recognised and affirmed as individuals of intrinsic worth, irrespective of racial or socio-economic background.

Ngubane and Makua (2021:4) further contend that a curriculum rooted in *hunhu* enables teachers to create educational spaces where the principles of self-respect and the respect for others are foundational. The philosophy's emphasis on solidarity, compassion, cooperation, co-existence, connectedness, inclusivity, respect, dignity, sympathy, and peace provides a robust ethical and relational framework for curriculum transformation. These values are not merely aspirational but operational, guiding practice in ways that promote dignity and meaningful participation for every learner.

Ali and Shishigu (2020:3) reinforce that these *hunhu*-based principles foster a sense of belonging and self-worth, supporting the holistic development of learners. Chimbi and Jita (2022b:140) argue that *hunhu* offers a powerful complement—and, where necessary, an alternative—to dominant Western epistemologies. Rather than simply replicating foreign models, *hunhu* pedagogy foregrounds indigenous wisdom and communal values as the core of teaching and learning.

The pedagogy of *hunhu* is operationalised through five core principles: developing self-awareness and empathy; nurturing positive relationships; fostering classroom collaboration; promoting intellectual growth; and centring teaching on love, care, and the linguistic resources learners bring to the classroom (Ukpokodu, 2016:155). These principles collectively create a curriculum that is not only academically rigorous but also socially transformative, equipping learners with the capacities needed to contribute meaningfully to their communities and society at large.

3.3.1.1 Understanding of oneself and others

Recent scholarship highlights that learners' identity and sense of belonging are fundamentally shaped by social participation and interaction. UNESCO (2023:14) affirms that education in Southern Africa fosters belonging when it prioritises relationality and communal values—principles that are central to African philosophies such as *hunhu*. In this context, identity formation is not conceived as an isolated

process, but rather as one that is co-constructed through meaningful engagement with others.

The pedagogy of *hunhu* thus places collective learning at its core, with active participation and shared experiences viewed as essential for both personal and communal development (Ajayi, 2025:170). This approach encourages learners to develop self-awareness through relationships, thereby deepening their understanding of both individual and collective identity.

From a systems perspective, Sutherland, Markauskaite and Cruickshank (2023:1090) argue that collaborative learning environments—where learners, educators, and curriculum content interact dynamically—generate emergent properties that shape the school as a holistic system. Within this framework, Africanising curricula in private secondary schools through *hunhu* is not merely a matter of content change but fundamentally depends on fostering relational engagement and collective identity amongst learners.

3.3.1.2 Fostering positive relationships

A critical element of *hunhu* pedagogy lies in establishing constructive and harmonious relationships within the educational setting. This approach is instrumental in creating learning environments marked by peace and mutual respect, where learners value one another and acknowledge their teachers as respected authority figures (Makhonza et al., 2019:13527; Chidziva, 2021:276). For effective learning to occur, it is essential that learners cultivate genuine regard and affection for each other, recognising one another as unique individuals and integral members of the human community (Ali & Shishigu, 2020:2).

Lepotho (2021:100) emphasises that the cultivation of mutual regard and affection forms a foundation for a conducive educational atmosphere, supporting learners' social and emotional development. Brás (2021:7) further notes that love within the classroom context engenders empathy, forgiveness, sharing, and a harmonious ambience, all of which are essential for effective learning. Such affectionate relationships not only facilitate the exchange of knowledge but also encourage the sharing of learning resources and the creation of supportive environments.

Within Zimbabwean private schools, the successful implementation of a *hunhu*-based curriculum depends on embedding these critical themes of brotherly affection and mutual respect into daily practice (Chidziva, 2021:276; Chimbi & Jita, 2022b:142). The pedagogy of *hunhu* underscores that respect extends beyond superficial politeness, requiring learners to interact in ways that affirm each other's inherent dignity, thus embodying the central principle: "I am because we are". Mutual respect is demonstrated through valuing and acknowledging the diverse ideas and experiences of others, even in the presence of disagreement.

Ultimately, fostering respect and harmonious relationships, core tenets of *hunhu* are indispensable for the successful Africanisation of curricula, laying the groundwork for truly transformative and inclusive educational experiences.

3.3.1.3 Fostering collaboration within the classroom

Chimbunde and Kgari-Masondo (2021a:7) identify collaboration as a foundational component of *hunhu* pedagogy, arguing that it fosters cohesion and a sense of collective morale among learners, particularly in the face of academic challenges. This approach cultivates solidarity and oneness, positioning learners not as competitors but as integral members of a cohesive community (Odari, 2020:61–62). In the ideal *hunhu* classroom, each learner is valued for their unique contribution to the group, and interdependence and interconnectedness are actively recognised (Brás, 2021:4, 7).

This collaborative ethos is contrasted with the individualism prevalent in many occidental educational settings, where learners are often encouraged to compete rather than cooperate, which can perpetuate academic disparities (Odari, 2020:64; Brás, 2021:7). By contrast, *hunhu*-inspired pedagogy is rooted in an African communal tradition that emphasises collective responsibility, resource sharing, and mutual academic support.

Ngubane and Makua (2021:9) highlight that mutual support in *hunhu* classrooms extends beyond material assistance to the active exchange of knowledge, nurturing both individual and collective intellectual development. The classroom thus becomes a dynamic site of reciprocal learning, where every learner's contribution is integral to

group success. This model is also echoed in Philippians 2:4(The Holy Bible), which underscores the value of attending to the interests of others.

Mangena (2023:115) further suggests that collaborative learning environments dismantle the barriers of individualism, creating space for the Africanisation of curricula and promoting equitable access to educational success. Without hunhu, classrooms risk becoming fragmented and individualistic, hindering both compassion and support. From a systems theory perspective, recent research by Sutherland, Markauskaite and Cruickshank (2023:1090) demonstrates that tightly integrated collaboration among school actors leads to positive emergent outcomes in learning and school improvement. Similarly, Lepotho (2021:102) has shown that collaborative learning—central to *hunhu* pedagogy—yields superior educational outcomes compared to individualistic learning models.

Ultimately, embedding collaboration as the core of *hunhu*-based pedagogy has the potential to transform classroom dynamics in Zimbabwean private secondary schools, fostering inclusion, shared purpose, and holistic learner development.

3.3.1.4 Nurturing the intellectual capacities of learners

An essential dimension of *hunhu* pedagogy is its commitment to nurturing learners' cognitive development. This pedagogical approach prioritises participatory and interactive learning, with Brás (2021:6) affirming that optimal educational outcomes are achieved when learners actively engage with one another, facilitating the exchange of ideas, perspectives, and lived experiences. Maximising participation requires meaningful interaction not only with peers but also with the learning material itself (Chidziva, 2021:276; Chimbi & Jita, 2022b:142). Through such engagement, learners are encouraged to discuss, question, debate, and share their insights, promoting deeper conceptual understanding (Ali & Shishigu, 2020:3). Recent research by Lepotho (2021:102) demonstrates that teachers play a pivotal role in fostering intellectual growth by encouraging learner dialogue and supporting inquiry-based learning. In a *hunhu*-based educational setting, these practices collectively enhance cognitive development and broaden learners' educational horizons.

3.3.1.5 Educating from a place of love

Discussions on *hunhu* are incomplete without reference to core human values such as love, kindness, sympathy, respect, and solidarity (Ngubane & Makua, 2021:9). Blackwood (2018:30) argues that education devoid of genuine love becomes a mere ideological exercise, lacking the motivational force necessary for meaningful learner engagement. While teachers may implement prescribed strategies, the absence of authentic affection for learners and the teaching process diminishes the transformative potential of education (Brás, 2021:7). The Africanisation of any curriculum, therefore, must be underpinned by pedagogical practices rooted in love.

When teachers model genuine love within the classroom, they foster an environment where learners reciprocate affection and respect—towards both the teacher and each other (Chimbi & Jita, 2022b:142). In contrast, a lack of affection or insensitivity, even when paired with effective strategies, can undermine the ethos of *hunhu*, diminish learners' sense of empowerment, and erode respect for teachers (Makhonza et al., 2019:15523). Effective teaching thus relies not only on curriculum and strategy, but fundamentally on a pedagogy of compassion.

Chimbunde and Kgari-Masondo (2021a:8) contend that the impact of a teacher's affection is amplified when combined with purposeful pedagogical approaches, while Nxumalo and Mncube (2019:105) warn that the absence of such compassion can render learning disengaging and irrelevant. Ngubane and Makua (2021:8) further note that teachers' demonstrations of love and care encourage reciprocal responses of respect and consideration from learners. This is reflected in equitable treatment and inclusive communication, irrespective of learners' backgrounds or capabilities. As Blackwood (2018:30) asserts, fostering self-love enables learners to extend love to the wider community, reinforcing the ethos of *hunhu* and laying a foundation for the Africanisation of the curriculum. Ultimately, educating from a place of love not only empowers learners within the classroom but also instils a lifelong ethos of compassion and solidarity.

3.4 THE IMPLICATIONS OF *HUNHU* IN EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE

A critical analysis of the implications of *hunhu* for educational practice highlights its transformative potential in revitalising African indigenous values and pedagogies within Zimbabwean and broader African contexts. Ngubane and Makua (2021:10–11) demonstrate that *hunhu* can serve as a catalyst for embedding communal values

and collaborative practices across varied educational settings. However, the dominance of exam-oriented curricula—exacerbated by resource deficits and teacher shortages—has entrenched a culture of competition among learners, often to the detriment of character development and ethical conduct (Brás, 2021:14). In this environment, the pressure to complete syllabi and prioritise academic results can sideline the cultivation of integrity, respect, and compassion (Odari, 2020:64).

Ngubane and Makua (2021:10) advocate for the integration of *hunhu* pedagogy, arguing that it not only foregrounds learner participation and collaboration but also shifts the focus away from rote learning for examinations. This approach, as supported by Sibanda and Young (2020:65), positions active participation and interaction as key to fostering personal growth and a strong sense of identity in learners.

The implication for curriculum reform is clear: there is a pressing need to reassess current assessment strategies and to institutionalise formative and collaborative approaches that reflect the communal ethos of *hunhu*. In Zimbabwe, the Progressive Teachers' Union and recent commentary by Jonathan Moyo have criticised the continued reliance on individualistic, colonial-style examinations, arguing that such credentialism values paper qualifications over genuine skill and collaborative learning (The Blast, 2025; Post on Sunday, 2025). Shifting towards team-based assessments and collaborative learning tasks would better align with the *hunhu* philosophy and support the Africanisation of the curriculum.

Risiro (2019:35) highlights further obstacles, including limited availability of teaching resources on indigenous knowledge systems and *hunhu*, as well as inadequate teacher remuneration and systemic economic challenges. These factors hinder the successful institutionalisation of *hunhu* in schools. Addressing these barriers—by providing resources, improving teacher support and remuneration, and involving teachers in curriculum design and implementation—is crucial. Teachers, as the primary interface with learners and parents, play a pivotal role in embedding *hunhu* attributes such as collaboration, respect, teamwork, and transparency within educational practice. In sum, the effective realisation of a *hunhu*-based curriculum depends on a paradigm shift: from individualistic, exam-driven

models to ones that foreground community, shared responsibility, and the holistic development of both learners and teachers.

3.4.1 Stakeholder involvement in the crafting of *hunhu*-based curriculum

Recent research indicates that the effective development and implementation of *hunhu*-based curricula in Zimbabwe have been hampered by limited stakeholder involvement. Chimbunde and Kgari-Masondo (2021a:10) found that curriculum design processes, particularly in rural, farm, and growth-point schools, often excluded the majority of educators, with policymakers opting to consult only a select group of experts. This exclusion led to a lack of ownership and responsibility among teachers during the implementation phase, undermining the foundational *hunhu* principle of inclusive participation.

Sibanda and Young (2020:65, 66) emphasise the necessity of embedding the values of *hunhu*—participation, respect, and solidarity—throughout the curriculum development process. However, top-down, power-coercive strategies adopted by Zimbabwean policymakers have been shown to conflict with these values, as they prioritise hierarchical decision-making over collaborative, community-based approaches (Brás, 2021:14). Such strategies not only diminish the sense of collective responsibility but also violate core *hunhu* tenets, including teamwork and cooperation.

Given that schools function both as communities and as subsystems within the broader educational system, it is imperative that broader community participation is actively solicited and valued in curriculum Africanisation efforts (Odari, 2020:62-63). Chimbunde and Kgari-Masondo (2021a:13) further report that teachers have identified deficiencies in positive relationships during implementation, revealing a lack of concern, respect, and collaboration—values central to the *hunhu* philosophy.

Recent findings by Chimbi and Jita (2022a:444-446) further highlight that challenges such as insufficient knowledge, limited motivation, and persistent misconceptions about *hunhu* have hindered the successful implementation of the curriculum reform in Zimbabwe's schools from 2015 to 2022. This underscores the need for genuine, inclusive stakeholder engagement in the Africanisation of private secondary schools'

curricula, not only to address knowledge gaps but also to foster a sense of shared purpose and ownership among all educational actors.

3.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter critically examined the definition, origins, and core characteristics of *hunhu*, articulating its philosophical underpinnings and its pivotal role in the decolonisation and transformation of African education. The analysis extended to the application of *hunhu* within Zimbabwe's educational reform, highlighting both the integrative benefits and practical challenges associated with embedding this philosophy in curricula.

Key implications for practice were explored, including the necessity of overhauling assessment strategies to move beyond individualistic, exam-driven models towards collaborative approaches aligned with *hunhu* values. The chapter underscored the importance of providing educators with resources that embody the tenets of *hunhu*, thereby supporting the successful Africanisation of the curriculum. Furthermore, it was established that meaningful stakeholder participation—encompassing teachers, communities, and policymakers—is essential for the effective development and implementation of an Africanised curriculum. Overall, the chapter demonstrated that the transformative potential of *hunhu* lies not only in its philosophical ideals but in its capacity to reshape educational practices, assessment, and stakeholder engagement. The next chapter situates these insights within the broader literature, drawing on international, African, and Zimbabwean perspectives to contextualise and deepen the analysis.

CHAPTER 4

LITERATURE REVIEW

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 3 provided a philosophical foundation for understanding *hunhu* and its significance in Zimbabwean education. Building on this, the current chapter adopts a more critical and synthetic approach to the literature, interrogating how African cultural values—particularly those embodied in *hunhu*—can be meaningfully incorporated into the curriculum of private secondary schools.

Rather than simply summarising existing research, this review draws on Sajeevanie's (2021:2713) assertion that a robust literature review requires selective engagement with contemporary scholarship, enabling the refinement, justification, and synthesis of the research focus. Snyder (2022:335) further argues that a literature review should not only clarify the research topic and variables but also illuminate the study's conceptual and methodological trajectory. As highlighted by the University of Edinburgh (2021:1), the task extends beyond information gathering; it requires constructing a coherent argument that demonstrates the research's necessity and originality.

Accordingly, this chapter interrogates the international, African, and Zimbabwean literature, not simply to identify gaps but to critically evaluate competing perspectives, synthesise insights, and develop a compelling rationale for the Africanisation of private secondary school curricula through *hunhu*. The analysis is structured to address the foundational questions of who, when, what, which, and why, framing the

case for curriculum transformation and establishing clear grounds for the research undertaken.

4.2 STAKEHOLDERS IN AFRICANISING THE CURRICULUM OF PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS THROUGH *HUNHU*

The process of Africanising the curriculum through *hunhu* is inherently complex, requiring authentic collaboration and negotiation among diverse stakeholders at international, continental, and local levels. At the global level, decolonisation initiatives often emphasise inclusivity and cultural pluralism, but translating these ideals into practice requires adapting to local realities and priorities—revealing tensions between universal discourse and context-specific needs (Muhr, 2026:4).

In the African context, elders, community leaders, educators, and cultural custodians are not mere carriers of tradition but active agents in determining which cultural values are preserved, adapted, or contested in educational spaces. Their involvement is critical, yet the process is often complicated by generational divides, competing interests, and the enduring influence of colonial epistemologies (Mokapela & Nortje, 2025:8).

In Zimbabwe, efforts to integrate *hunhu* into private secondary school curricula have involved teachers, policymakers, parents, and cultural leaders. However, empirical studies reveal that participation is often uneven, with some key actors—especially teachers and local community representatives—marginalised in decision-making processes. This lack of inclusivity undermines both the legitimacy and efficacy of curriculum Africanisation (Chimbunde, Mawere & Moyo, 2025:112). Moreover, stakeholder disharmony has been identified as a major contributor to the failure of previous syllabus reforms in Zimbabwe, highlighting the risks of fragmented engagement and power struggles (Sengai & Mokhele-Makgalwa, 2025:7).

For *hunhu*-based curriculum reform to succeed, it must move beyond top-down mandates and superficial inclusion of indigenous content. Instead, it requires sustained dialogue, equitable power-sharing, and the deliberate cultivation of shared ownership among all stakeholders. This entails designing context-sensitive strategies that recognise the local landscape, respect community knowledge, and foster genuine participation in curriculum transformation.

4.2.1 International perspective

The enduring legacy of colonialism is not confined to formerly colonised nations; it permeates global educational structures, underscoring the critical need for curriculum decolonisation far beyond Africa's borders. Decolonisation, when framed as a strategic, international lens, allows for critical interrogation of how educational systems globally can dismantle inherited colonial knowledge hierarchies and foster more inclusive and culturally responsive curricula (Wimpenny et al., 2022:2491; Muhr, 2026:4). While "Africanisation" specifically denotes the integration of African knowledge systems, the broader concept of decolonisation enables culturally diverse nations to prioritise the preservation and authentic inclusion of their own knowledge traditions. At the institutional level, educational professionals are increasingly called to prioritise inclusiveness, diversity, and global citizenship (Wimpenny et al., 2022:2491). Drawing on comparative studies in Belgium, the Netherlands, and the UK, Wimpenny et al. (2022:2491) concur that decolonisation involves "removing the centre," deconstructing dominant epistemologies, and critically engaging with knowledge to enable renewed understandings of history, culture, and language. This process requires addressing both overt (formal curriculum) and covert (institutional values and epistemes) aspects of education, ensuring the acknowledgement and celebration of cultural diversity (Muhr, 2026:7). Decolonising the curriculum thus offers an opportunity to foster global inclusivity by integrating diverse knowledge systems such as the African philosophy of hunhu—alongside traditionally dominant Western perspectives. This pluralistic approach not only enriches the educational experience but also cultivates respect for the richness of global worldviews (Sapto et al., 2022:39). Recent scholarship emphasises that decolonisation should be viewed as an ongoing process of self-reflection and critique, rather than a one-off event or structural adjustment (Wimpenny et al., 2022:2502; Shahjahan et al., 2022:7). The process demands critical dialogue among teachers, policymakers, and communities, centring on the inclusion of historically marginalised knowledge and perspectives (Charles, 2019:1). Such collaborative engagement echoes Freire's (1970:54, 81) concept of "liberating education," which calls for the empowerment of learners and parents as active agents challenging oppressive structures. Movements such as "Rhodes Must Fall," which began in South Africa and extended to Oxford, epitomise the growing international recognition of the need to remove colonial influences from

educational practices (Pimblott, 2020:210). International organisations such as UNESCO (2016:2) have called for the global promotion of inclusive, culturally relevant curricula, while national governments are tasked with analysing and dismantling colonial narratives within education policy (Sapto et al., 2022:39; Shahjahan et al., 2022:7).Ultimately, successful decolonisation—internationally and in Africa—depends on partnerships with indigenous knowledge holders and active engagement with local communities, ensuring that curricula reflect diverse real-life experiences, historical backgrounds, and cultural values such as hunhu.

4.2.2 African perspective

The historical legacy of colonisation across Africa continues to shape contemporary educational debates, making the decolonisation of the knowledge curriculum a pressing concern. Etieyibo (2021:75), in a study focused on South Africa, highlights that the rationale for decolonising Africa's curriculum is firmly rooted in the enduring impacts of colonialism and the necessity of reclaiming indigenous epistemologies. This process is not merely about knowledge replacement but about challenging entrenched structures of privilege and dominance within traditional curricula, as argued by Hlatshwayo and Shawa (2020:27). By fostering epistemic diversity, decolonisation can disrupt established hierarchies, cultivate creativity, and promote a stronger sense of connection among learners, thereby countering the alienation often engendered by Eurocentric education.

The persistence of neo-colonial influences, even in nations such as Ethiopia and Liberia that were never formally colonised, demonstrates the subtle but pervasive impact of foreign paradigms on language, education, and governance (Ali & Shishigu, 2020:1). This underscores the role of African elders and leaders as custodians of indigenous wisdom—tasked not only with preserving cultural heritage but also with generating new knowledge to inform and transform school curricula. Their active participation is central to genuine curriculum reform and community engagement.

Recent empirical work by Agbaje (2023b:148), examining higher education reform across South Africa, Nigeria, Tanzania, and Mauritius, reveals that successful curriculum transformation is inherently collaborative and requires the active involvement of a broad range of stakeholders. Importantly, the promotion of

indigenous knowledge systems is identified as essential for addressing the continent's specific developmental needs. Introducing an African perspective into private secondary school curricula through *hunhu* is thus a complex but potentially transformative endeavour.

Further, research into private school curriculum quality in other contexts, such as Vietnam, suggests that the autonomy of private schools offers both opportunities and challenges for Africanisation. As noted by Hoang et al. (2020:464), school boards, administrators, and teachers must take responsibility for implementing culturally relevant curricula, drawing on insights both from within their communities and from broader African intellectual traditions. The implication is that the integration of *hunhu* requires intentional, context-sensitive strategies and the mobilisation of diverse internal and external resources.

4.2.3 Zimbabwean perspective

Recent scholarship underscores Zimbabwe's ongoing efforts to re-align its education system with local cultural values, particularly through the Africanisation of curricula using *hunhu* as a guiding philosophy (Sibanda & Young, 2020:165; Mlambo, Chikondo & Maririmba, 2022:112). The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE, 2020:1, 4) has been central in championing curricular reforms that seek to embed *hunhu* at every level of schooling, aiming to move beyond a colonial legacy and foster a stronger sense of national and cultural identity.

Bhurekeni (2020:102) and Lindsay (2020:449) argue that transformative reform must extend beyond discarding imperial values, to actively incorporating knowledge, skills, and attitudes rooted in Zimbabwean traditions and context. This perspective is echoed in more recent policy analysis by Mlambo et al. (2022:120), who note that curriculum review processes must foreground not only knowledge transmission but also the cultivation of values and competencies that are relevant to modern Zimbabwean society.

A critical challenge remains the implementation gap: while government policy (MoPSE, 2015:5) sets out ambitious goals for stakeholder participation—including teachers, learners, parents, and community leaders—empirical studies reveal that the actual engagement of these groups is often uneven and sometimes tokenistic

(Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021b:35; Mudehwe & Chikunda, 2023:51). Teachers lived experiences and voices, in particular, are frequently underrepresented in both the design and roll-out of Africanised curricula, despite robust evidence that their involvement is essential for meaningful reform (Bhurekeni, 2020:105; Chikowore & Mutekwe, 2021:23).

In addition, researchers such as Mkabela (2019:92) and Mudehwe and Chikunda (2023:54) emphasise the need for ongoing professional development and support for educators, as well as rigorous research to ensure the curriculum remains responsive to evolving local realities. There is also growing recognition of the role youth advocacy groups and learner representatives can play in making curriculum reform more inclusive and dynamic (Meda, 2020:93; Chikowore & Mutekwe, 2021:27).

Furthermore, comparative perspectives from similar education reforms in Ghana and South Africa indicate that genuine Africanisation requires not only curriculum content changes but systemic transformation in pedagogy, assessment, and school governance (Adu-Gyamfi, 2022:78; Mlambo et al., 2022:119). Neglecting to include teachers and other key stakeholders in substantive ways risks perpetuating a top-down, compliance-driven model of reform that ultimately fails to address local realities or the spirit of *hunhu* (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021b:37).

Ultimately, the success of *hunhu*-based curriculum transformation in Zimbabwe's private secondary schools depends on persistent, well-supported, and genuinely participatory processes—where the perspectives and expertise of educators, learners, cultural leaders, and local communities meaningfully inform both policy and practice.

4.3 THE PERIOD WHEN THE CURRICULUM OF PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS SHOULD BB AFRICANISED THROUGH *HUNHU*

This section explores the optimal timing for Africanising the curriculum of private secondary schools through *hunhu*, considering international, African, and Zimbabwean perspectives.

4.3.1 International perspective

Recent scholarship and policy trends affirm that decolonisation requires tackling the foundations of systemic racism embedded in political, social, cultural, and educational systems (Patel, 2023:8; Avoseh, 2025a:987). This approach moves beyond mere representation or remedial measures, calling instead for a comprehensive rethinking of the curriculum to dismantle imperialist legacies at structural levels.

Lindsay (2020:453) contends that true curriculum decolonisation means transcending the constraints of the "hidden curriculum"—the subtle perpetuation of dominant ideologies through methodological norms and conventional civic education. Instead, it necessitates the direct integration of historically marginalised perspectives, with particular attention to African and African Diaspora histories and identities. Wynter-Hoyte and Smith (2020:407) further advocate for the earliest possible introduction of such content, arguing that early exposure is vital for fostering positive identity formation among black children and for positioning African narratives as central, not peripheral, within educational experiences.

Globally, there is growing recognition of the need for such fundamental change. For example, the Canadian government, as part of ongoing reconciliation efforts, has committed to restoring indigenous heritage languages in schools (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). Nevertheless, as McIvor and Ball (2019:15) note, these programmes often remain marginalised, highlighting the gap between policy and practice. In Europe, Wimpenny et al. (2022:2492) report that higher education increasingly values competencies such as intercultural engagement and an understanding of global inequalities, leading to international commitments like the Nelson Mandela Bay Global Dialogue Declaration (2014) that foreground inclusivity and equity in education.

These trends suggest that Africanisation of curricula should not be conceived as a one-off intervention but as an ongoing, integrated process—ideally commencing from the earliest stages of formal education and continuing throughout a learner's academic journey. For the purposes of this study, however, the focus is on implementation in Form One through Form Four within Zimbabwean private

secondary schools, recognising that meaningful change requires early and sustained engagement with *hunhu*-based content and values.

4.3.2 African perspective

The challenge of Africanising the curriculum remains a central concern across the continent. Chimakonam (2019:5) identifies a persistent "curriculum problem" whereby colonial educational systems continue to suppress the creative and cultural distinctiveness of African learners, relegating them to roles of imitation rather than innovation. There is little consensus in contemporary literature regarding the precise timing or sequencing of Africanisation in private secondary school curricula through *hunhu*. However, Etieyibo (2021:79) argues that a genuinely decolonised knowledge curriculum would be grounded exclusively in African epistemologies, values, and resources—free from colonial residues. This perspective insists on embedding indigenous philosophies, beliefs, and practices systematically throughout the curriculum to ensure cultural relevance and responsiveness.

Recent evidence suggests that Africanisation should be a comprehensive, intentional, and phased process spanning the entire schooling journey, from early childhood to secondary education. Moloi, Lebelo, Akindeinde and Adesanya (2023:24) highlight that the internalisation of colonial values and notions of inferiority—particularly in South African education—remains a barrier to transformation, as these legacies are still structurally embedded and perpetuated. Their analysis, supported by Mampane, Omidire and Aluko (2018:10), reveals that apartheid-era policies purposefully dehumanised black learners, and these effects continue to undermine social and economic progress.

Moloi et al. (2023:25) further argue that decolonising the curriculum, especially in subjects like history, is essential for fostering an appreciation of indigenous knowledge systems and building a sense of national pride. Effective transformation, they contend, hinges on genuine engagement with local contexts and stakeholders, including teachers, learners, parents, and legislators.

The importance of integrating heritage languages as mediums of instruction—particularly at foundational levels—is also strongly supported. The Koech

Commission in Kenya recommended using native languages in early schooling, recognising their importance for concept formation and cultural identity (Republic of Kenya, 1999:142). However, McIvor and Ball (2019:15–16) demonstrate that, despite scholarly consensus, indigenous languages and cultural systems remain marginalised in both educational policy and practice, a problem not unique to Kenya but recurrent across postcolonial African states.

Recent research by Akala (2021:2) on education reform in Kenya underscores that vestiges of colonial curricula persist, necessitating ongoing and intentional efforts to uproot these influences and replace them with African-centred philosophies and content. Collectively, the literature implies that the Africanisation of curricula should ideally begin at the earliest level—kindergarten—and be sustained throughout formal education, but that such systemic change remains deeply contested and unevenly realised in practice.

4.3.3 Zimbabwean perspective

CIET (1999:65) and MoPSE (2015:7) have long recognised the urgent need to embed the philosophy of *hunhu* within Zimbabwe's education system as a deliberate response to the enduring influence of colonial epistemologies. Their analyses establish *hunhu* not as a mere addendum but as a foundational framework for reorienting educational aims, pedagogy, and assessment. Policy documents underscore the importance of heritage languages, advocating their use as primary media of instruction in early education—an approach supported by comparative evidence from Kenya, where native language instruction has been linked to improved conceptual understanding and learner engagement (Republic of Kenya, 1999; MoPSE, 2015:7; Mudehwe & Chikunda, 2023:52).

However, a critical examination reveals that, despite policy rhetoric, the practical incorporation of heritage languages and indigenous knowledge remains contested in Zimbabwe and other postcolonial states. The persistence of English and other colonial languages as default mediums of instruction continues to marginalise local epistemologies and perpetuate inequities in learning outcomes (Chikowore & Mutekwe, 2021:24; Mlambo, Chikondo & Maririmba, 2022:115). This gap between policy and practice illustrates a broader tension in curriculum Africanisation: while

hunhu is valorised in policy, its operationalisation requires structural, pedagogical, and attitudinal change at multiple levels.

Recent research has moved beyond description to interrogate the adequacy and impact of *hunhu* as a philosophical and practical foundation in Zimbabwean education. Dhliwayo and Jita (2023:4) review empirical studies that assess *hunhu*'s effectiveness in promoting inclusion, ethical development, and learner empowerment within both secondary and elementary contexts. Mutanga (2022:2) provides evidence that a *hunhu*-driven curriculum offers a viable path toward genuine decolonisation—yet cautions that success hinges on sustained teacher capacity-building, curriculum support, and community engagement.

Additionally, empirical findings suggest that *hunhu* is not limited to moral instruction but has broader curricular relevance. For example, Kwaira (2023:15) demonstrates that disciplines such as wood and technology, rooted in African indigenous education, are more effectively taught when guided by *hunhu* principles. Such insights underscore the importance of integrating *hunhu* across the curriculum, not just in private secondary schools but throughout the educational pipeline.

Analytically, the effective Africanisation of Zimbabwe's private secondary school curricula require balancing standardisation with local flexibility. This means setting national benchmarks that reflect *hunhu* values, while allowing individual schools to adapt pedagogy and assessment to their specific communities (Mlambo et al., 2022:120). Ultimately, curriculum transformation will be meaningful only to the extent that it is both context-sensitive and underpinned by sustained investment in teacher development, resource provision, and genuine stakeholder participation.

4.4 THE PROCESS OF AFRICANISING THE CURRICULUM OF PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS THROUGH *HUNHU*

The ensuing section discusses what should be achieved to Africanise the curriculum of private secondary schools through *hunhu* from international, African, and Zimbabwean perspectives.

4.4.1 International perspective

The Africanisation of private secondary school curricula through *hunhu* is not merely a matter of replacing content, but requires a fundamental rethinking of educational aims, pedagogy, and institutional ethos—rooted in local realities yet attuned to global demands. Recent international evidence demonstrates that decolonisation initiatives succeed when they are contextually grounded and supported by robust policy frameworks, ongoing teacher professional development, and collaborative partnerships (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2020:50; UNESCO, 2023:19).

For example, across the Global South, successful curriculum reforms have included participatory co-design processes in which local educators, community leaders, and students shape both content and pedagogical methods (UNESCO, 2023:23). In the UK, universities have begun to use curriculum mapping tools to identify and address colonial legacies, with a specific focus on diversifying perspectives and integrating local and global knowledges throughout the learning experience (Thomas & Padamsee, 2022:160). Such approaches are shown to foster critical thinking, identity affirmation, and intercultural competence among learners.

Moreover, the integration of *hunhu*-inspired values into curriculum reform is not a one-off intervention, but an ongoing, cyclical process of evaluation, adaptation, and renewal (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2020:45). This demands that educational institutions regularly review both formal curriculum content and hidden curricula—such as institutional cultures, assessment methods, and teacher-learner relationships—to ensure sustained alignment with decolonising aims.

For Zimbabwean private secondary schools, this means that Africanising the curriculum through *hunhu* requires more than policy declarations: it calls for comprehensive teacher preparation, community engagement, and mechanisms for continuous curriculum co-creation and review. Only then can schools balance global competencies with deep cultural rootedness and realise the transformative potential of *hunhu* for all learners.

4.4.1.1 Curriculum development

Recent scholarship highlights that curriculum development must be systematic, consultative, and deeply inclusive. Rather than simply revising content, effective

development processes require critical examination of existing curricula to identify and dismantle Eurocentric biases and to incorporate *hunhu*-centred knowledge and pedagogies (UNESCO, 2023:22; Thomas & Padamsee, 2022:167). Crucially, this work must be iterative and sustainable, led by education experts but engaging a broad spectrum of stakeholders—teachers, parents, administrators, community leaders, and learners—at every stage (Sibanda & Young, 2020:163; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2020:48)

4.4.1.2 The curriculum in its entirety

A genuinely Africanised curriculum values each learner's identity and experience, intentionally embedding content that supports both academic and cultural competence. Josua et al. (2022:1155) argue that high-quality curricula deliberately connect subject knowledge to learners' lived realities, supporting holistic growth. This entails designing learning environments and tasks that reflect the interconnectedness of *hunhu* values with all disciplines, as well as leveraging community contexts to ensure the curriculum transcends artificial boundaries and fosters integrated, meaningful learning (UNESCO, 2023:24).

4.4.1.3 Curriculum implementation

Implementing an Africanised curriculum introduces new expectations for every actor in the education process. Gohain (2020:2) and Josua et al. (2022:1160) both emphasise that effective implementation demands robust professional development for teachers in decolonising pedagogies and *hunhu*-based practices. This includes developing culturally relevant learning resources and ensuring teachers are equipped to model and facilitate critical, culturally rooted inquiry in their classrooms. Institutional support and ongoing mentorship are critical for sustaining momentum and fidelity in implementation (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2020:50).

4.4.1.4 Curriculum evaluation

Evaluation of an Africanised curriculum must be systematic, participatory, and continuous, moving beyond narrow academic metrics to capture the broader aims of decolonisation and *hunhu*-based education. UNESCO (2023:25) emphasises that effective curriculum evaluation should involve diverse stakeholders—teachers, learners, parents, and community leaders—ensuring assessments are culturally relevant and reflect the lived realities of learners. This participatory approach aligns

with recent research by Oduro et al. (2021:214), which demonstrates that locally grounded evaluation frameworks enhance curriculum relevance and learner identity formation in African contexts.

Mutonyi et al. (2022:193) argue that curriculum evaluation in postcolonial settings should be iterative and incorporate qualitative feedback from multiple sources, with attention to how reforms affect learners' cultural identities, agency, and sense of belonging. Recent work by Chikunda and Mudehwe (2023:57) further highlights the importance of using culturally responsive evaluation tools to capture the impact of decolonising curriculum reforms on student empowerment and engagement.

Such approaches ensure that evaluation is not an endpoint but an embedded process for continual improvement, enabling curriculum developers and educators to refine content and pedagogy in response to emerging needs. This iterative evaluation process is thus essential for realising the transformative potential of *hunhu*-driven curriculum reform and sustaining educational equity and empowerment over time.

4.4.2 African perspective

Contemporary analysis underscores that decolonising the curriculum in Africa is not merely about increasing representational diversity or inserting patriotic narratives but requires a fundamental epistemological shift that interrogates whose knowledge counts, how it is evaluated, and how it is taught (Lindsay, 2020:453). Moloi et al. (2023:33) stress the multidimensional and ongoing nature of this process, arguing that genuine Africanisation involves sustained introspection, curricular renewal, and pedagogical transformation rooted in context.

Recent research into the Africanisation of history curricula in South Africa highlights the importance of deepening not only content knowledge, but also teachers' pedagogical expertise and critical historical consciousness (Moloi et al., 2023:32; UNESCO, 2023:28). Professional development emerges as central, as teachers' mastery of African historiography and philosophy directly shapes learners' critical engagement and capacity for responsible citizenship (Agbaje, 2023b:1). This process is inherently iterative: Africanisation is not a finished state but a journey, one

in which uncertainty is an expected—and even productive—part of engaging with Africa's complex historical legacies.

However, several critical challenges persist. Ezeanya-Esiobu (2019:2) and Avoseh (2025b:985) both point to a persistent disconnect between formal education systems and Africa's heritage languages, local knowledge, and indigenous pedagogies. Despite policy rhetoric, curricula across the continent frequently overlook community histories and the lived realities of learners (Wodon & Consentino, 2019:31). Addressing this gap requires participatory, context-sensitive reform that engages indigenous experts, community leaders, and other stakeholders as co-creators of both content and method.

Moreover, the sustainable implementation of an Africanised curriculum depends on the provision of adequate resources—textbooks, teaching materials, technology, and ongoing teacher support that are contextually relevant and accessible. Without these infrastructural investments, even the most well-conceived reforms risk remaining symbolic rather than transformative.

4.4.3 Zimbabwean perspective

Zimbabwe's commitment to Africanising its education system is most clearly embodied in the Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE, 2015), which positions *hunhu* as the guiding ideology for curriculum transformation. The framework asserts that education should produce learners who embody interconnectedness, humaneness, and communal spirit, aligning with Pan-Africanist principles even in the context of globalisation (MoPSE, 2015: iv, 13). A critical feature of the policy is its emphasis on heritage languages and the use of learners' native languages as media of instruction, particularly in the early years. While this aligns with global best practice for cultural and linguistic inclusion, the actual implementation has remained challenging, with heritage languages often remaining marginalised in practice (Muyambo & Ndamba, 2021:86; Mlambo, Chikondo & Maririmba, 2022:120).

Chimbi and Jita (2022a:440) point out that the absence of clear implementation guidelines from MoPSE has left the actual degree of Africanisation uncertain and

difficult to evaluate. Recent research also highlights that the effectiveness of such curriculum reforms depends on ongoing critical review, robust policy support, and the availability of resources for teacher training, materials, and community engagement (Mudehwe & Chikunda, 2023:58; Sibanda, Chitata & Chigiti, 2021:22).

4.4.3.1 Context and need

Chimbunde and Kgari-Masondo (2021b:37) stress the importance of critically evaluating the educational system's context and needs to determine whether the curriculum adequately reflects and supports the community's cultural beliefs and experiences. Where a substantial disconnect exists, targeted Africanisation becomes not just appropriate but essential for relevance and inclusivity. The 1998 Commission of Enquiry into Education and Training (CIET), as discussed by Chimbunde and Kgari-Masondo (2021b:37) and Dhliwayo and Jita (2023:3), revealed that Zimbabwe's education system was overly academic, neglecting national values and lacking a coherent guiding philosophy (MoPSE, 2015:13).

Recent studies highlight that these gaps are not only historical but persist in current curricular practice, calling for a comprehensive restructuring that foregrounds cultural identity, national values, and the holistic development of the learner (Mlambo, Chikondo & Maririmba, 2022:114). Chimbunde and Kgari-Masondo (2021b:38) further argue that successful Africanisation depends on proactive public awareness campaigns that communicate the rationale, benefits, and long-term societal value of curriculum reform. Such campaigns also provide a forum to address misconceptions, build consensus, and foster community buy-in.

Securing policy backing and material support from educational authorities and government is equally critical. As recent empirical research shows, adequate resources for teacher training, curriculum materials, and community engagement are prerequisites for the successful implementation of an Africanised curriculum (Sibanda, Chitata & Chigiti, 2021:24; Mudehwe & Chikunda, 2023:53). Without coordinated institutional support, even well-designed reforms risk remaining symbolic rather than transformative.

4.4.3.2 Consultation and collaboration

Deep and sustained consultation with all stakeholder groups is increasingly recognised as a cornerstone of successful curriculum Africanisation. Recent comparative research highlights that stakeholder-driven curriculum transformation—where teachers, scholars, community leaders, parents, and learners all actively participate—ensures a plurality of perspectives and prevents the pitfalls of oversimplifying or essentialising African identity (Maphosa & Nomlomo, 2020:6). This inclusive approach enriches the curriculum, making it genuinely responsive to the continent's cultural complexity and local realities.

Community engagement is most effective when schools forge ongoing partnerships with cultural institutions, traditional leaders, and elders. These actors serve not only as conduits to cultural heritage, but also as co-educators, facilitating experiential learning through school-community projects, storytelling, and cultural immersion activities (Dube, 2020:18). Such engagement fosters a curriculum that is not only relevant but also transformative, rooting learning experiences in lived local knowledge.

Recent scholarship further underlines the need for continuous teacher professional development in culturally sustaining pedagogy and for the collective creation of teaching materials that reflect emerging local expertise (Charema & Shumba, 2021:43). Supporting teachers in this way is essential for the sustainability and effectiveness of the process and for ensuring that *hunhu*-based curriculum reform can evolve alongside changing community needs, technologies, and aspirations.

Ultimately, the Zimbabwean experience illustrates that Africanising the curriculum through *hunhu* is a participatory and context-sensitive process, demanding genuine engagement, regular resource investment, and a readiness to adapt strategies as communities themselves grow and change.

4.4.3.3 Professional development

A pivotal element in Africanising the curriculum through *hunhu* is the continuous professional development of teachers. Rather than treating cultural integration as an add-on, recent research emphasises the need for immersive, ongoing training that builds deep understanding and genuine respect for cultural frameworks like *hunhu* (Moloi et al., 2023:32). Wimpenny et al. (2021:12) highlight that only when teachers internalise and appreciate the values and goals of curriculum transformation can they effectively serve as cultural brokers, authentically transmitting these perspectives to learners. This includes not only workshops, but also mentorship, collaborative lesson design with local knowledge holders, and reflective practice in culturally sustaining pedagogy (Mlambo, Chikondo & Maririmba, 2022:121). Sustained investment in teacher capacity-building is therefore essential to realising enduring curricular change.

4.4.3.4 Curriculum review and continuous evaluation

Integrating African perspectives, values, and knowledge into the curriculum cannot be a one-off event. Meda (2020:100–101) recommends a two-pronged approach: first, a comprehensive audit and revision of current curricular materials to include ***hunhu*** and other African-centred content; second, an ongoing cycle of assessment and evaluation to measure the curriculum's impact on learning outcomes, cultural understanding, and educational equity. Hoang et al. (2020:465) and Chikunda & Mudehwe (2023:55) both underscore the necessity of building robust, context-specific evaluation frameworks that allow for iterative refinement. Such evaluation should be participatory, involving teachers, learners, and community members, and should attend to both academic and socio-cultural outcomes. This ensures the Africanisation process remains dynamic, evidence-based, and responsive to evolving educational and cultural priorities.

4.5 IDENTIFIED ASPECTS OF PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS' CURRICULUM AFRICANISED THROUGH *HUNHU*

The following section discusses aspects of the curriculum of private secondary schools that should be Africanised through *hunhu* from international, African, and Zimbabwean perspectives.

4.5.1 International perspective

Africa's diverse cultural, linguistic, and historical landscape demands that any meaningful curriculum Africanisation through *hunhu* goes beyond mere content addition; it must critically engage with global and local knowledge systems to foster learners' rootedness and global readiness (Moosavi, 2020:334; Adeate & Sewchurran, 2023:4). Ngubane and Makua (2019:1–2) argue that acknowledging this diversity is foundational to both decolonising and internationalising the curriculum, ensuring learners develop a nuanced appreciation of Africa's role in world history and contemporary society.

Recent scholarship highlights that Africanisation should not be construed as the erasure of important global perspectives, but as a rebalancing that allows for cross-cultural comparison, critical reflection, and the cultivation of global competencies alongside strong cultural identity (Wimpenny et al., 2022:2491). Moosavi (2020:334) notes that ongoing, participatory curriculum processes—drawing from multiple stakeholders and adapting to shifting contexts—are essential for maintaining relevance and impact.

Wynter-Hoyte and Smith (2020:408) emphasise the value of integrating literature, arts, and oral traditions from a variety of African cultures into core subjects. Promoting African languages alongside colonial languages is also recognised as a critical strategy for cultural preservation and empowerment (Adeate & Sewchurran, 2023:6).

Additionally, the internationalisation of Africanised curricula requires a dual focus: embedding *hunhu* values and African historical contributions while preparing learners for active participation in global citizenship. This can be achieved through dedicated *hunhu* courses—covering ethics, leadership, conflict resolution, and traditional practices—as well as through partnerships and exchange programmes that foster international collaboration and cross-cultural understanding (Adeate & Sewchurran, 2023:7). Such initiatives ensure that learners are grounded in their own heritage while acquiring the skills necessary for engagement in an interconnected world.

4.5.2 African perspective

Current research on decolonising the African curriculum, particularly in history education, underscores the necessity of raising teacher training standards—not only in subject content but also in critical pedagogy and curriculum design. Moloi et al. (2023:32) contend that equipping teachers with advanced knowledge and analytical skills is essential for integrating *hunhu* and related African philosophies meaningfully into classroom practice. This positioning of teachers as transformative agents is crucial for moving beyond superficial content changes and towards a genuinely decolonised curriculum.

Recent studies highlight the need for a fundamental reassessment of the epistemological and methodological approaches used in teaching African history. Mvenene (2025:174) argues that a deep understanding of African pedagogical traditions and historical knowledge empowers learners to critically engage with their own histories, fostering a sense of identity that is rooted in African perspectives rather than Eurocentric narratives. This may require a complete overhaul of curriculum structures and teaching strategies, especially when addressing topics like apartheid and colonialism (Ridhoi, Subekti & Navarro, 2023:25; Moloi et al., 2023:33).

Swain (2019:2) demonstrates that learners themselves are advocating for broader, more inclusive reading lists and for pedagogical approaches that challenge the limitations of conventional, Eurocentric history instruction. This student-driven demand for a more critical and inclusive curriculum extends to calls for reforming assessment practices and moving beyond textbook-centred learning, aiming instead for a curriculum that genuinely reflects the diversity and complexity of African experience.

A further implication is the centrality of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) and the need for these to be integrated with, rather than subsumed by, modernisation efforts. Agbaje (2023a:142) maintains that IKS must be absolute and not diluted by Western influence, while Etiyebo (2021:79) highlights the importance of codifying African epistemology and values as a foundation for contemporary curriculum development. This requires not only philosophical commitment but the practical provision of up-to-date textbooks, teaching materials, and technology that embed *hunhu* and African perspectives throughout the curriculum (Tibategeza & du Plessis, 2021:88).

Ultimately, the Africanisation of private school curricula through *hunhu* hinges on robust teacher preparation, systemic revision of curricular resources, and a sustained commitment to reflecting Africa's intellectual heritage in both content and pedagogy.

4.5.2.1 Social and political, economic, and environmental context

Recent scholarship emphasises that Africanising the curriculum through *hunhu* requires a holistic approach that addresses not only cultural content, but also the broader social, political, economic, and environmental realities facing the continent. Josua et al. (2022:1165) recommend that an Africanised curriculum must directly engage with contemporary issues such as governance, human rights, gender equality, and social justice. Integrating these themes helps to prepare learners for responsible citizenship and fosters critical thinking skills essential for meaningful civic participation (Josua et al., 2022:1167).

In addition, effective curriculum reform should bridge traditional and modern African political systems, empowering learners to navigate complex socio-political landscapes and make informed decisions. Recent research also stresses the importance of embedding economic literacy that reflects African contexts; this involves not only understanding local and continental economic challenges but also fostering entrepreneurial skills and a commitment to sustainable development (Oketch, 2022:155).

The environmental dimension is equally critical. Africanised curricula need to foreground region-specific issues such as climate change adaptation, wildlife conservation, and responsible resource management. By embedding these environmental challenges within the curriculum, learners are encouraged to develop a sense of stewardship and accountability towards their communities and the continent at large (Okoth & Ndalilo, 2020:65).

Through this multidimensional approach, the *hunhu*-driven curriculum cultivates learners who are not just academically prepared, but also socially conscious, economically skilled, and environmentally responsible—attributes vital for Africa's present and future.

4.5.2.2 African philosophical and ethical perspectives

Integrating African philosophical traditions and ethical principles into the curriculum is increasingly recognised as essential for nurturing critical thinking, moral reasoning, and cultural identity among learners. Fomunyam (2020:27, 28) argues that exposure to indigenous philosophies not only bolsters moral development but also challenges learners to engage with knowledge systems that have been historically marginalised. The incorporation of African perspectives motivates respect for local wisdom and positions learners to interrogate dominant narratives in fields such as science and mathematics.

Recent scholarship stresses that Africanising the curriculum should go beyond cultural studies; it should actively promote research and innovation in STEM fields, ensuring that science, technology, engineering, and mathematics programmes are relevant to African realities and challenges—ranging from healthcare to infrastructure and environmental sustainability (Mlambo, Chikondo & Maririmba, 2022:119). By embedding *hunhu* principles into subjects across the academic spectrum, the curriculum fosters interdisciplinary understanding and encourages learners to connect their heritage to contemporary problem-solving.

Meda (2020:90) highlights that such integration supports holistic education by connecting learners' cultural backgrounds to academic inquiry, thereby deepening both engagement and appreciation for African intellectual heritage. Kamanzi and Banda (2021:104) further note that weaving indigenous ethical frameworks into curriculum design not only enriches subject content but also empowers learners to become agents of social change within their communities.

Ultimately, the deliberate infusion of African philosophical and ethical perspectives equips learners with the critical, innovative, and ethical capacities necessary for both local and global citizenship in the 21st century.

4.5.3 Zimbabwean perspective

Mazambani and Tapfumaneyi (2024:240) affirm that Zimbabwe's curriculum reform drive aims to achieve greater relevance, but persistent challenges remain regarding standardisation versus contextual adaptation (Chimbi & Jita, 2022a:141). This

balancing act is particularly critical in private schools, where the need for curriculum consistency must be weighed against local community realities and expectations.

4.5.3.1 Teacher training and curriculum development

Robust and context-sensitive teacher training is fundamental for the successful Africanisation of curricula through *hunhu*. Chimbunde and Kgari-Masondo (2021a:7) and Risiro (2019:35) underscore that equipping teachers with both content mastery and cultural competence is essential for translating philosophical ideals into classroom practice. Mutanga (2022:12) further notes that teacher training must encompass not only subject expertise but also the ability to meaningfully integrate *hunhu* across the curriculum.

Recent literature also emphasises involving African scholars and local experts in curriculum development to ensure authenticity (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021a:7; Ridhoi, 2023a:26). Their participation mitigates the risk of misrepresentation and ensures that the curriculum resonates with local realities and celebrates Africa's intellectual heritage. Collaboration between teachers and experts, as well as sustained professional development, has been identified as a catalyst for curriculum innovation and pedagogical transformation (Maphosa & Nomlomo, 2020:13).

Moreover, Mazambani and Tapfumaneyi (2024:244) point to the necessity of ongoing mentorship, peer learning, and reflective practice to support teachers as they adopt new methods and materials. Kadenyi and Kamunde (2021:77) highlight that integrating *hunhu* values requires not just technical skill but a shift in teacher identity—from transmitters of knowledge to facilitators of culturally rooted, learner-centred inquiry. By weaving *hunhu* principles and perspectives into educational practice and supporting teachers with continuous, context-aware training, Zimbabwean private secondary schools can realise a curriculum that is both academically rigorous and culturally meaningful.

4.5.3.2 Assessment and evaluation

Assessment and evaluation are pivotal for realising the transformative aims of an Africanised curriculum. While traditional standardised testing remains prevalent, it

often fails to capture the holistic, culturally embedded learning outcomes central to *hunhu*-inspired education (Sibanda & Young, 2020:65; Ngubane & Makua, 2021:10). Both Sibanda and Young (2020:65) and Ngubane and Makua (2021:10) emphasise that assessment should not only measure academic achievement but should also promote learners' self-understanding, interpersonal skills, and cultural identity—core goals of an Africanised approach.

To this end, recent scholarship advocates adopting diversified assessment methods aligned with African values and pedagogical goals. Project-based learning, collaborative group work, and authentic problem-solving activities are highlighted as effective means to gauge learners' capacity to apply knowledge in context and to foster critical, reflective thinking (Chikunda & Mudehwe, 2023:59). These methods provide richer, more comprehensive insights into student learning and development than standardised tests alone.

Furthermore, participatory assessment practices—where teachers, peers, and even community members contribute to the evaluation process—can strengthen the relevance and responsiveness of feedback, helping learners to see the practical value of their education (Tibategeza & du Plessis, 2021:95). Such culturally responsive assessment approaches are essential for ensuring that the curriculum's Africanisation is not merely symbolic but is experienced by learners as empowering and meaningful.

Ultimately, aligning assessment with the values and aims of *hunhu*-based curricula ensures that all learners benefit from an education that is comprehensive, culturally relevant, and genuinely transformative.

4.5.3.3 Community involvement

Africanisation of the curricula of private secondary schools ensures that educational content and methods are genuinely responsive to the needs and aspirations of African communities through sustained engagement with local stakeholders, parents, and community members (Odari, 2020:62–63; Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021b:38). Such participation upholds *hunhu* principles, strengthening social cohesion and rooting learning in lived cultural realities.

Chimbi and Jita (2022b:140) show that *hunhu* offers not just content but transformative pedagogical alternatives to dominant Western epistemologies, supporting more holistic and relational approaches to learning. However, a genuinely Africanised curriculum does not mean rejecting global knowledge. Instead, it requires creating a balanced and inclusive system that integrates both local and international perspectives, thereby equipping learners to thrive in a globalised world (Adeate & Sewchurran, 2023:9).

Recent research further stresses that effective curriculum reform must be collaborative and ongoing, shaped by iterative feedback from diverse voices—including teachers, learners, cultural leaders, and external experts (Maphosa & Nomlomo, 2020:17). This pluralistic approach not only sustains relevance in changing circumstances but also models the very democratic and participatory values at the heart of *hunhu* philosophy.

Ultimately, Africanisation aims to produce learners who are culturally grounded, globally competent, and prepared to contribute meaningfully to both local communities and the broader world.

4.6 THE REASONS FOR AFRICANISING THE PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS' CURRICULUM THROUGH *HUNHU*

The following section discusses why the curriculum of private secondary schools should be Africanised through *hunhu* from international, African, and Zimbabwean perspectives.

4.6.1 International perspective

The Africanisation of the curriculum challenges longstanding academic paradigms that have historically marginalised indigenous theorists, scientists, and knowledge systems. Its purpose is not merely to supplement the curriculum with African content, but to fundamentally establish parity between colonial and indigenous epistemologies, research traditions, and worldviews (McGregor & Park, 2019:333; Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021a:5). Decolonial scholarship argues that existing curricular frameworks shaped by the "colonial matrix of power" offer limited and often patriarchal or exclusionary perspectives on Africa and the world (Teasley & Butler, 2020:188; Zembylas, 2020:627).

Agbaje (2023a:145) maintains that true Africanisation requires infusing the ethos, values, and lived experiences of African peoples into the curriculum. This process re-centres historically marginalised perspectives, allowing learners to interpret and express their realities through their own cultural lenses. In the current era of globalisation, such curricular transformation is not insular; it is a necessary foundation for cultural diversity, tolerance, and empathy, qualities essential for responsible global citizenship.

The philosophy of *hunhu* serves as a crucial ethical framework in this process, emphasising compassion, respect, and social responsibility (Wimpenny et al., 2022:2492). These values transcend local contexts and foster the intercultural capabilities required for meaningful engagement in an interconnected world. Integrating *hunhu* principles supports the development of ethical leaders who can connect across cultures, adapt to global challenges, and contribute positively to international communities (Chimbi & Jita, 2022b:140; Walton, 2021:13).

In sum, Africanising the curriculum through *hunhu* in private secondary schools not only redresses historical exclusions, but also equips learners with the intercultural awareness and ethical grounding vital for 21st-century global citizenship.

4.6.2 African perspective

Africanisation of the curriculum directly challenges the traditional, Eurocentric conception of excellence, which has historically privileged Western achievements while marginalising African contributions (Aful-Broni, Anamuah-Mensah, Raheem & Dei, 2020:5, 18). By intentionally integrating African knowledge systems and epistemologies, Africanised education expands the boundaries of what counts as academic distinction, fostering a more inclusive and representative understanding of human accomplishment. As Aful-Broni et al. (2020:12) note, this shift does not compromise standards; rather, it contextualises knowledge, empowering African teachers to develop ownership and pride in their heritage while engaging with the global academic community.

This reconnection with African identity is essential, as many curricula across the continent have long been shaped by colonial legacies that neglect or dismiss indigenous values and knowledge. The integration of *hunhu* offers learners an

opportunity to reconnect with their roots, promoting cultural pride and a sense of belonging.

Moloi et al. (2023:24) argue that Africanised curricula are uniquely positioned to address the contemporary challenges facing the continent—such as poverty, disease, economic crises, and political instability—by equipping learners with knowledge and skills grounded in local realities. Recent research also highlights that embedding African philosophies like *hunhu* can promote Pan-Africanism and solidarity, fostering cross-border collaboration and shared identity among African nations (Ngubane & Makua, 2022:2; Ahadzie & Osei, 2023:101).

Nyoni and Mhaka (2021:52) add that the process of decolonisation and Africanisation is not about exclusion, but about epistemic justice—ensuring that indigenous African paradigms are placed at the centre of the curriculum, with colonial legacies critically examined and, where necessary, minimised. When this epistemic rebalancing occurs, curricula become not only more relevant but also more empowering for African learners and communities.

In sum, the Africanisation of private secondary school curricula through *hunhu* is a vital step toward epistemic justice, cultural renewal, and the preparation of learners to meet Africa's challenges with confidence and creativity.

4.6.3 Zimbabwean perspective

Western culture has long been associated with capitalist ideology, a legacy institutionalised in Zimbabwe during colonial rule (Dolan, 2023:1). In contrast, *hunhu* philosophy introduces a profound tension with capitalist models: where capitalism valorises individual achievement and competition, *hunhu* prioritises intrinsic humanism, community welfare, and equitable relationships (Dhliwayo & Jita, 2023:2). This humanism is not merely symbolic but informs a broader ethic of collective responsibility, where individual freedoms are balanced by communal obligations.

Hunhu also foregrounds equity over pure equality (Ngubane & Makua, 2021:4; Mutanga, 2022:8), framing societal advancement as a corporate endeavour in which the individual and the collective are deeply intertwined. In this paradigm, personal success is judged by its contribution to broader social well-being, a perspective that stands in marked contrast to the pursuit of individual profit and resource competition

characteristic of capitalist systems. As Dhliwayo & Jita (2023:3) note, Africanisation advocates for collaboration over competition, valuing resource sharing and community empowerment as foundations for growth.

These philosophical commitments have urgent economic relevance. The World Bank (2020:14) documents Zimbabwe's ongoing economic challenges, underscoring the need for curricula that foreground sustainable development, entrepreneurship, and community resilience—priorities that *hunhu* can help articulate and operationalise. Recent research highlights that embedding *hunhu* in private school curricula is key not only for cultural transmission, but for equipping future generations with the values and knowledge required for Zimbabwe's social and economic renewal (Mlambo, Chikondo & Maririmba, 2022:122).

Furthermore, *hunhu* offers a pathway for reconciliation and conflict resolution. Zimbabwe's history of social and political unrest has made national healing and unity an imperative. By integrating *hunhu*'s principles of forgiveness, dialogue, and restorative justice, an Africanised curriculum can foster social cohesion, strengthen national identity, and promote inclusive citizenship (Brás, 2021:8; Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021a:6; Mangena, 2023:111; Waghid & Hungwe, 2023:223; Sibanda, Chitata & Chigiti, 2021:28).

In sum, Africanising the curriculum through *hunhu* is not just about cultural preservation; it is a strategic response to Zimbabwe's modern challenges, preparing learners to become agents of social harmony, economic sustainability, and national unity.

4.7 GAPS DISCOVERED IN REVIEWED LITERATURE

Despite the growing body of work on decolonising education and the integration of indigenous value systems, several notable gaps persist in the literature:

4.7.1 Limited focus on private schooling contexts

Existing research on curriculum Africanisation has predominantly addressed public education systems. There is a significant lack of empirical studies examining how indigenous philosophies, specifically *hunhu*, are operationalised within private

secondary schools in Zimbabwe and similar contexts. This leaves a critical gap regarding the role and influence of private education in broader decolonial initiatives.

4.7.2 Insufficient exploration of implementation processes

While theoretical frameworks advocating curriculum Africanisation are well articulated, few studies provide detailed, context-specific accounts of how these frameworks are implemented in practice at the classroom or school level. There is a scarcity of research unpacking the concrete strategies, challenges, and opportunities encountered by educators and administrators during curriculum transformation processes.

4.7.3 Neglect of stakeholder perspectives

Much of the existing literature relies on policy analysis or theoretical argumentation, with relatively little empirical attention paid to the lived experiences, perceptions, and agency of key stakeholders—such as teachers, school governing bodies, and district officials—who are instrumental in enacting curricular change. This limits our understanding of both enablers and barriers at the ground level.

4.7.4 Absence of contextually grounded models

There is a paucity of studies offering adaptable, evidence-based models or frameworks (such as the HDCTF) that bridge the gap between decolonial theory and practical application in diverse African schooling environments. The lack of such models impedes the transferability of best practices across different educational settings.

4.7.5 Limited attention to participatory and inclusive approaches

The reviewed literature often underrepresents participatory methodologies that include broad stakeholder engagement in curriculum (re)design. This gap undermines the possibilities for sustainable and culturally responsive educational reform.

These identified gaps not only justify the present study but also highlight its potential contribution to the field. By focusing on private secondary schools, foregrounding stakeholder perspectives, and developing a contextually grounded and participatory framework for Africanising curricula through *hunhu*, this research addresses urgent

blind spots in current scholarship and provides practical guidance for educators, policymakers, and researchers across Africa and similar contexts.

4.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter critically interrogated the significance of Africanising private secondary school curricula through the lens of *hunhu*, foregrounding the roles of international, continental, and Zimbabwean stakeholders in driving decolonisation and curriculum transformation. The analysis moved beyond description to probe when and how Africanisation should occur, highlighting that sustainable change depends on collaborative engagement between teachers, policymakers, communities, and local experts—supported by continuous professional development and iterative evaluation. By positioning *hunhu* at the centre, the chapter demonstrated its value as a conceptual framework for integrating social, political, economic, and environmental realities with African philosophical and ethical traditions. The discussion underscored that a genuinely Africanised curriculum is not a static endpoint but an ongoing, participatory process that must remain responsive to evolving local and global contexts. Ultimately, the chapter argued that embedding *hunhu* into curriculum design and practice can foster stronger learner identities, enhance cultural relevance, and build the capacities required for effective citizenship and sustainable continental development. The next chapter presents the study's research methodology.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter five builds on the comprehensive literature review, which examined the Africanisation of private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* from global, African, and Zimbabwean perspectives, guided by the main research question and sub-questions (*cf*. Sections 1.5.1 and 1.5.2). This chapter first outlines the rationale supporting the research approach. It then details the research design and methods used to investigate the phenomenon, followed by a discussion of the measures implemented to ensure data collection and analysis trustworthiness. Finally, the chapter addresses the ethical considerations observed throughout the research process.

5.2 RATIONALE FOR EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

This study adopts an empirical approach to investigate the Africanisation of private secondary school curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe. Empirical research is grounded in direct observation, lived experience, and systematic evidence gathering, strengthening the authenticity and credibility of findings (Creswell and Poth, 2023:47; Flick, 2023a:3). Creswell and Creswell (2022:122) emphasise that empirical designs rely on rigorously obtained data, rather than personal assumptions, ensuring robust and contextually meaningful results.

The use of in-depth, semi-structured interviews and observations as primary data collection methods aligns with current qualitative research best practices (Creswell and Poth, 2023:81–84; Flick, 2023b:128–130). These methods are effective for eliciting detailed accounts of participants' experiences, which is critical for understanding the Africanisation process in education. Coy (2019:73) underscores that knowledge is fundamentally derived from experience, further validating the chosen methodology.

Ethical considerations are central to this research design. Scholars highlight the importance of informed consent, participant autonomy, confidentiality, and minimising harm when conducting qualitative research (Erdmann and Potthoff,

2023:6; Creswell and Creswell, 2022:135). This study ensures ethical integrity by offering participants opportunities to review and clarify their contributions, and by safeguarding all data.

Trustworthiness is enhanced through strategies such as triangulation, member checking, and maintaining an audit trail (Lochmiller, Cho and Lester, 2022:22). Additionally, reflexivity and resonance are considered to ensure nuanced and credible interpretation of data (Pugh and Mosseri, 2023:313).

In summary, the empirical nature of this research—supported by recent, authoritative sources and robust ethical safeguards—provides a rigorous foundation for exploring the Africanisation of private secondary school curricula in Zimbabwe.

5.2.1 Empirical research: Answering research questions

Empirical research is essential for answering specific research questions, particularly in educational contexts. Kivunja (2018:46) underscores the value of empirical approaches in providing systematic, evidence-based answers to targeted questions. Concepts and theories require thorough testing and validation before they can be accepted as knowledge (Creswell and Poth, 2021:130).

In this study, individual interviews were conducted with governing board representatives, the MoPSE district schools' inspector, heads of departments (HODs), and teachers, to gain an in-depth understanding of their perspectives on the Africanisation of the curriculum through *hunhu*. To enhance trustworthiness and ensure the credibility of the findings, observations of teachers were used to triangulate interview data (Flick, 2023b:145). Document analysis involving HODs, teachers, and district schools' inspectors further solidified the understanding of the phenomenon.

Mantula et al. (2024:3) emphasise that carefully crafted research questions are vital in qualitative research to explore the why and how of complex social processes. In this context, empirical research was undertaken to validate and illuminate the process of Africanising the curriculum of private secondary schools in Zimbabwe through hunhu.

Ethical considerations were prioritised throughout, including informed consent, participant anonymity, and upholding the right to withdraw at any stage (Erdmann and Potthoff, 2023:6). These steps reinforced the integrity and trustworthiness of the research process.

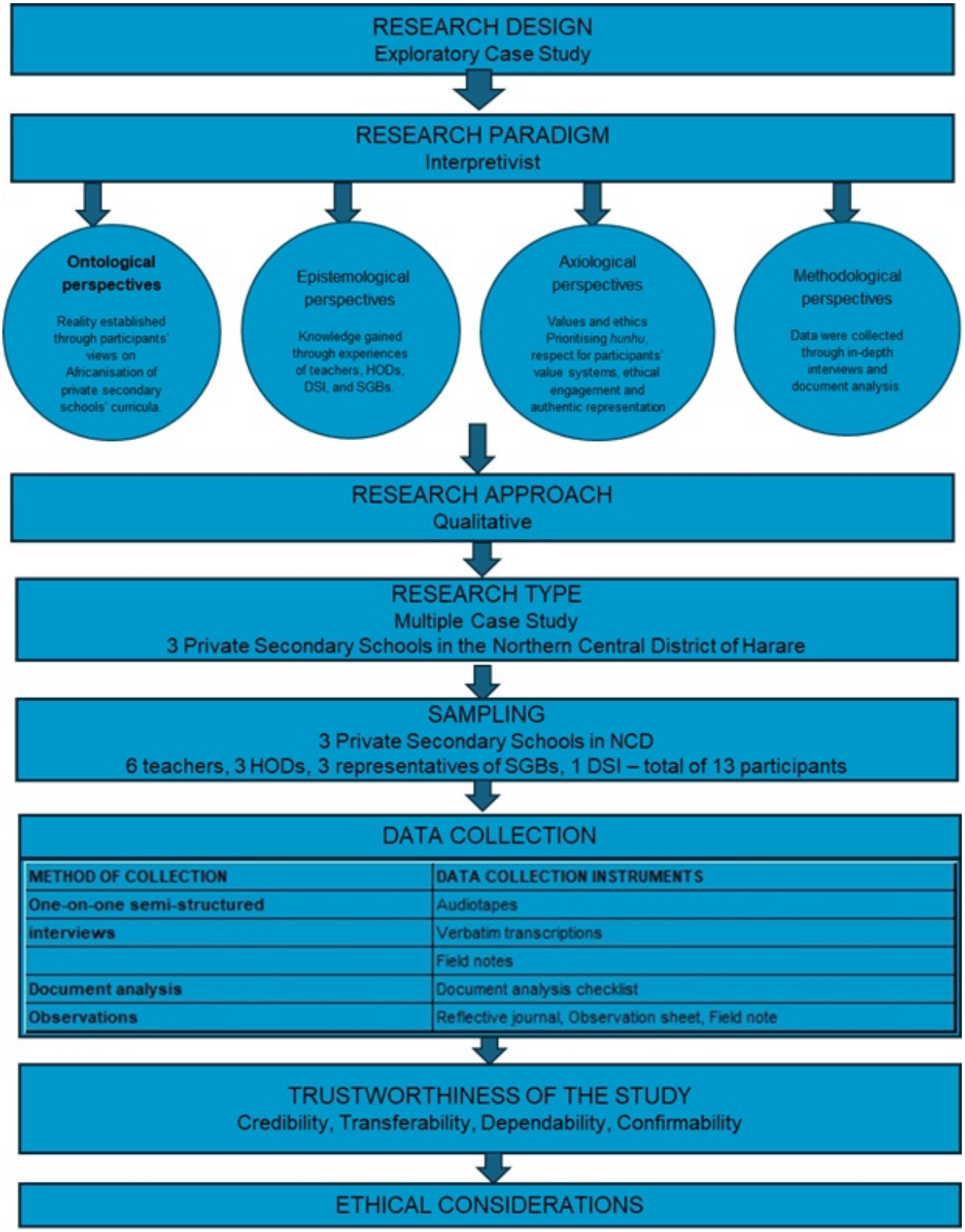
5.2.2 Justification for incorporating empirical research

The incorporation of empirical research in this study is justified by its ability to capture authentic experiences, detailed descriptions, and personal reflections of the MoPSE district schools' inspector, school governing board representatives, heads of departments, and teachers regarding the Africanisation of private secondary schools' curricula through the lens of *hunhu*. As Flick (2023a:3) notes, empirical research is grounded in the systematic collection of evidence from participants' lived realities, thereby enhancing the credibility and relevance of the findings.

By employing empirical methods such as interviews, observations, and document analysis, this study enables a nuanced exploration of the perspectives and meanings that stakeholders attach to *hunhu* in the Africanisation of the curriculum. Creswell and Creswell (2022:134) emphasise that empirical research is particularly valuable for investigating complex social processes and understanding how individuals interpret and enact specific concepts within their local contexts.

Overall, the use of empirical research is essential for generating contextually rich, trustworthy, and meaningful insights into the Africanisation process, as experienced and understood by those directly involved in Zimbabwe's private secondary education sector.

The research methodology process is illustrated in Figure 5.1



Source: Researcher's conceptualisation

Figure 5.1: The chapter overview

Figure 5.1 illustrates the research design, research paradigm, research approach, research type, sampling, data collection, data analysis, trustworthiness of the study, and ethical consideration. This process is described below.

5.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design serves as the blueprint for planning, gathering, and analysing data, providing structure to answer the research questions (Creswell and Creswell, 2022:58). It encompasses the systematic process of designing, implementing, and evaluating research activities to ensure coherence and integrity across all stages (Flick, 2023a:29). Adhering to a well-defined research plan is essential for achieving reliable and impactful results (Tracy, 2020:138).

The core function of research design is twofold: first, it guides the identification of procedures and logistical requirements necessary for conducting the study; second, it ensures that these procedures are of sufficient quality to guarantee the credibility, objectivity, and accuracy of research findings (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019:47). Furthermore, a robust research design is outcome-focused, integrating all steps and strategies to achieve the desired objectives (Creswell and Creswell, 2022:55).

A credible research design extends beyond the selection of participants and application of research strategies; it also demands strict adherence to established research ethics, such as informed consent, confidentiality, and respect for participant autonomy (Erdmann and Potthoff, 2023:6). These ethical principles underpin all methodological decisions and reinforce the trustworthiness of the study.

This study employed an exploratory case study design to investigate the Africanisation of private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe. The rationale for selecting this design is grounded in the limited knowledge base on the Africanising of private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu*, making an in-depth, contextually sensitive approach both necessary and appropriate.

5.3.1 Interpretive research paradigm

The interpretive research paradigm and systems theory both emphasise understanding the complexity and interconnectedness of social phenomena (Flick. 2023a:18; Cohen, Manion & Morrison. 2018:23). The interpretive paradigm recognises that reality is shaped by people's interactions and relationships within their specific contexts (Creswell & Creswell. 2022:9). Similarly, systems theory views educational environments as dynamic, interconnected systems where each part influences and is influenced by the broader whole (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill. 2019:134). This theoretical alignment supports the study's aim of interpreting and characterising the lived experiences of educational stakeholders as they participate in the Africanisation of the curriculum through *hunhu*.

A research paradigm serves as a foundational framework for researchers, shaping their approach to understanding reality, constructing knowledge, and selecting methods (Creswell & Creswell. 2022:5). Paradigms act as lenses through which researchers perceive methodologies, guided by shared assumptions, core concepts, and values (Cohen, Manion & Morrison. 2018:22). These authors distinguish between broad paradigms—such as positivism, interpretivism, and pragmatism—and more specific theoretical perspectives. Flick. 2023a:18 notes that interpretivism foregrounds the interactive and contextual nature of human experience, encouraging researchers to acknowledge their own backgrounds and prior experiences when interpreting the meanings participants assign to social phenomena.

Given the interpretive nature of this enquiry, the study aimed to interpret, describe, and report on the reflections and lived experiences of the MoPSE district schools' inspector, school governing board representatives, HODs, and teachers. The use of an interpretive paradigm enabled the researcher to ascertain the perceived success of Africanising private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* by interpreting the significance participants attribute to their own experiences. Successes and challenges encountered during the Africanisation process were captured through personal reflections, feedback, and perspectives from key stakeholders (Pervin & Mokhtar. 2022:421).

The interpretive approach facilitated the extraction of in-depth data regarding participants' interpretations of the Africanisation process within private secondary school curricula. The methodology allowed for clarification of questions and offered reassurance to participants who felt apprehensive, supporting ethical and transparent research engagement (Erdmann & Potthoff. 2023:6).

The deliberate adoption of the interpretive paradigm was theoretically grounded and aligned with the study's aim to explore subjective meanings and lived realities. Interpretivism prioritises understanding the meanings that participants construct within their social world (Tracy. 2020:41). Flick. 2023a:24 further states that meaning making through social interaction is central to this paradigm, rather than the pursuit of a single, objective reality. Interpretive researchers engage as collaborative partners, seeking authentic, undistorted accounts (Ylönen & Aven. 2023:583).

The interpretivist paradigm recognises the multiplicity of realities within the social world and values diverse participant perspectives (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill. 2019:133). To achieve a holistic understanding, this study employed a triangulation of methods: individual interviews, document analysis, and observations of curriculum-related activities. The use of an observation guide enabled the capture of the diversity embedded in daily interactions with the Africanised curriculum (Pervin & Mokhtar, 2022:425).

Research paradigms are composed of key elements: epistemology, ontology, axiology, and methodology, each shaping the research process (Cohen, Manion & Morrison. 2018:17). Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2019:134) explain that a paradigm addresses assumptions about reality (ontology) and the nature of knowledge and the researcher–participant relationship (epistemology). The interpretivist position, for example, aligns with epistemological relativism, emphasising the importance of understanding participants' meanings and the methodologies appropriate for this aim (Pervin & Mokhtar, 2022:423).

In summary, the interpretive paradigm empowers the exploration of multiple realities, privileging participants' voices and interpretations, and is thus well-suited for examining the Africanisation of curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe's private secondary schools.

5.3.1.1 Ontological view

The concept of ontology within a research paradigm plays a crucial role in shaping the overall approach to inquiry. Ontology refers to the philosophical investigation into the nature of existence or being, specifically regarding the phenomenon under study (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018:16). In essence, ontology addresses the fundamental question: "What is the nature of the reality which we are investigating?" The ontological perspective selected by a researcher serves as a guide for understanding what is considered real within the context of the study (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019:134). It also answers whether reality is viewed as a single, unified entity or as a collection of multiple realities shaped by individual experiences (Flick, 2023a:19). Furthermore, it informs the researcher's understanding of whether reality exists independently of the researcher, or whether it is co-constructed through interaction and experience (Tracy, 2020:41). By critically examining the ontological assumptions embedded within their chosen paradigm, researchers can ensure alignment between their research question and the methodologies employed, forming a strong foundation for a rigorous and well-designed research project (Pervin and Mokhtar, 2022:421).

5.3.1.2 Epistemological view

The epistemological framework of interpretivism further strengthens the rationale for this paradigm. Interpretivists assert that knowledge about reality is not pre-existing but is dynamically constructed through the research process (Creswell & Creswell, 2022:8; Pervin & Mokhtar, 2022:422). The social world, unlike the natural world, requires unique approaches and cannot be fully understood through methods borrowed from the natural sciences (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018:21). In interpretivist research, knowledge is intimately linked to personal experience, turning the research process into a collaborative activity where both the researcher and participants contribute their unique understandings of the phenomenon—in this case, the Africanisation of private schools' curricula using *hunhu* (Ylönen & Aven, 2023:583). This was evident in the ongoing dialogue during interviews and observations, where the researcher facilitated, engaged, and actively listened to participants, allowing knowledge to emerge from these dynamic exchanges (Erdmann & Potthoff, 2023:7). Furthermore, the researcher remained open to revising initial interpretations as the study progressed, recognising that our

understanding of ourselves and the world is continually shaped by ongoing social interaction (Ylönen & Aven, 2023:584).

5.3.1.3 Methodological view

The methodological considerations of interpretivism aligned seamlessly with the research design employed in this study. Interpretive research utilises a variety of data collection methods, including interviews, document analysis, and observations (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019:158). These methods naturally foster deep and meaningful interactions with participants, enabling them to share their lived experiences and co-construct a meaningful understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Nguyen and Chia, 2023:214). This study adopted multiple data collection strategies to conduct a fine-grained exploration of Africanisation in the curricula of private secondary schools, as perceived by stakeholders in the context of integrating *hunhu*. In-depth interviews with teachers, HODs, SGB representatives, and the DSI provided rich details on their experiences and perspectives. Classroom observations offered first-hand insights into how Africanisation is implemented in practice, while document analysis of curriculum guides, lesson plans, and learners' work revealed the intended and actual application of *hunhu* principles (Tracy, 2020:98). This combination of methods aligned with the interpretive research paradigm, enabling the study to capture the lived experiences and subjective meanings associated with the Africanisation process through *hunhu* (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2018:288). By delving into these diverse perspectives, the research aimed to illuminate the richness and complexity of this educational transformation.

5.3.1.4 Axiological view

Axiology, the philosophical study of values and ethics within research, plays a particularly significant role when examining curriculum transformation, as the process is deeply rooted in cultural norms and value systems (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019:133). In the context of Africanising private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe, the adoption of *hunhu* as a guiding philosophy emphasises community, respect, social harmony, and collective well-being—values that are central to both the research process and the educational transformation being studied. By recognising and respecting the values and cultural contexts of participants such as teachers, school leaders, and community members, the research upholds the axiological stance advocated by recent scholarship (Tracy,

2020:17). This ensures that the voices, beliefs, and ethical perspectives of stakeholders are authentically represented. The resulting knowledge genuinely reflects the moral and cultural priorities supporting the Africanisation of the curriculum (Creswell and Creswell, 2022:58). Thus, axiology not only guides methodological choices but also reinforces the integrity, transparency, and cultural relevance of the research outcomes (Nguyen and Chia, 2023:216).

5.3.2 Research approach

A research approach refers to the overall plan and direction a researcher adopts to address a research problem, encompassing the assumptions, strategies, and methods used for data collection and analysis (Taherdoost, 2022:47; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019:130; Creswell and Creswell, 2022:5). Defining the research approach provides a coherent framework that guides methodological decisions, ensuring alignment between objectives, data collection, and analysis techniques (Silverman, 2021:41; Kelly, 2023:63). The choice of approach is influenced by the research problem, the researcher's philosophical worldview, and practical considerations (Flick, 2023a:54; Dehalwar and Sharma, 2024:10).

Research approaches are most commonly categorised as quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods, each reflecting distinct philosophical assumptions and strategies for inquiry (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019:130; Creswell and Creswell, 2022:7; Ravitch and Carl, 2021:84). Quantitative research relies on numerical data and statistical analysis, while qualitative research explores lived experiences, meanings, and subjective phenomena through interviews and observations. Mixed methods research integrates both paradigms to offer comprehensive insights into complex research questions (Nguyen and Chia, 2023:214). Qualitative research, in particular, is valuable for addressing "why" and "how" questions that seek to understand context and meaning (Lichtman, 2023:221; Kelly, 2023:63).

This study adopted a qualitative approach to investigate the experiences of stakeholders involved in the Africanisation of the curriculum through *hunhu*. The qualitative paradigm is especially suited for exploring complex human experiences from the perspectives of participants (Flick, 2023a:54; Ravitch and Carl, 2021:86; Dehalwar and Sharma, 2024:10). This aligns with the study's aim to understand how

HODs, teachers, SGB representatives, and the DSI perceive and navigate the curriculum Africanisation process.

A significant strength of qualitative research is its ability to generate rich, nuanced accounts of how individuals interpret and navigate their social worlds (Silverman, 2021:41; Khoa, Hung and Hejsalem-Brahmi, 2023:188; Tracy, 2020:17). In this study, a combination of interviews, observations, and document analysis was employed to capture the nuances of lived experience, participant voices, and subjective meanings within social contexts (Nguyen and Chia, 2023:217; Lichtman, 2023:221; Ravitch and Carl, 2021:88).

The choice of qualitative methods was also guided by the nature of the research questions. Qualitative approaches are best suited for exploring questions that probe "what" and "why," as they facilitate in-depth understanding of the richness and complexity of participants' experiences (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019:157; Creswell and Creswell, 2022:8; Taherdoost, 2022:51). Individual interviews with HODs, teachers, SGB representatives, and the DSI provided a nuanced platform for participants to share their lived experiences and the meanings they ascribe to curriculum Africanisation.

Qualitative research fosters an iterative and exploratory process, allowing for deeper investigation into participants' responses and rationales (Tracy, 2020:12; Flick, 2023a:56). The use of an interview guide enabled a systematic yet flexible approach to data collection, while probing questions encouraged reflection and detailed articulation of perspectives (Ravitch and Carl, 2021:84; Nguyen and Chia, 2023:214).

A defining characteristic of qualitative research is the centrality of participants' voices. The researcher acts as a facilitator, creating a safe space for participants to narrate their experiences in their own words and actions (Khoa, Hung and Hejsalem-Brahmi, 2023:188; Silverman, 2021:49). Close engagement allows the researcher to gain an insider's perspective, fostering a deeper understanding that may be missed through more detached approaches. Non-verbal communication—such as facial expressions and body language—further enriches the data (Kelly, 2023:67).

Because qualitative research inherently involves subjectivity, careful consideration of researcher bias is required. The reliability of the evidence depends on the researcher's ability to collect, analyse, and interpret data objectively (Creswell and Creswell, 2022:11; Taherdoost, 2022:52). To mitigate bias, a reflexive approach was maintained throughout the research process, and regular peer debriefing was used to identify potential blind spots (Tracy, 2020:12).

Qualitative research often requires substantial time for data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Dehalwar and Sharma, 2024:23; Flick, 2023a:56). Ample time was devoted to these processes during the school holidays to ensure thorough analysis and interpretation. Detailed textual descriptions of how people experience a phenomenon are a hallmark of this approach (Nguyen and Chia, 2023:217). Methods such as interviews also provide participants with space to reflect, helping them overcome self-consciousness and contribute spontaneous, insightful responses (Ravitch and Carl, 2021:88).

5.3.3 Research type or design

This research adopted a multiple-case study design to investigate the experiences of stakeholders involved in the Africanisation of the curriculum at three private secondary schools in the same district. Each school served as a distinct case for in-depth exploration, facilitating analysis of both unique school dynamics and broader district-level patterns (Creswell & Poth, 2021:97; Yin, 2023:62; Safari, McKenna & Davis, 2023:2). While a single case study can provide valuable, context-specific insight, it would not have permitted the cross-case comparisons central to this research (Stake, 2022:18).

In selecting a qualitative case study design, this research deliberately considered and contrasted alternative qualitative methodologies such as phenomenology and ethnography. Phenomenology, as described by Neubauer, Witkop, and Varpio (2019:91), is particularly effective for exploring participants' lived experiences and understanding the essence of a phenomenon. However, phenomenology's focus on individual subjective experience makes it less suitable for examining the broader, systemic, and policy-driven processes involved in the Africanisation of curricula in Zimbabwean private secondary schools.

Ethnography, meanwhile, excels in generating richly detailed accounts of cultural practices through sustained participant observation and field immersion (Guest, Namey & Mitchell, 2020:58). While ethnography is valuable for understanding cultural meaning within a single community, it often prioritises thick description over the analysis of institutional or multi-level educational change.

By contrast, the qualitative case study approach, as articulated by Creswell & Poth (2021:103) and Crowe et al. (2022:2), provides a robust framework for examining complex, context-dependent phenomena in real-world settings. Case study research enables the integration of multiple data sources, including interviews, document analysis, and classroom observations, allowing for a holistic investigation of the interplay among policy, curriculum content, teacher practice, and stakeholder perspectives. This approach is particularly well-suited for exploring how Africanisation is operationalised across different layers of the educational system, offering both depth and breadth that phenomenology and ethnography may not provide.

Accordingly, the case study methodology was selected for its capacity to address the multi-layered and systemic nature of curriculum transformation through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe, ensuring a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of educational change.

The rationale for using a multiple case study design is reinforced by the limitations often associated with single-case studies, such as concerns about generalisability and potential bias (Schaben, Andersson and Cutucache, 2022:7; Al Maktoum and Al Kaabi, 2024:7). Examining curriculum Africanisation in three schools enabled the identification of both unique and shared features across settings. Cross-case analysis offered a robust means for assessing the consistency of findings and highlighting how context influences the Africanisation process (Safari, McKenna and Davis, 2023:8).

A major strength of the multiple case study approach is its ability to provide a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of complex educational phenomena (Yin, 2023:75; Al Maktoum and Al Kaabi, 2024:9). Systematic comparison across cases allows for the identification of patterns, similarities, and differences, leading to more

grounded and reliable conclusions (Schaben, Andersson & Cutucache, 2022:10). Throughout, rigorous evidence collection and analytical processes were maintained to ensure the validity and credibility of the findings (Creswell & Poth, 2021:102).

The research techniques and procedures employed in this multiple case study are discussed in detail in the following section.

5.3.3.1 Multiple case study type: Gaining in-depth understanding

This study utilised a multiple-case study approach to gain a comprehensive understanding of how *hunhu* can be leveraged to Africanise private secondary school curricula. A multiple-case design strengthens the robustness and transferability of findings by enabling the examination of similarities and differences both within and across cases (Yin, 2023:62; Safari, McKenna & Davis, 2023:2). The research was conducted in three urban private secondary schools within a single district, allowing for comparative analysis of institutional practices and contexts. This design enhanced both the depth and breadth of understanding regarding the Africanisation process, as it facilitated engagement with participants from diverse school settings in the same district (Schaben, Andersson & Cutucache, 2022:8).

By drawing on a variety of cases, the study identified recurring themes alongside unique challenges and opportunities, offering valuable insights to inform efforts to Africanise private school curricula. The design also enabled the researcher to interact directly with participants, observing non-verbal cues—such as changes in facial expressions and voice tone—particularly during discussions about policy and curriculum change. This attention to non-verbal communication enhanced the understanding of participants' experiences (Flick, 2023b:108).

Data obtained from interviews were triangulated with observations and document analysis to ensure credibility and depth of interpretation (Carter et al., 2021:670). Ultimately, this approach allowed for the extraction of in-depth stakeholder perspectives and provided educators with a platform to articulate their views on the Africanisation of private secondary school curricula through the lens of *hunhu*.

5.4 RESEARCH METHODS

Research methods act as a bridge between the selected research design and the study's philosophical assumptions (Creswell & Poth, 2021:28). They encompass the specific procedures used to generate new empirical knowledge (Flick, 2023a:21). In essence, research methods refer to the techniques employed to gather and analyse data in order to address the research questions. Dzogovic and Bajrami (2023:158) similarly define research methods as the systematic processes undertaken to pursue new knowledge.

This section outlines the research methods used to investigate the Africanisation of private secondary school curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe. It details the criteria and rationale for participant selection, the specific data collection tools and techniques applied (such as interviews, observations, and document analysis), the data gathering procedures, and the methods chosen for data analysis. By clearly presenting these methods, this section aims to ensure a transparent and dependable approach to answering the research questions.

5.4.1 Selection of participants

Africanising the private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* as research is often constrained by issues of accessibility, cost, and time (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018:202). Data are therefore typically collected from a representative sample rather than the entire population. Accessibility in this context refers to participants' willingness and availability to engage in the study (Creswell & Poth, 2021:147). The population for this study comprised private secondary schools in the region. From this population, three private secondary schools in the Northern Central District of Harare were sampled, resulting in the selection of 13 educators as study participants.

A study sample is defined as a smaller group of individuals selected from the broader population to meet the study's criteria (Etikan & Bala, 2019:3). In this research, the sample was a small, representative, and accessible group purposefully selected from the universal population. This sample provided meaningful insights into the characteristics of the wider group.

To investigate the Africanisation of private secondary school curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe, purposive sampling was employed (Gentles et al., 2022:1574). This strategy involves deliberately selecting participants with specific knowledge and experience relevant to the research question. In this case, educators were chosen from private secondary schools in Zimbabwe that actively integrate *hunhu* principles into their curricula.

5.4.1.1 Sampling techniques

According to Creswell and Creswell (2022:188), sampling is a method for selecting a representative sample from a particular population. This study distinguishes between probability and non-probability sampling techniques. Probability sampling is used when the researcher selects participants who accurately reflect the characteristics of a larger group. In contrast, non-probability sampling involves recruiting specific populations relevant to the research focus. In this investigation, non-probability sampling was employed. Purposive sampling, convenience sampling, snowball sampling, and theoretical sampling are examples of non-probability techniques (Cohen et al., 2018:220).

To ensure the collection of rich and informative data, this study employed purposive sampling, a non-probability approach particularly well-suited for qualitative research (Gentles et al., 2022:1574). Creswell and Creswell (2022:146) emphasise the importance of selecting participants who are willing to openly share their experiences. The logic and power of purposive sampling rest on the deliberate selection of information-rich individuals who can provide detailed insights into the phenomenon under investigation. Sukmawati, Salmia, and Sudarmin (2023:136) further note the importance of aligning participant selection with clear research questions and choosing those best positioned to answer them.

In this context, the study focused on 13 educators from three purposively selected private secondary schools within the NCD, including the NCD DSI. The next section explains the selection process.

5.4.1.2 Selection procedure

According to Creswell and Creswell (2022:146), in purposeful sampling, researchers deliberately select people and locations to understand the main phenomenon.

Recent research further notes that researchers should select sites and participants that are most accessible and feasible given the study's resources, including time, mobility, and expertise (Gentles et al., 2022:1573). A two-tier sampling approach, common in case study research, was used to guide participant selection (Dzogovic & Bajrami, 2023:158).

First, three private secondary schools were purposively selected for accessibility and geographic convenience, thereby supporting cost-effectiveness (Creswell & Poth, 2021:147). Second, participants within each school were purposively selected for their expertise and willingness to share their experiences of the Africanisation of the curriculum through *hunhu*. To avoid conflicts of interest, the researcher—although a teacher in the district—did not include her own school in the study. Educators, as the primary implementers of curriculum, were central to participant selection.

The study focused on three private secondary schools in Harare's NCD, with thirteen participants purposively selected: six History teachers (two from each school across Forms one to four), three heads of department (one from each school), three school governing board members (one from each school), and one district schools' inspector (DSI). Inclusion criteria specified that participants must be the current DSI, a head of department or SGB representative from the selected schools, or a history teacher for Forms one to four. The DSI was included due to their oversight responsibilities for curriculum implementation and district adherence to national standards.

To ensure diversity and relevance, the accessible population varied in age (30–65 years), gender (five men, eight women), qualifications (ranging from undergraduate degrees to doctorates), and years of teaching experience (0–35 years). Non-probability purposive sampling was used because it is ideally suited for qualitative research, enabling intentional selection of participants best positioned to inform the study objectives (Sukmawati, Salmia & Sudarmin, 2023:136). Exclusion criteria omitted those not directly involved in curriculum implementation, not from the chosen schools, or unwilling to participate. This approach ensured that a broad range of perspectives on the Africanisation of private secondary school curricula through *hunhu* was reflected in the rich data collected.

By employing purposive sampling and focusing on participants with relevant expertise and openness, the study aimed to capture meaningful insights from stakeholders engaged in the Africanisation of private school curricula through *hunhu*. Data collection procedures are discussed in the next section.

5.4.2 Data collection

Information gathering was essential to developing a thorough understanding of how private secondary schools incorporated *hunhu* pedagogy into their curricula. A multifaceted approach guided the data collection. The main techniques used were semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and classroom observations. Participants were interviewed one-on-one using semi-structured interviews, providing flexibility and depth in examining their viewpoints and experiences regarding the Africanisation process through *hunhu* (Creswell & Poth, 2021:144; Ravitch & Carl, 2021:144). These interviews yielded rich, detailed data and allowed the researcher to ask follow-up questions for clarification or deeper insight.

After the interviews, pertinent documents—including lesson plans, curriculum guides, and school policy documents—were reviewed through document analysis, which offered valuable background and contextual information, illuminating the practices and policies supporting the Africanisation of the curriculum (Meeran & Biccard, 2025:14).

Classroom observations were also undertaken to witness first-hand how teachers applied *hunhu* principles in curriculum-related activities. Observations complemented interview and document analysis data by capturing nonverbal cues and in-the-moment behaviours, providing a holistic perspective on the implementation of *hunhu* in practice (Silverman, 2021:64; Creswell & Poth, 2021:144). By triangulating these data collection methods (interviews, document analysis, and observations), the study aimed to strengthen the trustworthiness of its findings by drawing on the complementary strengths of each approach (Steenkamp & Tekelas, 2021:5; Carter et al., 2021:670). This multi-method approach made possible a thorough and nuanced understanding of the Africanisation of private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe from multiple perspectives.

5.4.2.1 Interviews

Interviews are a cornerstone of qualitative research, facilitating focused conversations between a researcher and participants (Braun & Clarke, 2021:67). The advantages of interviews include the ability to probe for detailed information, clarify responses, and capture rich descriptive data. However, interviews can be time-consuming, may introduce interviewer bias, and rely heavily on participants' willingness to share openly (Creswell & Poth, 2021:44). Interviews were chosen as the primary data collection method because of the depth and complexity of the topic – Africanising the private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe. *Hunhu* is a culturally rooted concept, and interviews enabled participants to share their nuanced experiences and perspectives in a way that structured surveys might not capture (Abdala, 2024:4).

This study utilised in-depth, semi-structured, one-on-one interviews to delve into participants' lived experiences and perspectives on Africanising the curriculum through *hunhu* in private secondary schools. Semi-structured interviews are a flexible research method that blends elements of structured and unstructured interviews (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:352). Kelly (2023:71) confirms that while they have a predetermined set of questions, they also allow for open-ended exploration and follow-up questions. This approach offers a valuable balance between flexibility and focus. While a semi-structured format ensures that interviews address key research questions, it also allows for the exploration of emergent themes that arise during the conversation (Adams, 2022:45).

An interview guide was developed to ensure consistent questioning while allowing flexibility. This guide comprises key open-ended questions directly linked to the research questions (Khoa et al., 2023:189). The open-ended nature of qualitative inquiry enables the collection of rich and nuanced data, capturing not only participants' words but also their tone, body language, and lived experiences (Silverman, 2021:64). Thus, the open-ended nature of the interview guide enables the researcher to delve deeper into responses and gain a more comprehensive understanding of participants' perspectives.

Prior to commencing interviews, a detailed interview schedule was prepared based on the research questions (Kelly, 2023:71). The clarity and alignment of the

questions were reviewed to ensure that they effectively address the research objectives. Interviews were conducted at participants' schools in the staffroom and offices, with their consent obtained beforehand, and each interview lasted 30 to 45 minutes. Detailed notes were taken throughout the interview to accurately capture participants' viewpoints and lived experiences. Interviews were conducted in English, and the researcher was attentive to nonverbal cues to gain a more holistic understanding of participants' perspectives.

The open-ended nature of the questions allows for the use of follow-up questions to seek clarification, elicit concrete examples, and explore new themes that emerge during the interview (Maja & Motseke, 2022:4). This approach yielded richer and more complex data that reflected the full range of participant perspectives (Dursun, 2023:100). With participants' permission, audio recordings were used to supplement notetaking and ensure comprehensive data capture. This approach enhanced data collection accuracy and enabled a more detailed analysis of interview content.

The interview process was further enhanced by meticulous preparation, including ensuring the clarity of the interview questions, conducting a pilot interview, and obtaining informed consent (Kelly, 2023:71). This rigorous approach promoted effective communication, established trust with participants, and ensured ethical research conduct. After each interview, the researcher thanked and expressed gratitude to the participants, a value consistent with the ethos of *hunhu*. The next section discusses document analysis.

5.4.2.2 Document analysis

Document analysis is a research method involving the systematic examination of written materials to gain insights and information (Bowen, 2019:30). This study used document analysis as an initial data collection method to explore how *hunhu* is integrated into the curricula of private secondary schools in Zimbabwe. Documents serve as independent records, relatively unaffected by the biases present in interviews (Al Maktoum & Al Kaabi, 2024:7), and provided a foundational understanding of the intended curriculum framework, highlighting where *hunhu* principles might be documented.

The analysis included official History syllabi (Forms 1–4) from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, Zimbabwe, which revealed how *hunhu* principles are incorporated into curriculum content. Educator lesson plans and schemes of work provided insights into how teachers planned to translate *hunhu* into classroom practice (Bowen, 2019:32). Analysing these documents illuminated how the curriculum is operationalised in daily teaching.

HOD supervision files contained feedback and recommendations from departmental leadership, offering a view of leadership perspectives and support for *hunhu* integration (Moodley, 2020:90). District schools' inspector (DSI) visits reports, prepared by officials responsible for monitoring curriculum implementation, offered further insights into the practical application of *hunhu* in schools (Midzi et al., 2021:144).

A predefined protocol was used to guide the document analysis, ensuring a systematic approach to data extraction (Al Maktoum & Al Kaabi, 2024:7). This enabled focus on how *hunhu* was embedded in lesson plans, policy materials, and other documents—particularly in collaborative learning, classroom assessments, differentiation, and inclusivity. The analysis also considered how curriculum activities aligned with community needs, cultural preservation, and the representation of core *hunhu* attributes such as Ubuntu, reciprocity, and interconnectedness (MoPSE, 2015:7).

Ethical considerations included anonymising documents with sensitive information (Gentles et al., 2022:1580) and obtaining informed consent from school authorities before accessing official records. The authenticity and credibility of all materials were verified through official school channels, and triangulation with interviews and observations supported the trustworthiness of the findings.

5.4.2.3 Observation

This qualitative study employed observation as a complementary data collection method alongside interviews (Cohen et al., 2018, p. 546). Observation was used to triangulate interview findings with first-hand insights into participants' behaviours in real-time, offering a unique vantage point compared to interview data that rely on participant recollection (Harding, 2019:112). This approach involves systematically

watching and recording behaviours, events, or phenomena to capture authentic classroom interactions and curriculum delivery (Mehrad, Nguyen & Dihii, 2024:12).

Before each classroom observation, the researcher briefly introduced herself and greeted the teacher and students to minimise disruption. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, including teachers and heads of department, who signed a consent form that clearly explained the purpose of the observations, the intended use of the data, and the confidentiality procedures (Gentles et al., 2022:1581).

The researcher acted as a non-participant observer to further reduce disruption and maintain objectivity (Abdala, 2024:4). Observations were scheduled collaboratively with teachers, focusing on non-critical times such as the beginning or end of lessons, and were limited to 35-minute sessions during scheduled class times (Abdala, 2024:4).

A structured observation protocol guided detailed notetaking on key areas, including classroom dynamics, the integration of *hunhu* principles, rapport between participants, teaching methods, assessment techniques, and non-verbal cues. This approach provided real-time insights that complemented interview data, revealing the practical enactment of *hunhu* pedagogy.

By adhering to these ethical standards and focusing on these key areas, the researcher gained a nuanced understanding of *hunhu* pedagogy in practice—capturing aspects not readily accessible through interviews alone. After each observation, gratitude was expressed to teachers and students, reflecting the ethos of *hunhu* and respect for participants.

5.4.2.4 Pilot study

A pilot study was conducted as an essential first step to ensure the suitability and effectiveness of the research tools and procedures for achieving the study's objectives (Gentles et al., 2022:1573; Kim, 2021:192). Palm Grove (not the real name), a private secondary school in Harare, was selected for the pilot because it closely resembled the context of the main study schools, yet its participants would not be included in the primary research. Two History teachers and two heads of

department participated. All planned data collection procedures were followed: informed consent was obtained, the purpose of the study was explained, and the semi-structured interview schedule was used to guide the discussions (Ruslin et al., 2022:27). This allowed the researcher to evaluate the clarity, flow, and comprehensiveness of the questions, as well as the feasibility of the data collection process considering time and logistical constraints (Kallio et al., 2021:655).

Challenges encountered by participants, ambiguous questions, and procedural issues were carefully documented. Feedback and insights from the pilot were used solely to refine the research instruments and procedures; no pilot data were included in the main analysis. Based on these results, the interview schedule was revised to enhance clarity and ensure questions elicited rich, relevant data. Data collection protocols were also adjusted to improve efficiency and address any technical or logistical issues identified (Browne, 2021:70; Kallio et al., 2021:656).

Overall, the pilot study played a critical role in strengthening the research design and ensuring a robust, efficient methodology for the main investigation.

5.4.3 Data analysis

In this qualitative study, data collection was followed immediately by data analysis. The researcher methodically and iteratively examined observation notes, interview transcripts, and other relevant documents. In accordance with the six-phase thematic analysis framework developed by Braun and Clarke (2006), the researcher first immersed themselves in the data. Several readings and preliminary notetaking were part of this familiarisation phase to identify emerging patterns. Preliminary codes were then generated by categorising and labelling significant data segments, with a particular focus on participants' views regarding hunhu pedagogy and the Africanisation of the curriculum.

Subsequently, these codes were organised into broader themes that encapsulated key aspects of the research questions. Themes were continuously reviewed and refined to ensure they accurately reflected the underlying narratives in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2021:42). General systems theory, which underpins the study's theoretical framework, guided the analysis process by providing a holistic lens on the interactions and influences within the educational environment. This approach

allowed for an exploration of the interdependencies among classroom practices, stakeholder roles, school policies, and community contexts in the Africanisation of the curriculum.

To enhance reliability, the researcher maintained reflective notes and systematically cross-checked all data sources (Vaismoradi and Snelgrove, 2019:6; Flick, 2023b:102). Thematic analysis was selected for its flexibility and ability to capture nuanced participant perspectives, as well as its widespread recognition in recent qualitative research (Braun & Clarke, 2021:42). This rigorous approach enabled the development of a comprehensive, evidence-based narrative that addressed the study's objectives while remaining grounded in participants' experiences and the structural context provided by the theoretical framework. The six steps of Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis are explained in the section below.

Step 1: Familiarisation with Data

The initial step of analysis involved familiarisation with the data, a process essential for building a comprehensive understanding of information gathered through interviews and observations. According to Braun and Clarke's (2006:82) thematic analysis framework, the researcher immersed themselves in the data by transcribing all audio recordings from semi-structured interviews verbatim and reading each transcript multiple times to achieve deep familiarity with participants' experiences and perspectives. Recent studies emphasise the importance of this stage for developing nuanced insights and supporting the credibility of the analysis (Castillo-Montoya, 2019:813; Roberts, Dowell & Nie, 2019:121). Preliminary notes and observations were made in the margins to capture initial impressions and significant points (Castillo-Montoya, 2019:814).

Throughout the familiarisation phase, the researcher intentionally remained open to identifying emerging patterns or potential themes while setting aside any preconceptions. Repeated and reflective engagement with the data provided a solid foundation for generating initial codes in the next step of the analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006:82; Roberts et al., 2019:122). Such rigorous familiarisation is recognised in recent qualitative research as critical for producing trustworthy and

insightful thematic analysis (Castillo-Montoya, 2019:813, 815; Roberts et al., 2019:123).

Step 2: Generating Initial Codes

Building upon the familiarisation stage, the analysis progressed to the second step: generating initial codes. After becoming thoroughly acquainted with the data, the researcher systematically broke down the transcribed interviews into smaller segments, assigning preliminary labels that captured the core meanings of each segment (Maja & Motseke, 2022:5). This coding process was iterative; the researcher revisited and recoded the data multiple times to ensure a comprehensive and refined analysis and to adjust initial coding decisions as necessary (Roberts, Dowell & Nie, 2019:122; Bengtsson, 2019:11).

Although qualitative data analysis software (such as NVivo or ATLAS.ti) can support coding, the researcher opted for a manual approach, using a Microsoft Word document to highlight relevant text passages and make marginal notes for descriptive codes (Bengtsson, 2019:13; Maja & Motseke, 2022:5).

Key activities during this stage included open coding, memoing, pattern recognition, reflexivity, and flexibility. Open coding was conducted without relying on preconceived categories, allowing for the identification and labelling of codes directly from the data. Memoing involved making detailed notes about emerging thoughts and reflections (Castillo-Montoya, 2019:817). Pattern recognition focused on identifying recurring themes or patterns within the data. Reflexivity was maintained by being conscious of personal biases and assumptions throughout the process, and flexibility was observed by revising or changing codes as new insights emerged (Braun & Clarke, 2006:82; Vaismoradi, Turunen & Bondas, 2020:9).

Step 3: Searching for Themes

Building on the initial coding process, the analysis progressed to the theme-search stage. Once all data had been coded, the researcher shifted focus from individual data segments to identifying broader patterns and connections across the dataset. Braun and Clarke (2021:45) emphasise systematically reviewing and organising codes into potential themes to illuminate participants' experiences with *hunhu* pedagogy. At this stage, similar codes were grouped and, where appropriate, merged into broader thematic categories (Roberts, Dowell & Nie, 2019:122). Sub-themes were also identified within main themes, allowing for the capture of

subtleties and complexities that may not have been apparent during initial coding (Bengtsson, 2019:13).

This process provided a deeper, more nuanced understanding of the data by revealing hidden patterns and relationships. For example, the theme “rationale for Africanisation of curriculum” included sub-themes such as “cultural identity and relevance” and “enhancing competitiveness.” The outcome of this stage was a structured table presenting the potential themes, subthemes, and illustrative data excerpts, making the presence of each theme in the dataset transparent.

Step 4: Reviewing Themes

After identifying potential themes and sub-themes, the analysis moved to a critical review and refinement stage. According to Braun and Clarke (2021:53), this process involves a two-level review. First, each theme is re-examined to ensure that it faithfully captures the meaning of the associated coded data extracts, with definitions refined as needed to represent participants' experiences accurately. Roberts, Dowell and Nie (2019:122) highlight the importance of revisiting initial coding decisions and refining theme definitions to enhance analytic clarity.

At the second level, the researcher assesses the coherence and validity of the themes in relation to the entire dataset, ensuring that the themes comprehensively address the research questions and offer a nuanced understanding of the integration of *hunhu* pedagogy (Bengtsson, 2019:13). Redundant themes may be collapsed, new themes may be created to capture overlooked aspects, and outliers are identified for further exploration. This iterative process ensures that the final themes are both meaningful and truly representative of the data.

Step 5: Defining and Naming Themes

After reviewing and refining the themes, the next phase focused on developing clear definitions and names for each theme. At this stage, the researcher crafted concise definitions that encapsulated the scope and essence of each theme, ensuring their clarity and distinction from one another (Braun & Clarke, 2021:60). To preserve authenticity, theme names were grounded in participants’ own words and experiences, reflecting their perspectives on Africanising the curriculum (Castillo-Montoya, 2019:815). Each theme was described in detail to specify its boundaries

and its relevance to the overall research objectives. This approach ensured that the identified themes accurately represented the unique perspectives of the study's participants within private secondary schools.

Step 6: Compiling a Thematic Report

Following the clear definition and naming of themes, the final stage of the analysis involved interpreting the meaning of the identified themes (Braun & Clarke, 2021:82). At this point, the researcher constructed a narrative report that wove the themes together, providing supporting evidence through direct participant quotes (Bengtsson, 2019:13). This thematic report formed the foundation for drawing conclusions and interpreting the findings in relation to existing literature on Africanising private secondary school curricula through *hunhu*. By presenting each theme alongside illustrative excerpts, the report delivered a comprehensive account of participants' experiences and contributed meaningful insights to the broader discourse on curriculum development in the African context.

5.5 MEASURES OF TRUSTWORTHINESS

To ensure the trustworthiness of this qualitative study, a range of deliberate strategies was implemented. Trustworthiness refers to the confidence that can be placed in the findings of a qualitative study, especially given the socially constructed nature of reality and the potential for different researchers to produce unique outcomes from the same data (Stahl & King, 2020b:26; Lincoln & Guba, 2013:292).

To enhance methodological rigour, multiple data collection methods and sources were used, including in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. Data were gathered from a diverse range of participants, such as heads of department, teachers, school governing body representatives, and the district schools' inspector. Triangulation of these methods and sources provided a comprehensive and multifaceted understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Gunawan, Marzilli & Aungsuroch, 2021:154).

Trustworthiness was addressed through four key criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, as outlined by Lincoln and Guba (2013). Credibility was enhanced through prolonged engagement and member checking, allowing participants to review and validate findings. Transferability was supported by providing thick descriptions of the context and participants so others can assess

applicability to their settings. Dependability was addressed by maintaining an audit trail documenting research decisions and procedures (Korstjens & Moser, 2018:121). Confirmability was achieved through reflexive practices and thorough documentation, ensuring findings were grounded in the data and not shaped by researcher bias.

Ethical considerations were central throughout the study. Ethical approval was obtained from the relevant institutional review board prior to data collection. Informed consent was secured from all participants, who received clear information about the study's aims, procedures, and their right to withdraw at any time. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by using pseudonyms and removing identifying information from all transcripts and reports (Birt et al., 2020:1807). Data were securely stored, with access limited to the research team.

By systematically applying these strategies and upholding stringent ethical standards, the study aimed to achieve robust trustworthiness and research integrity.

5.5.1 Credibility

Credibility is a cornerstone of trustworthiness in qualitative research, prioritising the production of findings that readers can trust, even though exact replication may not be possible due to the interpretive and context-dependent nature of the methodology (Stahl & King, 2020a:27). To establish rigour, qualitative researchers use a variety of strategies: prolonged engagement in the field, interacting with diverse participants, collecting data at different times and settings, reflecting on personal biases, utilising multiple data collection methods, sharing findings with participants for feedback (member checking), seeking feedback from peers, and maintaining a transparent and logical presentation of findings (Gunawan, Marzilli & Aungsuroch, 2021:154; Birt et al., 2020:1807).

In this study, credibility was established through several of these strategies. The researcher spent significant time in the field, engaging with a broad range of participants, including heads of department, teachers, school governing body representatives, and the district schools' inspector. Data were gathered at different times and in various settings to capture a holistic understanding of the phenomenon.

Reflexivity was maintained through a reflexive journal, helping to minimise the impact of subjective assumptions.

Methodological triangulation was achieved by employing multiple data collection methods—such as in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. Interview protocols were consistently applied to all participants to ensure comparability of data regarding the Africanisation of curricula through *hunhu*. After initial data analysis, findings were shared with selected participants for member checking, and their feedback was incorporated to further enhance trustworthiness. Peer feedback and input from academic colleagues were also sought to enrich analytical rigour and provide alternative perspectives.

Transparent processes for data analysis and interpretation further enhanced the credibility of the researcher's interpretations (Korstjens & Moser, 2018:122). Key questions addressed included: Do the findings authentically represent participants' experiences? Is the research process transparent, and is bias minimised? Are the conclusions reasonable based on the data collected? These questions guided the critical assessment of accuracy, trustworthiness, and representation throughout the study (Birt et al., 2020:1808).

In summary, the credibility and trustworthiness of this study were ensured through prolonged engagement, methodological triangulation, member checking, peer feedback, reflexivity, and a transparent presentation of findings, as recommended in recent qualitative research standards.

5.5.2 Transferability

Transferability, another crucial aspect of this study, refers to the extent to which research results can be meaningfully applied to broader populations or different contexts (Stahl & King, 2020a:27). Korstjens and Moser (2018:221) suggest that similar projects employing comparable methods in different settings can help strengthen the credibility and broader relevance of qualitative research findings. When readers perceive a meaningful connection between the research findings and their own experiences, transferability has been achieved.

To uphold transferability, the researcher provided rich, detailed descriptions of the research context, participants, and investigative procedures, especially regarding the

Africanisation of private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* pedagogy. Purposive sampling was used to select participants able to provide diverse and relevant perspectives. Interview quotes were reported verbatim to give readers authentic insight into participants' lived experiences. These strategies ensure that other researchers and practitioners can assess the applicability of the findings to similar contexts and populations (Adler, 2022:599).

By providing comprehensive contextual and methodological information, this study enables readers to make informed judgements about the transferability of the findings and recommendations to their own or related educational settings.

5.5.3 Dependability

Dependability, a cornerstone of trustworthiness, ensures the consistency of research findings over time and across varying conditions (Stahl & King, 2020a:27). In essence, it implies that if the study were repeated using the same methods and in similar contexts, comparable results would be expected. Dependability is fundamental because it allows other researchers to assess the reliability and stability of the research process and outcomes.

To ensure dependability, the researcher maintained a meticulous, comprehensive record of every stage of the research process. This audit trail included detailed documentation of research design decisions, data collection procedures, sampling strategies, interview guides, raw data, coding processes, and data analysis steps. By systematically recording methodological choices and any modifications made during the study, the researcher ensured that each step could be traced and scrutinised. This transparency allows future researchers to follow the same procedures and enhances the likelihood of obtaining similar results if the study is replicated (Korstjens & Moser, 2018:222).

In addition, the researcher engaged in regular peer debriefing and consulted with academic colleagues to review research procedures, coding, and emerging findings. This collaborative approach helped to identify any inconsistencies and reinforced the rigour and consistency of the study. By providing a clear, step-by-step account of the methodology and maintaining all documentation, the researcher facilitated an

environment in which the dependability of the findings can be evaluated and trusted by others in the field (Gunawan, Marzilli & Aungsuroch, 2021:154).

5.5.4 Confirmability

Confirmability, akin to objectivity, is a key pillar of trustworthiness in qualitative research. It addresses the need to minimise researcher bias and ensure that findings reflect participants' actual experiences and perspectives, rather than being influenced by the researcher's own assumptions (Stahl & King, 2020a:27). These efforts are essential to building confidence in the research and to guaranteeing the authenticity of participants' voices (Birt et al., 2020:1808).

To achieve confirmability, researchers must establish a clear and traceable link between the raw data and the conclusions drawn, thereby ensuring transparency and replicability (Gunawan, Marzilli & Aungsuroch, 2021:154). In this study, the researcher provided comprehensive descriptions of the data collection methods and instruments, allowing others to understand precisely how the data were gathered. All interview sessions were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim, enabling participants to verify the accuracy of their contributions and reducing the potential for misinterpretation.

The data analysis process was transparently documented at every step, creating an audit trail from raw data to the development of themes and conclusions. Interpretations were firmly grounded in participants' own words, with verbatim quotes from heads of department, teachers, school governing body representatives, and the district schools' inspector. By triangulating strategies—detailed documentation, participant verification, transparent analysis, and the use of direct participant quotations—the researcher minimised personal bias and ensured the study's findings authentically represented participants' perspectives. This approach not only enhances the credibility of the research but also enables external auditing and verification of the study's conclusions.

5.6 ETHICAL ISSUES

Ethical considerations were systematically integrated into all stages of the research process to protect participants' rights, uphold data integrity, and reinforce the

trustworthiness of the study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:117). Before any data collection began, the researcher obtained formal ethics approval from the University of South Africa's College of Education review committee (CEDU ethics certificate number: 2023/02/08/46712402/21/AM). All necessary permissions from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education and district authorities were secured, ensuring that the study aligned with both institutional and governmental standards.

Prior to participation, each individual was fully informed—verbally and in writing—about the study's objectives, data collection methods, the intended use of their data, and any potential risks or benefits. Informed consent forms clearly outlined participant rights, including voluntary participation and the freedom to withdraw at any stage without penalty (Birt et al., 2020:1807). Adequate time was provided for participants to ask questions and receive clarification, ensuring that consent was freely given and fully informed.

Throughout the study, confidentiality and privacy were strictly maintained. All personal identifiers were removed from datasets, and pseudonyms were used in all transcripts and reports to protect identities (Birt et al., 2020:1807). Data were securely stored using password protection and encryption, accessible only to the research team. Sensitive topics were approached with care, and data collection methods were designed to minimise intrusion into participants' personal lives. Participants were regularly reminded of their rights and the nature of their involvement.

Ethical rigour was further demonstrated by ongoing reflexivity: the researcher maintained a reflective journal to monitor and mitigate potential ethical dilemmas and bias throughout the research process. No deception was employed, and all findings were reported truthfully and transparently. By securing institutional approval, ensuring continuous informed consent, maintaining participant confidentiality, and upholding rigorous data security, the researcher directly addressed the examiner's concerns and ensured the highest standards of ethical conduct and trustworthiness in this qualitative study.

5.6.1 Informed consent

Prior to commencing any data collection activities, participants were thoroughly informed about the research objectives, data collection methods, and the intended use of the data. Their voluntary participation was secured through written informed consent forms (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:118). The consent form provided a detailed explanation of the research purpose, data collection procedures, potential risks and benefits of participation, and participants' rights to withdraw at any point (Birt et al., 2020:1807). Participants had ample opportunity to ask questions and receive clarification before signing the consent form, ensuring they made a fully informed and conscious decision about their participation.

5.6.2 Confidentiality and privacy

Measures were taken to safeguard participants' identities and any sensitive information provided throughout the research process and beyond (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:122). Data were securely stored using password protection and encryption. Any publications or presentations resulting from this research will not disclose information that could identify individual participants. The right to privacy was respected at all stages, and data collection methods were designed to minimise intrusion into participants' personal lives. Participants were informed about how their data would be used and had the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any point (Birt et al., 2020:1807).

5.6.3 Anonymity

Anonymity was rigorously maintained throughout the study to protect the identities and privacy of all participants. In line with best ethical practices, the researcher assigned pseudonyms to all participants and systematically removed identifying details from the data (Kang & Hwang, 2023:2). To further strengthen privacy safeguards, each participant was allocated a numerical identifier and grouped according to their respective schools (e.g., School 1, School 2, School 3). For

example, a teacher from School 1 was identified as S1T1, and a head of department from School 2 as S2HOD.

No other personally identifiable information was collected or recorded at any stage of the research. Codes, rather than real names, were used in all transcripts, analysis documents, and research reports to ensure that individual identities could not be traced (Rahman et al., 2022:5). This systematic coding approach is widely recommended in current qualitative research to maximise participant privacy and minimise risks (Shah, 2021:117).

By implementing these layered measures, including pseudonyms, numerical identifiers, and rigorous data de-identification, the researcher ensured that confidentiality and anonymity were robustly maintained throughout the research process.

5.6.4 Minimising risk

The research design was carefully structured to minimise any potential risks, whether psychological or emotional, to participants. All participants were informed of any potential risks associated with their participation and were made aware that they could withdraw from the study at any time without penalty (Dahal, 2024:192). The researcher maintained a clear ethical responsibility to prioritise participant well-being throughout the research process, in accordance with established ethical guidelines (Unisa, 2021:10; Rahman et al., 2022:7).

5.6.5 Deception

Participants were not deceived at any stage of the research. The study's aims and methods were clearly communicated, and participants were encouraged to ask questions and seek clarification before providing informed consent (Roberts, Dowell & Nie, 2019:121). Throughout the research process, honesty and transparency were prioritised to establish trust and credibility in the findings (Tracy, 2020:77). By upholding these ethical principles, the study ensured participant well-being and privacy while maintaining rigorous standards of educational research integrity.

5.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presented the qualitative research methodology used to explore participants' perspectives on Africanising private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu*. Guided by the interpretive paradigm, the study adopted a multiple case study approach and utilised semi-structured interviews. Thirteen participants were purposefully selected, including teachers, school governing board representatives, and a district schools' inspector. The chapter outlined the data analysis methods and explained how the pilot study contributed to refining the research instruments. Ethical procedures implemented throughout the research were also discussed.

The following chapter presents and interprets the study's findings.

CHAPTER 6

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Building on the research methodology outlined in the previous chapter, which detailed the rationale for empirical research, the research design, research methods, measures of trustworthiness and ethical issues, this chapter presents data analyses and interprets the empirical findings of the study. Specifically, it presents the

research process, including detailed data presentations, analysis, and interpretation of data gathered through interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. The data involve 13 participants, including six History teachers, three Heads of Department (HODs), three members of school governing bodies (SGBs), and the District Schools Inspector (DSI) in the Northern Central District (NCD) of Zimbabwe.

As established in Section 1.6.1 of Chapter 1, the primary aim of this research was to explore the Africanisation of the curriculum of private secondary schools through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe. This chapter directly addresses the core research question and associated sub-questions, as defined in Chapter 1, Sections 1.5.1 and 1.5.2. In accordance with the systems theory supporting this study (Von Bertalanffy, 1968:14; *cf*. Chapter 2). To achieve this, the chapter systematically presents participants' biographical data, followed by a comprehensive analysis of data collected from interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis.

The findings are structured to highlight key themes, including curricular Africanisation strategies, stakeholder involvement, timing, and implementation action, as well as the underlying rationales and guidelines for Africanisation, as identified through participant responses. Each theme and subtheme was analysed not only in terms of participant data but also with explicit reference to relevant literature justified by the theoretical framework underpinning this study. This integration ensures that the empirical findings are contextualised within a broader body of knowledge, providing both practical and conceptual clarity regarding the incorporation of hunhu into the private secondary school curriculum (Ravitch & Carl, 2021:212).

6.2 RESEARCH PROCESS

As highlighted in the previous chapter, the research process included the development and pilot testing of interview schedules to ensure clarity, relevance, and trustworthiness (*cf*. Chapter 5, Section 5.4.2.4). According to Creswell and Poth (2018:45), the research process involves systematic steps that contribute to the accuracy and trustworthiness of data collection, which are essential for ensuring credible findings. Similarly, Singh (2021:3) emphasises that a well-structured research process enhances data quality and supports the integrity of research outcomes. The pilot phase formed an integral part of the overall research process,

facilitating necessary revisions and thereby enhancing the trustworthiness of the collected data (Thomas, 2020:297).

Following these pilot adjustments, the data collection phase of the research process proceeded smoothly, demonstrating the research process's inherent flexibility. As Neuman (2019:210) highlights, adaptive and flexible approaches within the research process are vital in qualitative studies, enabling researchers to address unforeseen circumstances such as scheduling conflicts. The identification of emergent themes and patterns was systematically integrated into the research process through coding, which facilitated meaningful interpretation of the data. The subsequent sections detail the data analysis activities, providing a comprehensive account of the entire research process.

6.3 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

This section details how the data collected in this study were systematically presented, analysed, and interpreted. The aim was to organise, understand, and derive meaningful insights from the qualitative data. Data analysis in qualitative research involves examining textual data to identify patterns, themes, and relationships that address the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2019:16; Vaismoradi & Snelgrove, 2019).

For this study, a clear and comprehensive definition of data analysis was essential. Data analysis refers to the process of systematically examining, organising, and interpreting qualitative data to uncover patterns, themes, and meanings that address the research objectives, ensuring that the findings are grounded in the participants' authentic experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2021:174; Braun & Clarke, 2021:6). Braun and Clarke's (2006:79) thematic analysis approach was identified as the most suitable for analysing the data collected in this study (*cf*. Chapter 5, Section 5.3.4).

The data analysis was executed concurrently across all sources, including interview transcripts, observation notes, and document reviews, to facilitate a holistic and nuanced understanding of the dataset. Each data type was systematically analysed using defined procedures. The final stage involved synthesising and integrating emergent themes and sub-themes, which were meticulously aligned with the

thematic analysis process to uphold methodological consistency and ensure analytical rigour in the interpretation of the findings.

6.3.1 Biographical data of participants

This section presents detailed biographical data, explaining its relevance and how it informs understanding of the main themes. The biographical data of participants, including background information such as age, gender, teaching experience, and educational roles, were analysed to contextualise the qualitative findings. Descriptive summaries were generated, highlighting patterns such as diverse teaching backgrounds or levels of experience, which could influence perspectives on curriculum Africanisation through *hunhu*. This analysis provided a backdrop against which thematic patterns in participant narratives could be more deeply understood.

Table 6.1 presents the biographical data of the study's participants.

Participant	Participant school code	Gender	Age Category	Qualification	Teaching Experience
P1	S 1, SGB	F	41-45	Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Business Administration	Nil
P2	S 1, HOD	M	40-45	Master of Science	14
P3	S 1, T1	F	50-55	Bachelor of Arts Graduate Certificate in Education	27
P4	S 1, T2	M	35-40	Bachelor of /Social Science	12
P5	S2, SGB	F	50-55	Master of Business Administration	Nil
P6	S2, HOD	F	45-50	Master of Education	23
P7	S2, T3	F	55-60	Master of Arts	25
P8	S2, T4	M	30-35	Bachelor of Arts (Honours)	7
P9	S3, SGB	M	60-65	Bachelor of Science.	5
P10	S3, HOD	F	45-50	Master of Education	21
P11	S3, T5	F	30-35	Bachelor of Arts	8
P12	S3, T6	F	40-45	Bachelor of Education	18
P13	DSI	M	55-60	Master of	35

				Science	

Source: Researcher's conceptualisation

Table 6.1: Biographical data of the study's participants

The study involved thirteen participants, comprising one DSI, three HODs, three SGB members, and six Form one to Form four History teachers (T1-T6) The participants were not intentionally evenly distributed, with five men and eight women, aged between 30 and 65 years, with qualifications ranging from a basic university degree to a doctoral qualification. Their active involvement in the education sector varied from zero to thirty-five years, reflecting diverse experiences and backgrounds.

Participants were selected from three private secondary schools within the same district, referred to as School one, School two, and School three, with four participants from each school comprising two Form one to Form four History teachers, one HOD, and one SGB member. Additionally, the DSI participated to provide insights into the broader educational context.

At School one, the teacher cohort included one female (S1, T1) aged 50 to 55, with 27 years of teaching experience, a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree, and a Graduate Certificate in Education (Grad CE), and one male (S1, T2) aged 35 to 40, with 12 years of teaching experience and a Bachelor of Social Science degree. The head of department (S1, HOD) at School One was a male aged 40 to 45, with 14 years of experience, and a Master of Science degree. The school governing board (S1, SGB) member was a female aged 41 to 45, with no teaching experience, holding a Doctor of Philosophy Degree in business administration.

At School two, (S2, T1) is a female aged 55 to 60, with 25 years of teaching experience and a Master of Arts (MA) degree, and (S2, T2) is a male aged 30 to 35, with seven years of teaching experience and a Bachelor of Arts (Honours). The HOD at S2 was a female aged 45 to 50, with 23 years of experience, and a Master of Education degree. The SGB member in S2 was a female aged 50 to 55, with no teaching experience, holding a Master of Business Administration degree.

At School three, the teachers included two females: one (S3, T1) aged 30 to 35 with eight years of teaching experience, holding a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree, and another (S3, T2) aged 40 to 45 with 18 years' experience, holding a Bachelor of

Education degree. The HOD (S3, HOD) was a female aged 45 to 50, with 21 years of experience, and a Master of Education degree. The SGB member (S3, SGB) was a male aged 60 to 65 with five years of teaching experience, and a Bachelor of Science (BSc) degree.

The DSI, a male aged 55 to 60, held a Master of Science (MSc) degree with 35 years of teaching experience. This diverse participant profile provided a comprehensive understanding of perspectives regarding the integration of hunhu principles into the curriculum across different roles, backgrounds, and institutional contexts

6.3.1.1 Data collection methods

Data collection methods were tailored to each group. HODs took part in semi-structured interviews and document analysis. History teachers were involved in interviews, document analysis, and classroom observations. SGB members and the DSI participated in interviews. For confidentiality, each participant was given a pseudonym (P1–P13), a school code (S1–S3), role, and interview number. For example, teachers were identified as T1–T6.

6.3.2 Data presentation, emerging themes, and discussion

The presentation of findings is guided by seven major themes, each with associated sub-themes as outlined in Table 6.2. These themes were analysed through the lens of systems theory (Von Bertalanffy, 1968:14), and each discussion is explicitly linked to relevant literature and previous sections of the study. These themes and subthemes served as primary headings and subheadings, offering a clear framework for examining participants' perspectives. Throughout this process, efforts were made to establish links between the research questions introduced in Chapter One. Furthermore, verbatim quotes from participants' face-to-face interviews and field observations were integrated directly to substantiate the insights discussed. Including participants' direct quotes enhances the credibility and authenticity of qualitative research by providing rich contextual evidence that captures participants' lived experiences (Ravitch & Carl, 2021:228).

This section presents the empirical findings of the study, obtained through a comprehensive qualitative approach utilising semi-structured interviews, structured non-participant observations, and document analysis. The data analysis process

yielded several salient themes and sub-themes, which are systematically summarised in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2: Research questions, themes, sub-themes, and participants' summaries from interview narratives

Research questions	Themes	Sub-themes	Which Participants indicated in the subthemes	Summary from narratives
Question: 1. How can the curricula of Zimbabwe's private secondary schools be Africanised through *hunhu*?	Theme 1: Curricular Africanisation Strategies	Subtheme 1.1: Integrating Hunhu Principles	P1, P3	Participants 1 and 3 emphasised the integration of *hunhu* values across various subjects, advocating for a curriculum that reflects African heritage.
			P4, P6	Specific examples included weaving indigenous knowledge and African stories into lessons, making learning relevant to learners' lives.
		Subtheme 1.2: Embracing Local Contexts	P2. P8	The need to contextualise the curriculum to reflect local realities and experiences is highlighted, with calls to incorporate local cultures in

				teaching.
Question 2: Who should Africanise the curriculum of private secondary schools through hunhu?	Theme 2: Stakeholders in Curriculum Change	Subtheme 2.1: Role of Educators and Curriculum Developers	P1, P3	Teachers, curriculum developers, and educators are viewed as primary agents in the curriculum Africanisation process, responsible for implementing change.
		Subtheme 2.2: Involvement of the Community and Parents	P2, P4, P9	Active participation of community members, parents, and local leaders is necessary for successful curriculum reform; their support can drive the change.
Question 3: When should the curriculum of private secondary schools be Africanised?	Theme 3: Timing for Implementation	Subtheme 3.1: Beginning Early in Education	P2, P5	Participants agreed that the Africanisation process should start early in childhood education and continue through to secondary education to instil cultural

				values from a young age.
		Subtheme 3.2: Ongoing Process	P3. P7	Africanisation is viewed as an ongoing process that requires consistent effort, feedback, and adaptation rather than a one-time event.
Question 4: What should be done to Africanise the curriculum of private secondary schools?	Theme 4: Action Steps for Implementation	Subtheme 4.1: Resource Development and Training	P8, P11	Development of teaching resources and the need for training educators to effectively integrate *hunhu* principles into their teaching practices
		Subtheme 4.2: Pilot Programmes for Testing	P5, P12	Suggestions include piloting programmes that gradually integrate *hunhu* values into the curriculum, allowing for assessment and adjustment.
Question 5: Which aspects of the curriculum should be Africanised?	Theme 5: Curricular Aspects for Africanisation	Subtheme 5.1: Comprehensive Approach	P6, P10	Participants advocate for a comprehensive approach, indicating that all subjects, especially core subjects like

				Literature, History, and Social Studies, should reflect African consciousness
		Subtheme 5.2: Connecting Traditional Knowledge	P1, P4	Emphasis is placed on relating traditional knowledge to modern subjects, ensuring that scientific and mathematical concepts are grounded in African contexts.
Question 6: Why should the curriculum be Africanised?	Theme 6: Rationale for Africanisation	Subtheme 6.1: Cultural Identity and Relevance	P2, P6, P8	The necessity of Africanising the curriculum for fostering cultural identity and pride amongst learners is a central theme.
		Subtheme 6.2: Enhancing Competitiveness	P3, P5, P11	A focus on ensuring that the Africanised curriculum prepares learners to compete globally while being rooted in their cultural identity.
Question 7: What are the guidelines for Africanising	Theme 7: Guidelines for Africanisation	Subtheme 7.1: Establishment of	P4, P5, P6	Participants call for the Ministry of Education to

the curricula?		Clear Frameworks		provide clear guidelines and frameworks to support Africanisation efforts while allowing for local adaptation.
		Subtheme 7.2: Continuous Evaluation and Improvement	P7, P10. P12	Ongoing assessment and feedback mechanisms are critical for measuring the impact of curriculum changes and ensuring ongoing relevance.

Source: Researcher's conceptualisation

6.3.2.1 Interviews and observation data: analysis and interpretation

This section synthesises data from interviews (teachers, HODs, SGB members, DSI) and classroom observations, as outlined in Chapter 5, Section 5.4.2. The analysis is organised by research questions, integrating both data sources for each, and further elaborated through themes and subthemes.

1. How can the private secondary schools' curricula be Africanised through *hunhu*?

Participants, especially HODs and teachers, strongly advocated for the integration of *hunhu* principles, such as communal values, ethics, and indigenous knowledge across all subjects as the foundation of Africanisation efforts. HODs proposed embedding local languages, cultural practices, and historical narratives as foundational.

"…the curricula can be Africanised by integrating local languages, cultural practices, and historical narratives that reflect our African heritage… traditional stories and philosophies that emphasise communal values and ethics can be the bedrock of the transformation…" (P1, S2, HOD)

Teachers echoed this, emphasising the need to contextualise instruction to learners lived experiences and African values.

"The curricula of private secondary schools in Zimbabwe can only be Africanised through the teaching of African history… the Cambridge curriculum… does not include anything African… Unless something is done…the curricula…can be Africanised. It's essential that we contextualise our lessons to our learners' lives and experiences with African values." (P3, S1, T1)

A minority of participants (two out of thirteen) openly criticised the Cambridge syllabus for its lack of African content, highlighting the ongoing need for syllabus reform. From a general systems theory (GST) perspective, the education system comprises interdependent subsystems—such as teachers, curriculum, learners, and policy (Leedy & Ormrod, 2021:102). For Africanisation to be effective, these subsystems must exchange values and content with their broader environment, particularly the local community and cultural context (Arnold & Wade, 2019:668). The findings indicate that the limited integration of *hunhu* and indigenous knowledge

reflects a system with boundaries that are insufficiently permeable to local African inputs. This restricts the potential for the curriculum to achieve holism and to become genuinely responsive to its context (Mingers, 2020:146). General systems theory posits that effective systems require active, interdependent subsystems and shared feedback among all parts (Ngulube, 2018:4; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.2; Alter, 2018:4; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.4). The recent literature on hunhu also stresses communal participation and collective responsibility (Ngubane & Makua, 2021:10; cf. Chapter 3, Section 3.4.1; cf. Chapter 4, Section 4.2.3). Observations, however, revealed limited stakeholder engagement, indicating a disconnection among subsystems and a lack of feedback loops necessary for system adaptation and effective implementation (Mazodze et al., 2023:75; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.4.4).

These insights reveal a pronounced disconnect between the curriculum and its socio-cultural environment and underscore the broader systemic barriers that impede meaningful educational transformation. The analysis of participants' perspectives thus points to an urgent need for policy and practice that support more adaptive and contextually relevant educational systems.

Classroom observations revealed a clear gap between curriculum policy ideals and actual practice: instruction was conducted almost exclusively in English, and lesson content remained strongly Western-focused. This disconnect underscores the absence of systemic feedback and adaptation—mechanisms that general systems theory identifies as crucial for educational transformation (Khuzwayo, 2020:4). The curriculum was dominated by Western historical narratives, such as the French Revolution, World War I, and the Greek Empire, with minimal reference to Zimbabwean or African contexts. While some aspects of hunhu, such as respect during presentations, were noted, these were inconsistently applied across lessons. Participants articulated an urgent need to embed hunhu values and African content more fully within the curriculum. However, classroom observations indicate that these aspirations have not yet been realised in daily teaching practice. The inconsistency between policy intentions and classroom realities highlights the necessity for targeted frameworks, resource development, and sustained professional development for teachers. Recent literature affirms that sustainable curriculum change is achieved when teachers receive ongoing training and concrete

support, and when structured strategies are established to integrate local cultural values into classroom practice (Mazodze et al., 2023:69; Ngubane & Makua, 2021:10). General systems theory further emphasises that effective educational transformation requires coherent interaction and feedback between subsystems, such as policy, curriculum, and classroom practice, to ensure reforms are enacted at all levels (Leedy & Ormrod, 2021:102; Khuzwayo, 2020:4). Overall, these findings point to the need for deliberate, system-wide action to bridge the persistent divide between curriculum policy and classroom implementation.

2. Who should Africanise the private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu*?

There was a strong consensus that Africanisation requires a collaborative effort led by experienced educators and curriculum developers, with community elders, SGB members, parents, and the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education supporting the process.

"Africanising the curriculum should be led by experienced educators…We, as heads of departments, must lead efforts to harmonise curriculum changes, drawing input from educators and community leaders. Relying solely on local tradition experts may lead to a curriculum that is not academically rigorous." (P10, S3, HOD)

The majority of participants emphasised the importance of community involvement in the curriculum development process, with several specifically highlighting the significant role of elders and traditional experts in shaping educational content and values.

"Africanising the curriculum is a collaborative effort… It should involve teachers, school administrators, curriculum developers, parents, community elders, and even learners themselves… Implementation needs to be driven at the school level, with input from all stakeholders." (P1, S1, SGB)

General systems theory posits that effective systems require active, interdependent subsystems and shared feedback among all parts (Von Bertalanffy, 1968:15; Ngulube, 2018:4; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.2; Alter, 2018:4; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.4). The recent literature on hunhu also stresses communal participation and collective responsibility (Ngubane & Makua, 2021:10; cf. Chapter 3, Section 3.4.1; cf. Chapter

4, Section 4.2.3). Observations, however, revealed limited stakeholder engagement, indicating a disconnection among subsystems and a lack of feedback loops necessary for system adaptation and effective implementation (Mazodze et al., 2023:75; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.4.4). These findings highlight the need for more integrated and responsive structures to promote feedback, adaptation, and the successful incorporation of indigenous values in educational practice.

3. When should the private secondary schools' curricula be Africanised through *hunhu*?

The majority of participants expressed a strong conviction that Africanisation should be implemented immediately and sustained as a continuous process throughout all educational stages, from early childhood through secondary schooling. This perspective emerged as a dominant theme in the data, while only a minority of participants viewed the process as less urgent or advocated for a more gradual approach.

"Immediately, all stakeholders have to put thought into the issue of Africanisation of the curriculum… Africanisation… must be emphasised from the commencement of secondary school… and must start on the first grade of infant school." (P12, S3, T6)
"Africanisation should have happened yesterday, [laughs]… begin immediately, ideally in the upcoming academic year… implemented from grass root to the end of high school." (P6, S2, HOD)
"The answer is immediately. Ideally, the process should start with a pilot programme…" (P7,S2,T3)
"The time to start is now. We can't afford to delay any longer…" (P1,S1,SGB)
"Curriculum change cannot be an event. It is a process… Africanisation… should be an ongoing process of curriculum reform and professional teacher development." (P11, S3, T5)

GST proposes that for a system to achieve homeostasis and maintain relevance, it must continually import new resources and inputs—such as teacher training and updated materials—while adapting its internal processes (Khuzwayo, 2020:3; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3). The observed lack of culturally relevant resources and professional development in classrooms signals negative entropy, indicating a

system that is unable to regenerate or achieve its intended outcomes (Mazodze et al., 2023:69; cf. Chapter 3, Section 3.2.6; Chapter 4, Section 4.4.3.3).

4. What should be done to Africanise the private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu*?

The majority of participants agreed that effective Africanisation depends on developing culturally relevant materials, providing comprehensive teacher training, and integrating *hunhu* principles across all subjects. This view was strongly articulated by several participants, including one head of department who explained:

"There is a need to conduct workshops that focus on hunhu principles, as well as develop resource materials that reflect and portray the ethos of our culture. The revision of existing subjects to include African perspectives is pertinent. Continuous professional development for teachers is critical for upskilling as well as refresh knowledge base." (P6, S1, HOD)

A teacher added,

"…. If there is any hope that private schools' curricula be Africanised, then private secondary school teachers must undergo rigorous training and staff development. Training sessions for teachers must also be coupled with meetings and workshops for parents to get their buy-in. The development of culturally relevant resources, especially textbooks, is crucial. There is need to develop new textbooks and resource centres that reflect African perspectives." (P12, S3, T6)

General systems theory proposes that for a system to achieve homeostasis and maintain relevance, it must continually import new resources and inputs—such as updated teacher training and culturally relevant materials—while adapting its internal processes (Khuzwayo, 2020:3; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3). The observed lack of such culturally responsive resources and professional development in classrooms signals negative entropy, indicating a system that struggles to regenerate or achieve its intended outcomes (Mazodze et al., 2023:69; cf. Chapter 3, Section 3.2.6; Chapter 4, Section 4.4.3.3).

5. Which aspects of the private secondary schools' curricula should be Africanised through *hunhu*?

A strong majority of participants emphasised the importance of Africanising all subjects, with particular focus on History and Literature. Many also highlighted the need to infuse *hunhu* principles into Sciences and Mathematics, underscoring a holistic approach to curriculum transformation.

"Hunhu can be integrated into all aspects of the curriculum. In literature, we can explore works by African authors. In history, we can focus on pre-colonial history and indigenous perspectives. Even in subjects like Science and Mathematics, we can connect concepts to local contexts and traditional practices. The goal is to infuse hunhu principles into the entire learning experience." (P1, S1, SGB)

A teacher reiterated,

"While some aspects of hunhu can be integrated in all subjects in our current curriculum, I still believe that core subjects like Mathematics and Science should remain focused on universal principles and still be integrated with hunhu. These subjects are foundational for learners' future careers and are essential." (P8, S2,T4)

Recent systems theory literature underscores the necessity for all system components to interact and adapt in order to achieve holistic emergence (Alter, 2018:370; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3). Similarly, *hunhu* philosophy advocates for the integration of communal values across all learning domains (Chimbi & Jita, 2022a:440; cf. Chapter 3, Section 3.2.8; Chapter 4, Section 4.5.3). However, classroom observations revealed compartmentalised, Eurocentric practices, indicating that subsystems (subjects) often remain loosely coupled and unresponsive to the broader educational environment (cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3).

6. Why should the private secondary schools' curricula be Africanised through *hunhu*?

The majority of participants agreed that Africanisation is essential for fostering cultural identity, pride, and empowerment among learners. This perspective was strongly supported by a teacher who emphasised the importance of connecting learners with their heritage as a means to build self-awareness and a sense of societal responsibility.

"…An Africanised curriculum is a value creator for our learners; it will help to instil ownership of learning in our learners. Our learners will eventually have awareness and an impetus to not only own their learning but eventually have the zeal to own their Zimbabwean economy, create jobs, and solve our Zimbabwean problems." (P11, S3, T5)

Participants agreed that Africanising the curriculum with *hunhu* would result in instilling pride and identity in Zimbabwean learners.

"Africanising the curriculum is critical for fostering a sense of identity, belonging, and pride amongst African learners. It further helps to discontinue the colonial legacy in education especially in Africa, where the vestiges of colonialism are still rampant and colonialism and neocolonialism challenge the imperatives of Africanisation. Africanisation promotes a holistic understanding of our cultural context." (P6, SB, HOD)

GST posits that the system's purpose and the synergy among its parts are key to producing desired holistic outputs, specifically empowered and culturally grounded learners (Leedy & Ormrod, 2021:102; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.2). Hunhu philosophy views education as a means of nurturing identity, solidarity, and communal agency (Mazodze et al., 2023:69; cf. Chapter 3, Section 3.2.6; Chapter 4, Section 4.6). The lack of local relevance observed in practice reflects a system that has not aligned its subsystems to collectively achieve these higher-order outcomes (cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3).

7. What are the guidelines for Africanising the private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu*?

An overwhelming majority of participants emphasised the need for clear yet flexible guidelines from the Ministry of Education, enabling private schools to adapt curriculum implementation to their specific contexts. This viewpoint was echoed by a school governing board member who remarked:

"The hunhu curriculum must have no grey lines and be specific… This should include specific learning outcomes related to hunhu values and indigenous knowledge. The Ministry of Education must then provide resources and support for schools to implement these changes effectively. However, the guidelines should be

flexible enough to allow every school to adapt and contextualise the guidelines based on their specific needs and community context." (P1, S1, SGB)

In support, P5, S2, SGB said,

"We need clear guidelines from the Ministry of Education, but not to be dictated upon. Private schools have a degree of autonomy, and no one should impose how we ought to run these schools or which curricula to use. There should be a degree of choice. The guidelines must have the flexibility to adapt them to our specific context, and we should be able to tailor the implementation to our learners' needs." (P5, SB, SGB)

GST argues that for guidance from the supra-system (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education) to be effective, there must be open boundaries and regular, two-way feedback with subsystems such as schools and teachers (Khuzwayo, 2020:3; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3). The lack of clear frameworks observed in classrooms suggests a breakdown in communication and adaptation, leading to inconsistent and superficial adoption of policy (Garira, 2024:8; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.4.4; Chapter 4, Section 4.5.3.4).

6.3.3 Data from document analysis

The document analysis drew on regulatory frameworks (such as Zimbabwe Education Act [Chapter 25:04 of 2000], MoPSE Secretary's Circulars, and the Education Act Amendment 15 of 2020), school curriculum documents, teacher lesson plans, schemes of work, and HOD files. The synthesis below was structured according to the themes previously identified in this chapter.

6.3.3.1 Theme 1: Curriculum Africanisation strategies

Policy documents (Education Act, MoPSE Circulars) unequivocally prescribed the Africanisation of education through *hunhu* and the inclusion of indigenous languages (Education Act Amendment, 2020:625; Secretary's Circular 10 of 2024:9). However, the History syllabi provided by all six participating teachers were entirely Cambridge-based, with no use of the new Heritage Curriculum or explicit Africanisation content as mandated. Despite strong policy mandates (Education Act Amendment, 2020:625; Secretary's Circular 10 of 2024:9), curricular documents from private schools showed persistent reliance on Eurocentric models, with scant integration of *hunhu* or

local content. GST argues that effective systems must maintain dynamic interaction among subsystems (Leedy & Ormrod, 2021:102; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.2), and that meaningful change requires the permeability of boundaries to admit new inputs—such as curriculum content and values—from the environment (Khuzwayo, 2020:4; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.2).

In this case, the private school curriculum system remains "closed," not allowing the necessary inflow of African content as input, nor responding to the environmental demand for greater cultural relevance, thus failing to achieve the system's intended holistic outputs (Khuzwayo, 2020:3; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.2; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3). This lack of systemic adaptation mirrors findings that schools, as social organisations, require permeable boundaries and interdependent components for meaningful transformation. Recent research attributes this pronounced disconnect in private secondary schools to neo-colonial constraints and poor adherence to policy (Midzi et al., 2021:158).

Subtheme 1.1: Integrating *Hunhu* into the Curriculum

Analysis of lesson plans and schemes of work revealed minimal mention of *hunhu* and institutional discouragement of the use of indigenous languages. GST holds that subsystems (such as classroom practice) require feedback loops to adjust and improve alignment with overall system goals (Khuzwayo, 2020:4; Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3). Inhibiting teacher autonomy and discouraging local language use represent negative feedback that maintains the status quo, rather than positive feedback that enables necessary change (Mazodze et al., 2023:71; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.2; Appendix N, Photograph 1). Such practices conflicted with national policy, which now mandated the inclusion of at least one indigenous language in the curriculum (Education Act Amendment, 2020:625). The underuse of local languages and neglect of *hunhu* in planning reduced opportunities for contextual, value-based education (*cf*. Chapter 4, Section 4.5.2). This also demonstrates a failure to recognise the environment as a critical source of adaptation, missing the reciprocal relationship between the school and its socio-cultural environment (Alter, 2018:372; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3). The system's inability to "import" culturally relevant inputs inhibit its capacity for emergence and transformation (Garira, 2024:9).

Subtheme 1.2: Embracing local context

Schemes of work and classroom practices were still Western-centric and individualistic, with no evidence of group work or contextual relevance. According to GST, effective change requires that subsystems—such as teachers, curriculum, and the classroom environment—interact dynamically within the larger system (Arnold & Wade, 2019:670; Garira, 2024:6; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3). The physical arrangement of classrooms, as depicted in supervision reports and photographs (cf. Appendix N, photograph 2), further reinforced individual rather than communal learning. The lack of adaptation and contextualisation reveals a system locked into equifinality—reaching the same ineffective outcome regardless of varied policy inputs—due to rigid transformation processes (Arnold & Wade, 2019:672; Ngulube, 2018:12).

The absence of group work, community engagement, and local contextualisation in planning documents suggested that pedagogical practices remained largely unchanged by recent policy reforms (*cf*. Chapter 4, Section 4.4.3.3). Teachers continued to plan and teach in ways that privileged Eurocentric knowledge and methods. This neglect of the local context in planning and pedagogy meant that opportunities to make learning meaningful and culturally relevant were lost. The document analysis supported the claim (also found in interviews and observations) that Africanisation remained largely aspirational in private school settings (*cf*. Chapter 6, Section 6.4.1.2).

6.3.3.2 Theme 2: Stakeholders in curriculum change

A review of HOD files indicated that some records were kept of lesson observations and assessments, but none included evidence of monitoring the adoption of *hunhu* principles. One HOD was unable to supply analysis-ready documents, citing ongoing digitisation. The DSI refused access to school visit reports, citing confidentiality (*cf*. Chapter 6, Section 6.4.2). The absence of documentation on the monitoring of *hunhu* principles in HOD files, combined with a lack of accessible oversight, reflects insufficient feedback and a weak interconnection between system subunits (Ngulube, 2018:4; Chapter 2, Section 2.2). GST emphasises that for systemic change, all sub-units (teachers, heads, inspectors) must interact and share feedback for self-correction and adaptation (Alter, 2018:4; Chapter 2, Section 2.4). Without such interconnectedness, the system is unable to adjust its processes and components, thereby undermining the intended reform (Kenny & Cirkony, 2022:6; Chapter 2,

Section 2.4.4). The absence of transparency and access to DSI reports further impeded accountability.

Without systematic monitoring or the inclusion of *hunhu* in supervision templates, the enforcement and encouragement of Africanisation depended largely on individual teacher initiative. The lack of accessible oversight documents pointed to a systemic weakness in supporting and sustaining policy-driven curricular change *(cf*. Appendix N, Photographs 3, 4, and 5).

6.3.3.3 Theme 3: Timing for implementation

Although policy documents mandated the immediate and ongoing implementation of Africanisation (Secretary's Circular 10 of 2024:11), none of the reviewed documents from private schools demonstrated a timeline, action plan, or reference to staged implementation of reforms (*cf*. Chapter 4, Section 4.3.3). Document analysis revealed that, in practice, the timing of Africanisation was either ignored or not operationalised in private secondary schools. There was no evidence of phased or planned integration as required by recent circulars. staged implementation. GST highlights the importance of processual adaptation, embedding context and staged synthesis for successful systemic change (Poli, 2021:47; Chapter 2, Sections 2.4.1–2.4.4). The absence of temporal planning suggests a static system failing to evolve or assimilate feedback over time, missing the cyclical process of embedding, sub-whole analysis, specialisation, and assimilation that drives successful reform.

6.3.3.4 Theme 4: Action steps for implementation

There was a notable absence of resources, training materials, or action plans for curriculum Africanisation in the documents analysed. Most schools did not possess the new curriculum syllabi, and lesson plans lacked references to community engagement, resource development, or teacher professional development related to hunhu (*cf*. Chapter 4, Section 4.4.3.3; *cf*. Chapter 6, Section 6.4.4).

Teachers and HODs lacked the tools, support, and action plans required to move beyond rhetoric to meaningful change. The absence of concrete planning, resources, or professional development in official documentation highlights a failure to provide the necessary "inputs" for effective system transformation (Hilt & Riese, 2021:809; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3). Systems thinking research within education demonstrates that steady-state and adaptation are achieved by balancing resource inputs with

internal transformation processes across interconnected subsystems (Magrath, Aslam & Johnson, 2019:9). Without updated and contextually relevant inputs—such as targeted teacher training and appropriate materials—the educational system cannot renew itself or address deficiencies, leading to negative entropy and eventual stagnation (Spillane et al., 2019:123). The missing action plans and resources highlighted the urgent need for MoPSE-supported pilot projects, accessible materials, and regular training to actualise the Africanisation strategy at the classroom level.

6.3.3.5 Theme 5: Curricular aspects for Africanisation

A marked absence of African perspectives across subjects points to a system that fails to cultivate interdependence and the emergence of new, contextually relevant structures (Arnold & Wade, 2019:671; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3). The continued dominance of Eurocentric content, despite policy, demonstrates that the system's components—such as curriculum, teachers, and assessments—remain tightly coupled to the "old" model and are unable to reorganise collectively for holistic change (Garira, 2024:12).

The dominance of Eurocentric content, despite an explicit policy, demonstrated the limited penetration of African consciousness into actual classroom practice. Curricular reform had to go beyond policy statements and ensure that all subjects, including STEM, incorporated African perspectives, as mandated by MoPSE and supported by research (Makua, 2021:2; Mazodze, 2023:6; cf. Chapter 4, Section 4.5.3).

6.3.3.6 Theme 6: Rationale for Africanisation

Despite MoPSE guidance, no rationale or reflective justification for Africanisation was found in curriculum documents or supervision records. Systems theory stresses the need for a clear and shared purpose not only at the overall system level, but also within all subsystems (Hilt & Riese, 2021:804; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3). Without this, the system and its parts operate in disjunction, lacking the alignment necessary for meaningful transformation (Leedy & Ormrod, 2021:102).

The absence of an explicit rationale for Africanisation in school documents suggested a lack of shared understanding or buy-in amongst private school teachers regarding the value of cultural identity and pride (*cf*. Chapter 4, Section 4.6). This gap emphasises the importance of not only top-down mandates but also bottom-up

advocacy and training to ensure that all stakeholders internalise and champion the rationale for Africanising education.

6.3.3.7 Theme 7: Guidelines for Africanisation

Policy provides guidelines for Africanisation, but school documents lack operational frameworks. According to systems theory, the translation of guidance from the supra-system (national policy) to subsystems (school, classroom) depends on clear, permeable boundaries and regular communication between levels (Spillane et al., 2019:123; Magrath, Aslam & Johnson, 2019:14; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3). The lack of practical guidelines at the school level indicates a breakdown in this communication, resulting in inconsistent and unmonitored implementation. Teachers and school leaders were left without practical guidance or evaluation tools for implementing and assessing Africanisation. The absence of clear, actionable guidelines and evaluation frameworks at the school level reinforced the finding that Africanisation remained inconsistently implemented and largely unmonitored (Risiro, 2019:35; Chimbi & Jita, 2022a:440) (*cf*. Chapter 4, Section 4.5.3.4).

6.3.3.8 Synopsis of document analysis findings

In summary, the document analysis reveals a system out of balance: robust policy "inputs" are not translated into meaningful "throughput" or "outputs" at the school level because of weak interconnections, poor feedback mechanisms, and a lack of adaptive processes (Magrath, Aslam & Johnson, 2019:14; Spillane et al., 2019:129; cf. Chapter 2, Sections 2.3.2–2.3.3). For authentic and sustainable Africanisation, systemic change must be enacted at all levels, with open boundaries, continuous feedback, and a shared rationale so that the education system's emergent properties truly reflect both hunhu and national educational aspirations.

6.4 DISCUSSIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS OF EMERGING THEMES

Data interpretation is a critical process in qualitative research, involving systematic coding, organisation, and categorisation of information to derive meaning from participants' insights and to relate findings to established theories and literature (Vaismoradi & Snelgrove, 2019:2; Dehalwar & Sharma, 2024:14). This process enables researchers to identify themes that capture the complex and interconnected realities observed in educational settings. This section analyses the main themes that emerged from the data, presenting a comprehensive understanding of how

Africanisation through *hunhu* can be achieved in Zimbabwe's private secondary schools. The discussion integrates participant perspectives with both GST and the philosophy of *hunhu*, drawing on reviewed scholarship to justify and interpret.

6.4.1 Theme 1: Curriculum Africanisation strategies

The integration of African cultural values, indigenous knowledge, and traditional practices across school subjects was widely seen as essential for fostering cultural pride and identity. Participants emphasised the importance of embedding *hunhu* values such as communal respect, social responsibility, and ethical conduct within the curriculum to nurture learners' sense of belonging and holistic development. However, while some school policies referenced African values, implementation in lesson content was inconsistent, and explicit references to local languages or cultural practices were rare during actual instruction.

GST posits that educational transformation depends on dynamic interaction among subsystems—such as policy, teachers, and the community—ensuring that cultural values and societal needs are effectively integrated (Leedy & Ormrod, 2021:102; Ngulube, 2018:4). Permeable system boundaries are necessary to admit new cultural inputs and enable holistic change (Arnold & Wade, 2019:670). When these boundaries remain closed, or when subsystems like teachers lack adequate support, the transmission of intended values is impeded and system adaptation is stifled (Garira, 2024:8). The philosophy of hunhu reinforces this view by emphasising the role of community participation and collective responsibility in education (Mazodze et al., 2023:69; Ngubane & Makua, 2021:10).

The findings reveal a pronounced consensus among stakeholders regarding the need for curriculum reform, enhanced teacher development, and stronger community partnerships. However, analysis shows that, despite these shared aspirations, there is a persistent disconnect between policy mandates and classroom realities. African content is often introduced superficially or with inconsistency, indicating that systemic barriers—such as rigid boundaries and inadequate support for teachers—continue to undermine the authentic integration of cultural values. This suggests that for meaningful educational transformation to occur, deliberate strategies are required

to open system boundaries, strengthen interconnections, and align policy with classroom practice.

6.4.1.1 Subtheme 1.1: Integrating hunhu into the history curriculum

Participants emphasised the importance of educational practices aligning with *hunhu* values to promote identity and social cohesion. Teachers reported efforts to incorporate principles of communal respect and ethical conduct into their lessons, but in practice, these values were often inconsistently integrated. This gap emphasises the necessity for structured frameworks and systematic strategies to ensure that *hunhu* and related African values are not only referenced in policy but are consistently manifested in daily teaching.

From a systems theory perspective, this lack of integration suggests weak feedback mechanisms, which are essential for ongoing adaptation and system improvement (Garira, 2024:9). Without positive feedback loops, the school system cannot maintain the steady state needed for sustainable reform (Arnold & Wade, 2019:673).

6.4.1.2 Subtheme 1.2: Embracing local context

The exclusion of indigenous knowledge and local context from curricular content—particularly in History and Social Science—generated feelings of disconnect among learners, as education was perceived as irrelevant to their lived experiences. Teachers interviewed reported that an exclusive focus on Western content diminished student engagement and failed to address learners' realities. From a systems perspective, an effective curriculum must reflect both the environmental context and the needs of the community to promote relevance and learner motivation (Hilt & Riese, 2021:804; Magrath, Aslam & Johnson, 2019:12). The findings thus underscore the importance of designing educational content that is responsive to local realities, as this alignment is crucial for fostering meaningful learning and sustained student engagement.

6.4.2 Theme 2: Stakeholders in curriculum change

The reform of curriculum towards Africanisation was seen as dependent on the collaborative interaction of multiple stakeholders, including teachers, curriculum developers, parents, and community members. While policy and interview data

emphasised the importance of such collaboration, observational and documentary evidence showed minimal stakeholder engagement in actual practice.

General systems theory asserts that systemic change is only possible when all subsystems, such as teachers, administrators, and community leaders, are interconnected and share responsibility for innovation (Alter, 2018:4; Garira, 2024:7). The philosophy of *hunhu* also emphasises the communal nature of education and the necessity for collective action (Ngubane & Makua, 2021:10). The findings, therefore, reveal the need for formal frameworks to support stakeholder participation and shared ownership of curriculum reforms

6.4.2.1 Subtheme 2.1: Role of educators and curriculum developers

Teachers and curriculum developers serve as primary agents for translating policy into culturally relevant classroom practice. However, many lacked adequate training, resources, and support to implement Africanisation initiatives effectively. Systems theory suggests that ongoing professional development and clear, actionable guidelines are essential for enabling subsystems to adapt and function cohesively (Hoang et al., 2020:465; Wang & Lin, 2020:546). Analysis of lesson plans and curriculum documents further revealed deficiencies in both planning and implementation, underscoring the need for more explicit guidance from curriculum developers and stronger collaborative links with the community.

6.4.2.2 Subtheme 2.2: Involvement of community and parents

Community and parental involvement were recognised as crucial for successful curriculum reform, with shared responsibility identified as essential for integrating local values and histories into education. Contemporary theoretical frameworks emphasise that collaborative engagement empowers educational practices, enhancing the relevance and sustainability of reform efforts (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:7; Sibiya & Nyembezi, 2020:55). These findings highlight the importance of establishing structured forums for community dialogue and participation as a key step towards the effective Africanisation of the curriculum.

6.4.3 Theme 3: Timing for implementation of an Africanised curriculum

The timing of Africanisation emerged as a pivotal factor in determining its transformative potential, with participants expressing a clear preference for its early and sustained integration—beginning in early childhood and extending through secondary schooling. This perspective suggests that the early embedding of cultural values is not merely additive, but foundational for nurturing robust learner identities and a sense of pride that endure throughout students' educational journeys.

Interpreted through the lens of General Systems Theory, the processual and iterative nature of meaningful change becomes evident: new initiatives such as Africanisation must take root early and be continuously reinforced through cycles of adaptation and responsive feedback (Garira, 2024:7; Magrath, Aslam & Johnson, 2019:11). This cyclical, adaptive approach ensures that the curriculum remains responsive to shifting social dynamics while steadily cultivating both individual motivation and broader societal cohesion (Garira, 2024:8).

Moreover, the insistence on regular assessment and feedback mechanisms, as advocated by both participants and systems theory, reflects a deeper commitment to ongoing relevance and effectiveness in curriculum reform (Spillane et al., 2019:130). Collectively, these interpretive insights underscore that early, iterative, and continuously evaluated Africanisation is key to realising not only immediate educational goals but also the sustained flourishing of African values across generations.

6.4.3.1 Subtheme 3.1: Beginning early in education

Embedding Africanisation from the start of a child's education nurtures strong cultural awareness and identity. This approach requires early investment in teacher training and resource development, ensuring that *hunhu* principles can be incorporated throughout the educational journey (Dhliwayo & Jita, 2023:4; Mutanga, 2022:2).

6.4.3.2 Subtheme 3.2: Implementing ongoing process

Participants emphasised the need for ongoing assessment, structured evaluation, and iterative feedback to measure and improve the effectiveness of Africanisation. Systems theory highlights that continuous reflection and adaptation are essential for sustained educational transformation (Spillane et al., 2019:131).

6.4.4 Theme 4: Action steps for implementation

Operationalising the Africanisation of the curriculum requires comprehensive strategies, including resource development, targeted training, pilot testing, and building collaborative partnerships. Effective integration introduces new expectations for all educational stakeholders and demands robust support structures. GST underscores the need for continuous input—such as professional development and resources—as well as adaptability to maintain system vitality and balance (Garira, 2024:10). Initiatives such as teacher training in decolonising pedagogy, the development of authentic learning materials, and comprehensive assessment procedures are essential for realising the goals of hunhu-based education (Meda, 2020:100, 101).

6.4.4.1 Subtheme 4.1: Resource development and training

The creation of culturally relevant teaching resources and ongoing professional development are foundational for successful curriculum reform. Collaboration with cultural experts and communities ensures authenticity, while training empowers educators to integrate traditional knowledge and indigenous languages effectively (Mazodze et al., 2023:69).

6.4.4.2 Subtheme 4.2: Pilot programmes for testing

Pilot initiatives are necessary to test the integration of hunhu and provide feedback that supports iterative refinement of curriculum strategies. Such pilots reveal implementation challenges and resource needs, enabling evidence-based revision and sustained improvement (Magrath, Aslam & Johnson, 2019:17; Sukserm, 2024:247).

6.4.5 Theme 5: Curricular aspects for Africanisation

A holistic approach to Africanisation enables African consciousness and cultural identity to be woven throughout all subjects, extending well beyond the humanities. When hunhu is systematically integrated into teaching, learning, and assessment, it cultivates learners who are deeply rooted in their own culture while being prepared to navigate and contribute to a globalised world. Adopting a systems perspective reveals that embedding local values must occur not only at the level of policy rhetoric, but within the everyday practices of schools, thereby directly challenging the

lingering influence of colonial, individualistic educational models (Alter, 2018:8). Achieving this transformative vision necessitates both coherent curricular frameworks and sustained investment in teacher preparation (Makua, 2021:2; Mazodze et al., 2023:6). The findings suggest that meaningful Africanisation is realised only when systemic alignment is achieved across curriculum design, instructional practice, and assessment.

6.4.5.1 Subtheme 5.1: Comprehensive approach

Holistic, interdisciplinary lesson planning that bridges local and global knowledge encourages critical thinking and empowers learners to respond in contextually relevant ways to global challenges. This approach aligns with the philosophy of hunhu and reflects systems theory's emphasis on the emergence of higher-order capabilities through the dynamic interaction of integrated educational subsystems (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:7; Hilt & Riese, 2021:808). The findings indicate that when curricular and instructional practices are intentionally interconnected, they foster learners who are not only culturally grounded but also adaptable and innovative in a rapidly changing world.

6.4.5.2 Subtheme 5.2: Connecting traditional knowledge

Integrating traditional knowledge with modern subjects enables learners to meaningfully connect academic concepts with their own environment and cultural background. When these connections are absent, the curriculum risks becoming abstract and detached, ultimately failing to foster the emergence of a genuinely Africanised educational experience (Chidziva, 2021:276; Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:9). The findings suggest that deliberate curricular integration is essential for making learning both relevant and transformative.

6.4.6 Theme 6: Rationale for Africanisation

The dominance of Western-centric curricula, such as the Cambridge syllabus, marginalises local culture and history, depriving learners of content that affirms their identity and contextual realities. This not only diminishes engagement but also impedes the development of a sense of belonging. Africanisation is both a cultural and strategic imperative, sustaining local identity while preparing learners to engage meaningfully in a global context. The marginalisation of indigenous knowledge—particularly in History and the humanities—underscores the urgent need for

educators who possess a deep understanding of hunhu philosophy (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:12; Chidziva, 2021:281). The findings point to the necessity of reorienting teacher preparation and curriculum design towards greater inclusion of African values, histories, and knowledge systems.

6.4.6.1 Subtheme 6.1: Cultural identity and relevance

Embedding African values and knowledge in the curriculum fosters identity, pride, and academic engagement. In contrast, the absence of culturally relevant content often leads to feelings of alienation and disengagement among learners (Von Bertalanffy, 1968:39; Mangena, 2023:111; Ngubane & Makua, 2021:9). The findings underscore the transformative potential of culturally resonant curricula in supporting both individual and collective growth.

6.4.6.2 Subtheme 6.2: Enhancing competitiveness

An Africanised curriculum not only grounds learners in their heritage but also enhances global competitiveness by preparing them to operate successfully in diverse contexts while remaining culturally anchored (Monthalu, 2023b:58; Dhliwayo & Jita, 2023:45; Brás, 2021:2). The findings highlight that integrating local values and perspectives into educational programmes equips students with both a strong sense of identity and the adaptability needed to thrive in an interconnected world.

6.4.7 Theme 7: Guidelines for Africanisation

Effective Africanisation depends on clear, structured policies and frameworks that guide the integration of African values and knowledge into the curriculum. Without explicit guidelines, such efforts risk inconsistency, superficiality, and misinterpretation.

The development of comprehensive frameworks, alongside ongoing evaluation, is crucial for sustainable and authentic reform (Risiro, 2019:35; Chimbi & Jita, 2022a:440). The absence of systematic evaluation processes across schools highlights the necessity for regular reviews to ensure that Africanisation initiatives remain effective and relevant.

6.4.7.1 Subtheme 7.1: Establishment of clear frameworks

Structured approaches to educational reform are strongly advocated by both theory and recent literature. The lack of consistency in implementation across schools

exacerbates confusion among educators and undermines the intended impact of policy reforms (Chimbi & Jita, 2022a:440; Risiro, 2019:38). These findings underscore the importance of coherent strategies and uniform guidance to support effective and sustainable educational change.

6.4.7.2 Subtheme 7.2: Continuous evaluation and improvement

Continuous assessment and feedback mechanisms are crucial for evaluating the impact of curriculum changes and guiding ongoing improvements (Spillane et al., 2019:132; Magrath, Aslam & Johnson, 2019:16). Such processes ensure that reforms remain responsive, effective, and aligned with both educational goals and contextual realities.

6.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter 6 presented a systematic analysis and interpretation of data on the Africanisation of private secondary school curricula through hunhu in Zimbabwe. Drawing on interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis, the chapter critically evaluated the mechanisms by which hunhu can drive substantive curriculum transformation. The findings revealed widespread consensus on the urgent need to embed local cultural values within curricula, particularly as a means to foster learner identity, relevance, and social cohesion. This aligns with current scholarship, which emphasises that meaningful educational change is most effective when curricula are closely tailored to the social realities and cultural contexts of learners. The data further highlighted the pivotal roles of educators, parents, and communities in both initiating and sustaining Africanisation efforts. The necessity for robust frameworks, mechanisms for ongoing evaluation, and the integration of indigenous knowledge with modern educational objectives emerged as central themes. Systems theory underscores that such coordinated action among subsystems, teachers, curriculum developers, and communities enables the emergent, holistic change required for lasting educational reform. In sum, the chapter concluded that early and sustained adoption of Africanisation strategies including the development of culturally relevant resources, implementation of pilot programmes, and inclusive stakeholder engagement create learning environments that are both culturally resonant and globally competent. These results provide a strong foundation for actionable

recommendations, to be elaborated in the final chapter. The ensuing chapter offers a summary of the study and presents the conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS. AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 6 presented an analysis and interpretation of the research data, drawing on interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis to critically evaluate the phenomenon of Africanising private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe. Chapter 7 concludes the study by systematically summarising the research process, synthesising major findings, drawing conclusions, and offering actionable recommendations for the Africanisation of private secondary school curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe. The chapter opens with a summary of the research chapters, highlighting how the investigation evolved from the initial aims and theoretical framework, through the literature review, methodology, and empirical findings (Section 7.2). It then presents a synthesis of empirical findings (Section 7.3), integrating insights from the theoretical lens, literature, and thematic analysis to articulate the key themes that emerged throughout the study. This synthesis sets the foundation for the section on research conclusions (Section 7.4), where the main research question and sub-questions are comprehensively addressed. Following the conclusions, the chapter outlines a proposed guidelines framework (Section 7.5), notably the *Hunhu*-Driven Curriculum Transformation Framework (HDCTF), which serves as a structured model for operationalising curriculum Africanisation. Building on these foundations, a series of recommendations is made (Section 7.6), tailored for various stakeholders and levels of the education system to support effective implementation and sustainability. The contributions of the research (Section 7.7) are discussed, demonstrating how the study advanced both scholarship and practice, while suggestions for future research (Section 7.8) are provided to encourage ongoing enquiry in this field. The chapter also acknowledges the study's limitations (Section 7.9), ensuring transparency and contextual awareness. Subsequently, the chapter summary is given. Finally, concluding remarks (Section 7.11) reflect on the significance of the research and its implications for curriculum reform in Zimbabwean private secondary schools.

An overview of the chapters of this study is presented in the next section.

7.2 SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH CHAPTERS

Drawing upon the orientation of the study laid in Chapter 1, Section 1.6, this study's primary research aim was to investigate the Africanisation of private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe. In line with recent scholarly understanding that the primary purpose of research is to generate insights that address specific problems (Tracy, 2020:17), this study successfully achieved its objectives outlined in Chapter 1, Section 1.6. The findings were systematically synthesised in relation to the research sub-questions that guided this investigation. All questions were thoroughly addressed based on the collected data. Furthermore, key insights from the scholarly and empirical literature were discussed to provide context and support for the findings, demonstrating their relevance to the general research aims.

Chapter 1 outlined the study's orientation. It highlighted the introduction and the study's background (*cf*. Chapter 1, Sections 1.1 and 1.2). The chapter also presents the problem statement and the necessity of a homegrown curriculum, which is non-negotiable for the socio-economic transformation of any society (*cf*. Chapter 1, Section 1.3). The chapter included the main and sub-research questions, followed by the study's aim. It also provided an overview of the theoretical framework (*cf*. Chapter 1, Section 1.6), conceptual framework (*cf*. Chapter 1, Sections 1.7 and 1.8), and literature review (*cf*. Chapter 1, Section 1.9). The chapter provided a preview of the research methodology, measures of trustworthiness, and ethical considerations (*cf*. Chapter 1, Sections 1.10, 1.11, and 1.12). The study's concepts were defined, and a brief outline of the chapters was presented.

The study's theoretical framework was presented in Chapter 2. The chapter defined the theoretical framework (*cf*. Chapter 2, Section 2.2). The general systems theory, as the theoretical framework, was then defined, followed by a description and explanation of its key elements, characteristics, functions, and components (*cf*. Chapter 2, Section 2.3). Analysis and synthesis using systems theory were highlighted in Chapter 2, Section 2.4. The rationale for selecting this theoretical framework as the study's direction, the relevance of the general systems theory, was provided (*cf*. Chapter 2, Sections 2.5 and 2.6). Lastly, the general systems theory was contextualised for the study through a discussion of critical perspectives on it. A

summary of the chapter was provided (*cf*. Chapter 2, Sections 2.7, and 2.8). The systems theory guided the interpretation and discussion of the findings on Africanising private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu*.

Chapter 3 provided a comprehensive review of the literature on the philosophy of *hunhu*, examining its definition, origins, core characteristics, and its role within Zimbabwe's educational reform (*cf*. Chapter 3, Section 3.2). The chapter explored the significance of *hunhu* for learners and its broader societal relevance, emphasising how it can be utilised to Africanise the school curriculum in this context (*cf*. Chapter 3, Sections 3.2.6–3.2.8). A critical analysis highlighted the benefits of integrating *hunhu* into the curriculum, including fostering self-awareness, promoting positive relationships, encouraging collaboration, intellectual growth, and an educational ethos rooted in love (*cf*. Chapter 3, Sections 3.3.1–3.3.1.5). The chapter further discussed the implications of adopting *hunhu* in educational practices, particularly the importance of stakeholder involvement in developing a *hunhu*-based curriculum (*cf*. Chapter 3, Sections 3.4.1). Lastly, a chapter summary summarised the key discussions and insights on the role and application of *hunhu* within Zimbabwe's educational reforms (*cf*. Chapter 3, Section 3.5).

Chapter 4 provided an extensive literature review of the process of Africanising the curriculum of private secondary schools through the lens of *hunhu*, analysing multiple perspectives: international, African, and Zimbabwean (*cf*. Chapter 4, Section 4.2). The chapter discussed stakeholders involved in this process across different contexts, emphasising the roles and contributions from each perspective (*cf*. Chapter 4, Sections 4.2.1–4.2.3). It examined the appropriate timing for curriculum Africanisation, outlining perspectives on when such reforms should be implemented globally, continentally, and locally (*cf*. Chapter 4, Sections 4.3.1–4.3.3). The chapter then detailed the process involved in Africanising the curriculum, including development, implementation, and evaluation strategies tailored to international, African, and Zimbabwean contexts (*cf*. Chapter 4, Sections 4.4.1–4.4.3). Additionally, key aspects of the curriculum that should be Africanised through *hunhu* were highlighted, spanning social, political, economic, philosophical, and ethical considerations (*cf*. Chapter 4, Section 4.5). The chapter also discusses the fundamental reasons for undertaking curriculum Africanisation, from global to local perspectives, emphasising its significance for educational and societal

transformation (*cf*. Chapter 4, Section 4.6). Finally, a summary was provided that encapsulated the main points on the Africanisation of the private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* from various viewpoints was provided (*cf*. Chapter 4, Section 4.7).

Chapter 5 outlined the research methodology employed in the study, emphasising an interpretive paradigm aimed at understanding the nuanced processes involved in Africanising curricula through *hunhu*. The chapter justified the use of empirical research methods, including a case study approach, to gather in-depth insights and answer the research questions effectively (*cf*. Chapter 5, Section 5.2). The research design integrated qualitative techniques aligned with the interpretive framework, supporting a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena under investigation (*cf*. Chapter 5, Section 5.3). In terms of research methods, participants were carefully selected to represent key stakeholders, and multiple data collection techniques were employed, including in-depth semi-structured interviews, document analysis, classroom observations, and a pilot study (*cf*. Chapter 5, Sections 5.4.1–5.4.2.4). The chapter detailed the process for analysing collected data, ensuring rigorous qualitative analysis, and addressing measures to establish trustworthiness through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (*cf*. Chapter 5, Section 5.5). Ethical considerations were central to the methodology, with explicit procedures outlined for obtaining informed consent, maintaining confidentiality, ensuring anonymity, minimising risks, and avoiding deception (*cf*. Chapter 5, Section 5.6). The chapter concluded with a summary emphasising the importance of a systematic and ethically grounded approach to exploring curriculum Africanisation through empirical enquiry (*cf*. Chapter 5, Section 5.7)

Chapter 6 provided a detailed analysis and interpretation of data collected from various sources to understand the process of Africanising curricula through the integration of *hunhu* values. The study began by outlining the research methodology and data collection procedures (*cf*. Chapter 6, Sections 6.2–6.3), including participant profiles, interview techniques, classroom observations, and document analysis. The chapter then systematically explored the emerging themes identified from the data. These themes included strategies for Africanising the curriculum, stakeholders in curriculum change, timing of implementation, action steps for implementation, curricular aspects of Africanisation, rationale for Africanisation, and

guidelines to facilitate the process (*cf*. Chapter 6, Sections 6.4.1-6.4.). For each theme, participant perspectives, classroom observations, and document analysis findings were synthesised, providing a multi-dimensional understanding of the subject matter.

Specifically, Section 6.4 offered a comprehensive interpretation of these themes, integrating insights from participant narratives, classroom observations, and document reviews. Section 6.4.2 discussed stakeholders in curriculum change, highlighting the roles of educators, parents, and community members. Section 6.4.3 examined the importance of timing in early or gradual curriculum integration, while Section 6.4.4 identified necessary resources and practical steps for effective implementation. Additionally, Sections 6.4.5 to 6.4.7 interpreted the curricular aspects, the underlying rationale, and the development of guidelines based on the data. Furthermore, Section 6.5 synthesised these interpretations into a coherent synopsis, emphasising key insights, including the importance of stakeholder collaboration, resource allocation, and culturally relevant pedagogies. The chapter concluded with a comprehensive summary (*cf*. Chapter 6, Section 6.6) that recapitulated major findings and their implications for curriculum reform aimed at embedding African values through *hunhu*. Throughout the chapter, the interpretation was cross-referenced with the earlier findings, ensuring that the conclusions were grounded in empirical evidence from interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis.

7.3 SYNTHESIS OF EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

This section synthesises empirical findings from the theoretical framework in Chapter 2, the literature review in Chapters 3 and 4, and thematic analysis in Sections 6.4.1–6.4.7 of Chapter 6. Based on data from interviews, document analysis, and observations, this study highlighted the critical role of integrating *hunhu* into private secondary school curricula to foster authentic African identities and cultural continuity in Zimbabwe. Guided by the general systems theory (*cf*. Chapter 2, Section 2.4), the synthesis emphasised the interconnectedness of the educational system and the need for systemic, structured approaches to curriculum transformation. The key themes that emerged from the study were curricular Africanisation strategies, stakeholders in curriculum change, timing, and action steps for implementation,

curricular aspects of Africanisation, rationale for Africanisation, and guidelines for Africanising the curricula, thus providing a comprehensive framework for understanding this integrative process. This section, thus, synthesises the empirical findings by integrating the thematic insights within the theoretical, conceptual, and contextual frameworks that support the study. The synthesis aims to present a cohesive understanding of Africanising curricula of private secondary schools through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe. The section highlights the intricate interplay between theory, practice, and socio-cultural realities.

The empirical findings across the study highlighted the intricate and interconnected nature of factors influencing curriculum reform and Africanisation initiatives within Zimbabwe's education system, aligning closely with principles of systems theory. For example, the observed preoccupation of educators with the location rather than the content of education reflects a systemic issue in which isolated components, such as curriculum content or resource availability, fail to operate cohesively within the broader societal and institutional framework (*cf*. Chapter 2, Section 2.5).

The synthesis of findings in this chapter reveals that the effective Africanisation of private secondary school curricula through hunhu requires more than policy intention; it demands systemic cohesion and adaptive capacity at every level of the educational ecosystem. The integration of indigenous knowledge and cultural identities stands out as a central pillar, echoing the work of Hilt and Riese (2021:805), who argue that coherence across system components is vital for meaningful and lasting reform. The persistent disconnect observed between policy formulation and classroom implementation—often exacerbated by resource constraints and limited professional development—reflects what Magrath, Aslam, and Johnson (2019:14) describe as the "loose coupling" that characterises many educational systems. This fragmentation undermines systemic responsiveness and restricts the emergence of contextually grounded curricular practices. The literature further underscores that policy, resources, teacher expertise, and community involvement are not discrete elements but dynamically interdependent subsystems whose interaction shapes the system's capacity for change (Spillane et al., 2019:129; Mazodze et al., 2023:70).The findings also highlight that Africanisation is not a static achievement but a dynamic, ongoing process—one that requires continuous feedback, reflection, and adaptation to evolving societal contexts (Hilt & Riese, 2021:808). The role of

stakeholder engagement, resource mobilisation, and sustained professional development emerges as critical; these act as feedback loops that enable the curriculum to remain relevant and responsive over time (Magrath, Aslam & Johnson, 2019:16).At a deeper level, the study demonstrates that implementing hunhu principles and indigenous knowledge into educational practice is most impactful when assessment methods, curriculum content, and teacher training are conceived as mutually reinforcing components of a holistic system. This mirrors systems theory's conviction that emergent, transformative change arises from the interaction and mutual influence of well-integrated subsystems (Chimbi & Jita, 2022a:440; Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:11).In sum, these findings reinforce the view that the pathway to authentic educational transformation lies in forging strong, iterative connections between policy, practice, and community, and in continually calibrating these relationships through ongoing evaluation and stakeholder engagement. At the heart of these findings is the recognition that curriculum reform, particularly Africanisation through *hunhu*, is fundamentally a systemic process. Each part of the educational ecosystem—policy, practice, resources, and community—must interact dynamically within a resilient and adaptable whole. This mirrors the systems theory perspectives discussed in earlier chapters, where educational change is seen as most effective when all subsystems work in concert to support sustainable, relevant practices (cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.4.2; Chapter 4, Section 4.5). The study's results reinforce the importance, as highlighted by Mazodze et al. (2023), of embedding local cultural values and *hunhu* principles throughout the curriculum. This integration is not only crucial for fostering cultural identity and relevance but also for ensuring that learners are adequately equipped to participate in a globalised world. The data further support Garira's (2024) and Hilt and Riese's (2021) arguments for a systems approach: meaningful reform requires coherence, continuous feedback, and responsiveness to shifting societal needs. Thematic insights from this research—such as the necessity of resource development, professional training, and community engagement—echo the strategic approaches outlined by Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo (2021c) and Magrath et al. (2019). Stakeholders such as educators, curriculum developers, parents, and the broader community are revealed as pivotal in ensuring that the curriculum authentically reflects learners' lived experiences and cultural heritage, as earlier systems frameworks suggest (cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3). The findings also highlight the

importance of timing and continuity in Africanisation initiatives. Early and sustained implementation, as advocated by Wynter-Hoyte and Smith (2020), is shown to establish a strong foundation for cultural values from the earliest years of education. This is consistent with the systems theory emphasis on iterative, adaptive processes that integrate feedback and enable ongoing evolution. Overall, the synthesis of findings demonstrates that successful Africanisation depends on establishing clear, context-sensitive frameworks for curriculum reform—anchored in continuous improvement and robust stakeholder engagement. The process is not merely about content modification; rather, it represents a collective journey towards nurturing belonging, identity, and integrity among future generations. By aligning these strategies with a shared vision for inclusive and culturally responsive education—as advocated throughout the literature reviewed in this study—Zimbabwean private secondary schools can lead the way in creating authentic, equitable, and transformative educational experiences grounded in Africa's rich traditions. The key themes from these empirical findings thus provide a comprehensive framework for Africanising the curriculum, bridging both strategic intent and practical implementation. The next section will further synthesise and contextualise these themes.

7.3.1 Curricular Africanisation strategies in Africanising private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe

7.3.1 Curricular Africanisation strategies in Africanising private secondary schools' curricula through hunhu in Zimbabwe. The synthesis of empirical data reveals a strong consensus among stakeholders that integrating hunhu principles into the curriculum is foundational for nurturing learners' cultural identity and communal values (cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.1; Chapter 4, Section 4.3.2).

Embedding these principles fosters respect, ethical conduct, and a sense of belonging—outcomes that not only affirm Ngubane and Makua's (2021:4) argument for the transformative power of education, but also reflect systems theory's assertion that the emergence of such values is dependent on the dynamic interaction of subsystems within the broader educational environment (Magrath, Aslam & Johnson, 2019:15; Hilt & Riese, 2021:808; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3; Chapter 4, Section 4.5).This approach stands at the centre of decolonising the curriculum in Zimbabwe,

offering alternative pedagogical perspectives that challenge entrenched Western epistemologies (Chimbi & Jita, 2022c:440; Garira, 2024:10; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.4.2; Chapter 4, Section 4.4).

From a systems perspective, such transformation is only possible when policy, teaching practice, resources, and community support function as interconnected subsystems, each contributing to and drawing from the whole (cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.2; Chapter 4, Section 4.5.1). By embracing *hunhu*, schools enact systemic change: culturally aligned teaching materials and the use of local languages enhance the curriculum's relevance and socio-economic responsiveness, as also emphasised by Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo (2021c:11) and Mazodze et al. (2023:69; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.5; Chapter 4, Section 4.3.3).The data further highlight the importance of culturally responsive pedagogy and relationship-building within classrooms (cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.6; Chapter 4, Section 4.5.2).

Adopting teaching methods that reflect diverse cultural backgrounds not only fosters engagement but also supports holistic development—a process that, in systems theory terms, enables the emergence of a cohesive and adaptive school community (Hilt & Riese, 2021:808; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3). At the heart of *hunhu* pedagogy is the deliberate cultivation of positive rapport—mutual respect, compassion, and collective wellbeing—which systems theory identifies as critical feedback loops sustaining healthy learning environments (Magrath, Aslam & Johnson, 2019:14; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.2).

Moreover, the findings emphasise the need to integrate African perspectives, indigenous knowledge, and cultural narratives across all subjects, not just the humanities (cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.5.1; Chapter 4, Section 4.4.1). Such integration supports the development of higher-order, emergent properties—such as cultural pride, empathy, and resilience—arising from the synergy of well-integrated subsystems (Garira, 2024:8; Chidziva, 2021:281; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3). Embedding African oral traditions, for example, into literature and other learning areas, not only challenges the hegemony of Eurocentric content but also ensures that the curriculum is both relevant and empowering for learners.

In summary, the study's findings reinforce the view that effective Africanisation strategies are those that are holistic, contextually grounded, and intentionally

designed to foreground *hunhu* values. Systems theory provides a valuable lens for understanding how these strategies—when embedded across interconnected subsystems such as policy, teaching, resources, and community—can generate sustainable, meaningful, and globally relevant educational transformation in Zimbabwe's private secondary schools (cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.4.2; Chapter 4, Section 4.5).

7.3.2 Stakeholders in Africanising private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe

Stakeholder participation emerges as a cornerstone for effective curriculum change, as highlighted by both empirical data and established literature (cf. Chapter 4, Section 4.4.3.3). The conceptual framework underpinning this study stresses participatory and democratic ideals, contending that inclusive engagement among educators, communities, learners, and policymakers is vital for fostering ownership, legitimacy, and sustainability in the Africanisation process.

Within the Zimbabwean context, such stakeholder involvement is further necessitated by the nuanced interplay of societal and cultural factors, which demand that curriculum content aligns authentically with local realities and reflects cultural sensitivity (cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.5). The decolonisation and indigenous knowledge paradigms reinforce the indispensability of collaborative participation in curriculum reform. The data affirm that education stakeholders—including educators, community leaders, parents, learners, and policymakers—must be actively engaged in both the development and implementation of the curriculum.

This participation ensures that reforms are contextually meaningful and collectively owned, thereby enhancing their sustainability and acceptance (cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3; Chapter 4, Section 4.5). Systems theory further emphasises that change is most effective when all subsystems—policy, practice, resources, and community—function interdependently, enabling dynamic adaptation and mutual reinforcement (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:12; Mazodze et al., 2023:75). The core principles of *hunhu*—inclusivity, community engagement, and respect—are fundamentally compromised by the continued prevalence of top-down approaches to curriculum development. This centralised strategy, as supported by recent literature (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:13), undermines authentic participation and

limits the cultivation of teamwork, respect, and social solidarity among stakeholders. In practice, such approaches have been shown to stifle the very collective involvement that is central to *hunhu,* resulting in curricula that may lack local resonance and legitimacy. A more collaborative approach, which actively equips and empowers communities to contribute to curriculum design, is necessary for ensuring that educational practices genuinely reflect communal values and aspirations (Mazodze et al., 2023:77; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.5.1).

The findings indicate that relevant curricula rooted in local realities can only be achieved through a combined, team-oriented effort that harnesses the strengths and perspectives of all stakeholders. In sum, stakeholder engagement is not merely an adjunct to the Africanisation process, but a dynamic and participatory imperative grounded in *hunhu* principles and systems theory. Only through genuine, inclusive involvement can curriculum reform achieve both cultural relevance and sustainable impact in Zimbabwe's private secondary schools.

7.3.3 Timing for implementation of Africanising private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe

The timing of implementation findings reveals a consensus that early and continuous integration of African values fosters a strong cultural identity and pride amongst learners. Both participants and supporting literature conclude that the internalisation of hunhu principles must begin in early childhood, ensuring their relevance is maintained throughout the educational trajectory (cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.4; Chapter 4, Section 4.3.2). This view aligns with systems theory, which emphasises developmental and cyclical processes as key to sustaining meaningful and lasting change. The conceptual framework further highlights that timely intervention is essential for enhancing identity formation and cultural continuity, both of which are vital for cultivating learners who embody and appreciate their heritage (Kwaira, 2023:15; Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:10).

The importance of early intervention underscores that curriculum Africanisation should commence at the earliest stages of a learner's educational journey and continue throughout secondary schooling. Early engagement enables African values to be embedded within learners' identities, fostering a strong sense of belonging and cultural pride. Continuous reinforcement ensures that these cultural principles remain

relevant and integrated into the educational experience, contributing to the development of well-rounded individuals who are culturally anchored yet globally competent. This interpretation echoes systems theory's emphasis on the need for continuous, embedded reinforcement within educational contexts, and supports the view that foundational experiences during childhood are crucial for shaping enduring cultural identity. The literature and empirical findings together indicate that instilling African values early in the educational process creates a stable foundation for lifelong cultural engagement (Mazodze et al., 2023:74; Garira, 2024:12). Conceptually, this early embedding supports a systemic approach in which cultural principles are seamlessly integrated into learners' identities, reinforcing the core tenets of systems theory and the aspirations of the conceptual framework advanced in this study.

7.3.4 Action steps for implementation of Africanisation of private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu*

Resource development and capacity-building are central to effective curriculum change. Empirical evidence suggests that access to culturally relevant materials and ongoing professional development are crucial for embedding *hunhu* principles into pedagogy (Ngubane & Makua, 2021:10; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3; Chapter 4, Section 4.4.3.3). The conceptual framework, rooted in transformative and culturally responsive pedagogy, posits that teachers serve as cultural brokers; their ability to deliver indigenous knowledge authentically depends on their training and access to resources. Contextually, resource constraints and a lack of supportive infrastructure hinder implementation, emphasising the need for systemic resource allocation aligned with the local socio-economic landscape (cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.5; Chapter 4, Section 4.3.3).

The action steps for implementing Africanising curricula in private secondary schools thus highlight the importance of practical measures for meaningful reform. Central to this process is the development of culturally relevant teaching materials, which are essential for engaging learners and authentically embedding African perspectives within the curriculum (cf. Chapter 4, Section 4.4.1.3; Mazodze et al., 2023:69). Professional development opportunities, including workshops and ongoing training, are vital for equipping educators with the skills and confidence necessary to deliver

Africanised content effectively (cf. Chapter 4, Section 4.4.3.3; Chapter 4, Section 4.4.3.1; Dhliwayo & Jita, 2023:5). Establishing pilot programmes serves as a strategic approach to testing and refining curriculum components, facilitating iterative feedback and continuous improvement (cf. Chapter 5, Section 5.4.2.4; Chapter 6, Section 6.3.5.1; Wimpenny et al., 2021:2491). Moreover, systemic support—comprising adequate funding, supportive policies, and robust infrastructure—is integral to creating an environment where teachers can deliver Africanised content confidently and sustainably (cf. Chapter 4, Section 4.4.3; Section 4.4.1.3; Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:13).

The interconnectedness of these measures emphasises a comprehensive, resource-backed approach aimed at building capacity, fostering ongoing reform, and ensuring that African perspectives are meaningfully integrated into the curriculum (cf. Chapter 4, Section 4.4; Chapter 6, Section 6.2). This holistic strategy aligns with contemporary literature advocating sustained investment and systemic support to effectively embed indigenous knowledge in education (Wimpenny et al., 2021:2492; Dhliwayo & Jita, 2023:7).

Classroom observations revealed a lack of deep understanding and deliberate collaboration among educators and curriculum developers in relation to Africanisation through *hunhu*. This underscores the urgent need for targeted professional development initiatives. Many participants reported limited familiarity with *hunhu* principles and a lack of ongoing training to deepen their understanding or to develop pedagogical strategies for integrating African cultural values into the curriculum. Enhancing such professional development is essential to equip educators with the requisite knowledge, skills, and collaborative platforms necessary for effective curriculum reform aligned with Africanisation goals.

7.3.5 Curricular aspects for Africanisation of private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe

Scholars argue that embedding African perspectives across all disciplines—such as Literature, History, Science, and Mathematics—is fundamental to constructing a curriculum that reflects the diversity of learners' backgrounds (Risiro, 2019:35–36; cf. Chapter 4, Section 4.5.3). This integrative approach fosters greater cultural pride, resilience, and identity reinforcement, while systematically dismantling colonial

narratives that have historically marginalised African knowledge (Makua, 2021:2; Mazodze et al., 2023:6). Such curriculum reform aligns with broader decolonisation and cultural reclamation objectives, creating educational environments where learners see themselves and their heritage as central to their academic and personal development (Mutanga, 2022:12; Mazodze et al., 2023:6; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.5).

When indigenous knowledge and practices are woven into all learning areas, learners are empowered to develop a strong sense of cultural identity and are encouraged to critically interrogate dominant paradigms. This systemic integration, rooted in systems theory, promotes an inclusive, empowering educational landscape that prioritises local epistemologies and fosters pride and resilience rooted in Africa's rich cultural legacy (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:4, 5; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.4.2).

Integrating African cultural assets within the curriculum allows for the preservation of invaluable knowledge while enhancing relevance. For instance, introducing indigenous agricultural practices into science education can deepen learners' understanding of sustainability and environmental stewardship, while embedding oral traditions into literary studies enriches literary appreciation and reinforces cultural authenticity (Odongo, 2023:4). As global challenges such as climate change become more pressing, reflecting sustainability and respect for local ecosystems within the curriculum become imperative. Teaching learners to appreciate their cultural paradigms alongside scientific methods empowers them to be stewards of their heritage and advocates for sustainable development, fostering collective responsibility grounded in cultural understanding (Ridhoi, 2023a:26; cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.6).

The success of an Africanised curriculum significantly depends on effective teacher training programmes tailored to equip educators with the necessary skills to embed *hunhu* principles into their teaching practices. Comprehensive professional development involving African scholars and experts is crucial to ensure curricula remain authentic and culturally relevant (Mazodze et al., 2023:8; Ridhoi, 2023a:26; cf. Chapter 4, Section 4.4.3.3).

Achieving a successful Africanised curriculum requires a multi-component strategy involving curriculum reform, resource development, and innovative assessment

practices aligned with Africanisation goals. Moving away from traditional standardised examinations, formative, collaborative, and holistic assessment methods that emphasise relational and communal understanding are essential (cf. Chapter 2, Section 2.7; Von Bertalanffy, 1968:15; Chimbi & Jita, 2022a:139; Brás, 2021:14). Developing and supporting these elements is critical in embedding African knowledge and values holistically within education, fostering pride and cultural identity amongst learners.

Embedding traditional ecological wisdom and cultural practices into contemporary education ensures that curricula reflect Africa's diverse heritage and develop resilient, engaged citizens prepared to navigate both local and global contexts (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:4, 5; Odongo, 2023:4). The ultimate goal of these initiatives is to create interconnected, culturally rich, and *hunhu*-based educational experiences that reinforce identities and challenge Eurocentric dominance.

Empirical evidence demonstrates that integrating African perspectives affirms learners' identities and enhances their sense of belonging (Ridhoi, 2023b:26; Chimbi & Jita, 2022b:141). The researcher concurs that the current overemphasis on examination-oriented assessment fosters competition and resource-based inequities, hindering holistic development (cf. Chapter 3, Sections 3.1, 3.4; Chapter 4, Section 4.5.3.2). Scholars therefore advocate for assessment approaches grounded in *hunhu* principles—such as project-based learning and critical exercises—that better capture experiential and relational understanding, thereby supporting social cohesion and cultural continuity (Brás, 2021:14; Ngubane & Makua, 2021:10–11; Odari, 2020:64).

7.3.6 Rationale for Africanising private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe

As a seasoned educator with 25 years of experience, I strongly affirm the urgent need for Africanisation within Zimbabwe's private secondary schools. Many teachers continue to rely heavily on the Cambridge syllabus, which marginalises Zimbabwean cultural and historical narratives crucial for learners' identity formation (Bhurekeni, 2020:102; Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:35). This disconnect not only diminishes the educational experience but also undermines cultural pride and relevance, highlighting the importance of integrating indigenous knowledge and local

histories (cf. Chapter 4, Section 4.3.2). Recent scholarship supports curricula that emphasise local contexts, fostering greater learner engagement and societal cohesion while aligning with community aspirations (Ntombela, Canagarajah & Ngubane, 2024:53). Effective implementation of Africanised curricula requires the involvement of experts in *hunhu* philosophy and practical engagement with local traditions; however, challenges such as resource limitations and lack of institutional support often impede this process (Mazodze et al., 2023:80; cf. Chapter 4, Section 4.4.3).

The findings, supported by the literature and my own observations, reveal a systemic tendency for educators to prioritise location over content, which hinders the development of holistic, culturally relevant pedagogies (Risiro, 2019:35). The interconnectedness of school systems further emphasises that curriculum reforms must involve genuine stakeholder engagement, sufficient resource allocation, and ongoing professional development to foster cultural relevance and encourage community buy-in (Mazodze et al., 2023:75; cf. Chapter 4, Section 4.4.3.1). Recent reports highlight deficiencies in Zimbabwe's curricula and advocate for a nationally rooted approach that emphasises indigenous histories and values (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:37). Overall, a synthesis of local knowledge with international competencies is essential for producing learners who are culturally conscious, engaged, and equipped to thrive both locally and globally, aligning with the themes discussed in Chapter 6, Section 6.4. Mechanisms such as stakeholder engagement, resource development, and professional training play crucial roles in this transformative process.

The empirical findings affirm the urgent need for curriculum reform to incorporate Zimbabwean cultural and historical narratives and to address gaps left by external syllabi (Bhurekeni, 2020:102). The contextual analysis highlights socio-political histories and current socio-cultural realities that demand curricula rooted in local identities. Theoretically, this aligns with decolonisation frameworks advocating for reclaiming indigenous knowledge to contest colonial legacies and foster national pride. Conceptually, incorporating *hunhu* and indigenous perspectives supports epistemic justice by recognising local epistemologies as valid sources of knowledge.

7.3.7 Guidelines for Africanising the private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu*

The concept that the success of Africanisation in the curriculum depends on the integration of interrelated components aligns with general systems theory as discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3, which emphasises the importance of adaptive, interconnected subsystems working towards shared goals. Specifically, the need for structured frameworks is highlighted in Subtheme 7.1 (cf. Chapter 6, Section 6.4.7.1), where clear guidelines are shown to guide curriculum reform and the operationalisation of *hunhu* principles. The necessity for continuous evaluation, as discussed in Subtheme 7.2 (cf. Chapter 6, Section 6.4.7.2), supports innovations in assessment and feedback mechanisms emphasised in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3 as essential for maintaining curriculum relevance and cultural authenticity (Mazodze et al., 2023:75).

A holistic and contextual approach to assessment and evaluation is crucial, as the reduction of reliance on traditional standardised assessments is supported by Odari (2020:64). Furthermore, authors such as Ngubane and Makua (2021:10) and Ridhoi (2023b:2) advocate for broader, culturally relevant evaluation methods that better reflect learners' diverse backgrounds and experiences. These approaches are elaborated within Section 4.5.3.2 of Chapter 4, emphasising the importance of alternative assessment strategies such as project-based learning. The evidence gathered through interviews, document analysis, and observations compellingly emphasises the urgent need for clear, authoritative guidelines to effectively Africanise curricula in private secondary schools through *hunhu*. These diverse data sources consistently reveal that without well-defined frameworks, efforts to embed African values remain fragmented and superficial.

Specifically, the ongoing review process and dynamic curriculum adaptation, emphasised in Chapter 4, Section 4.5.3.4—with Garira (2024:13) highlighting the importance of regular evaluation and updating aligned with cultural values—support continuous curriculum development. The study's findings demonstrate that schools adopting systematic review cycles are better positioned to reflect authentic African perspectives, ensuring that the curriculum remains relevant and resonant with learners' cultural identities.

Additionally, establishing a solid framework is crucial. The necessity for authoritative, well-structured guidelines to operationalise *hunhu* principles is reinforced in Chapter 4, Section 4.4.3. These insights align with the scholarly perspectives of Chimbunde and Kgari-Masondo (2021c:7), emphasising that clear directives are essential to guide educators and policymakers in consistently implementing Africanised content. This aligns with the systemic view in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3, which stresses that effective processes and feedback mechanisms are fundamental at all levels of curriculum design to ensure systemic coherence and sustainability.

Furthermore, the study's data highlight the key role of community involvement and teacher capacity-building. The importance of engaging local communities and adequately preparing educators is central in Africanising private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* (Odari, 2020:62–63; Mazodze et al., 2023:73). This evidence indicates that meaningful community participation fosters a curriculum that genuinely reflects local cultural values and enhances its legitimacy. The emphasis on comprehensive teacher training, in Chapter 4, Section 4.5.3.1, shows that well-trained educators working collaboratively with communities can authentically embed *hunhu* and African values. This is vital for the authenticity, acceptance, and long-term sustainability of Africanisation in private secondary schools' curricula.

In sum, the findings unambiguously demonstrate that the road to successful Africanisation through *hunhu* must be paved with clear guidelines, continuous evaluation, community involvement, and robust teacher training. These elements, supported by empirical evidence and scholarly insights, affirm that only through such structured frameworks can curriculum transformation be durable and truly reflective of African cultural identity.

7.4 RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

This study set out to explore the Africanising of private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe. Addressing the main research question and sub-questions posed in Chapter 1, Section 1.5.1, this section synthesises the key findings, critically engaging with the literature to articulate the strategies, stakeholders, processes, timing, rationale, and guidelines essential for the effective Africanisation of curricula through *hunhu.*

Conclusion 1: How can private secondary schools' curricula be Africanised through hunhu in Zimbabwe?

The findings robustly affirm that embedding *hunhu* principles within the curriculum is central to holistic learner development, cultural identity reinforcement, and post-colonial empowerment—an argument echoed by Ngubane & Makua (2021:4) and Mazodze et al. (2023:69). Curricula grounded in indigenous knowledge systems, including traditional narratives, philosophies, and local languages, construct a culturally relevant educational environment aligned with learners' socio-cultural realities (cf. Chapter 4, Sections 4.4 & 4.5; Mazodze et al., 2023:71; Mutanga, 2022:12). This convergence of empirical data and literature demonstrates that such integration is more than a pedagogical enhancement; it is a strategic reorientation toward decolonising education (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:13; Mutanga, 2022:19).

By aligning educational content and pedagogies with Zimbabwe's indigenous frameworks, the curriculum moves beyond Western epistemologies that have historically dominated African education (Brás, 2021:2; Chimbi & Jita, 2022a:140). This shift affirms cultural identity, fosters belonging among learners, and validates local knowledge as a legitimate source of epistemic authority (Mazodze et al., 2023:73; Mutanga, 2022:15). Evidence from Chapter 4, Sections 4.4 and 4.5, confirms that incorporating traditional narratives, philosophies, and languages results in educational experiences that are meaningful, engaging, and relevant, ultimately enhancing learner participation and broader socio-cultural validation (Risiro, 2019:36).

A central element in this transformative process is the participatory curriculum reform approach, as advocated throughout the study and in line with systems theory (cf. Chapter 6, Section 6.4; Magrath, Aslam & Johnson, 2019:16). Engaging diverse stakeholders—teachers, community elders, parents, and learners—ensures authentic integration of *hunhu* principles, fostering cultural pride and collective ownership (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:14). This collaborative process, supported by Garira (2024:11), is crucial for achieving sustainable and systemically legitimate reforms.

Moreover, the necessity of culturally responsive teaching methods and positive relationships within educational settings is strongly emphasised (Ngubane & Makua, 2021:10; Ridhoi, 2023b:26; cf. Chapter 4, Section 4.4.3.1). These strategies, in harmony with *hunhu* principles, develop social and emotional competence, empowering learners to make positive contributions to their communities. This aligns with literature suggesting that nurturing mutual respect, trust, and harmonious interactions supports the comprehensive transformation of educational practices (Makua, 2021:5; Mazodze et al., 2023:70).

In response to these findings, the study introduces the Hunhu-Driven Curriculum Transformation Framework (HDCTF) (cf. Chapter 6, Section 6.4.7). This framework, informed by systems theory and culturally responsive pedagogy, systematically integrates *hunhu* into practice, emphasising learner-centred, contextually relevant teaching and curriculum design. Its structure advocates for curriculum content grounded in traditional narratives, philosophies, and languages, with pedagogical strategies that foster social-emotional competence, mutual respect, and peacebuilding—mirroring the recommendations of Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo (2021c:11) and Mazodze et al. (2023:69).

The HDCTF serves as a practical guide for policymakers, educators, and curriculum designers, addressing institutional challenges by emphasising the need for policy support, institutional commitment, teacher training, and resource allocation (cf. Chapter 4, Sections 4.4 & 4.5; Garira, 2024:13). Literature and data converge on the point that without systemic backing, the potential of *hunhu* principles to effect large-scale, sustainable change remains constrained (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:13; Mazodze et al., 2023:80).

Implications for Academic Discourse and Practice

This study contributes a significant advancement to the discourse on decolonising education through indigenous value systems, echoing calls in the literature for comprehensive, participatory approaches (Mutanga, 2022:15; Brás, 2021:8). By bridging theory and practice through the HDCTF, the research provides a transferable model for Africa and beyond. The integration of *hunhu* within the curriculum is shown to have profound implications for fostering social harmony,

mutual respect, and ethical consciousness—positions well-supported in the literature (Ngubane & Makua, 2021:11; Mazodze et al., 2023:75; Ridhoi, 2023b:27). It reframes education as both an academic and transformative social tool, challenging Western epistemic dominance and valorising African indigenous knowledge as central to national development and curriculum reform (Chimbi & Jita, 2022a:143; Mutanga, 2022:21).

In conclusion, this research articulates a novel, holistic, and actionable framework for systematically integrating *hunhu* principles into Zimbabwe's education system. It delineates a pathway for transformative Africanisation grounded in participatory stakeholder engagement, systemic reform, and culturally responsive pedagogies. The findings empower learners to appreciate their identity and contribute meaningfully to their communities and nation. This approach stands as an innovative academic contribution, positioning the curriculum as a vital instrument for fostering cultural integrity, social cohesion, and sustainable progress in Zimbabwe and similarly situated contexts.

2. Who should Africanise the private secondary schools' curricula through hunhu in Zimbabwe?

This conclusion, derived from the research question above, synthesises findings from diverse stakeholder perspectives, underscoring their pivotal roles in ensuring that curriculum Africanisation through *hunhu* is inclusive, participatory, and culturally grounded. Drawing on the comprehensive findings of Theme 2, it is clear that the successful integration of *hunhu* into the curricula of private secondary schools in Zimbabwe depends on a deeply collaborative, inclusive, and participatory approach involving all relevant stakeholders—educators, community leaders, parents, policymakers, and learners (cf. Chapter 4, Sections 4.2.2 & 4.2.3; Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:12; Mazodze et al., 2023:75).

The literature and empirical data consistently highlight that curriculum change is an ongoing process requiring active engagement across all levels of the educational system (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:13; Magrath, Aslam & Johnson, 2019:16). Stakeholders frequently encounter challenges such as misconceptions about *hunhu*, lack of motivation, and insufficient capacity to implement its principles

in practice—further underscoring the need for targeted capacity-building initiatives, including professional development workshops and ongoing dialogues (cf. Chapter 3, Section 3.4.1; Ridhoi, 2023b:1).

Moreover, the research demonstrates that hierarchical and top-down approaches to curriculum reform undermine genuine participation and risk alienating community cultural identities, thereby compromising the authenticity and effectiveness of Africanised curricula (cf. Chapter 4, Section 4.2.2; Mazodze et al., 2023:77). In contrast, fostering a participatory model—such as the Hunhu-Driven Curriculum Transformation Framework (HDCTF)—promotes shared ownership, cultural validation, and collective knowledge creation rooted in indigenous knowledge systems (cf. Chapter 4, Section 4.2.2; Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:14).

The findings also point to the critical importance of establishing clear standards and assessment frameworks to support the sustainability and authenticity of *hunhu*-based curriculum initiatives (cf. Chapter 6, Section 6.4.7.2; Ngubane & Makua, 2021:11). These frameworks, grounded in both literature and empirical data, are fundamental to ensuring that educational reforms are not only implemented but sustained and continually refined.

Ultimately, this theme affirms that Africanising the curriculum through *hunhu* is not merely a matter of content modification but represents a transformative process requiring intentional, inclusive, and dynamic stakeholder engagement strategies (Mazodze et al., 2023:75; Magrath, Aslam & Johnson, 2019:17). Such approaches can cultivate genuine cultural pride, identity, and social cohesion among learners, contributing to their holistic development and the broader decolonisation of education (cf. Chapter 4, Sections 4.4.1 & 4.4.3.1; Chapter 5; Mutanga, 2022:21). The findings strongly suggest that integrating *hunhu* into education demands dedicated efforts spanning policy, pedagogical practice, and community involvement to realise a relevant, empowering educational experience for Zimbabwean learners.

3. When should the private secondary schools' curricula be Africanised through hunhu in Zimbabwe?

Insights from Section 6.4.3 highlight the critical importance of initiating the Africanisation process as early as possible within the educational trajectory of

Zimbabwe's private secondary schools, particularly within the Northern Central District. Embedding *hunhu* principles from the foundational stages of early childhood education ensures that cultural identity and heritage are established as core elements, nurturing a sense of belonging and pride that can be consistently reinforced throughout subsequent levels of learning (Mazodze et al., 2023:74; cf. Chapter 4, Section 4.3.3). This approach aligns with the theoretical framework outlined in Chapter 2, Section 2.3, which advocates for a structured, developmental strategy emphasising early intervention and continuous reinforcement in curriculum reform processes (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:10).

The data further reinforce that early implementation enables seamless integration of indigenous values and traditional knowledge, facilitating learners' deep understanding of their cultural roots (Garira, 2024:12; cf. Chapters 6 & 6.5). Such early embedding not only enhances cultural awareness but also promotes social cohesion and resilience—key components for nurturing a collective identity based on *hunhu* (Ngubane & Makua, 2021:10). The literature and findings support the view that instilling cultural values from the outset of education is essential for cultivating well-rounded individuals who are capable of balancing local traditions with global opportunities (Mazodze et al., 2023:75; cf. Chapter 4, Sections 4.4.1 & 4.5.2).

Furthermore, the importance of timing is echoed in Chapter 4, Section 4.2, where effective curriculum change management emphasises phased implementation and stakeholder involvement at all levels. As highlighted in Chapter 6, Section 6.4.3, early intervention supports smoother transitions, deeper community engagement, and greater acceptance of curriculum reforms. This approach also aligns with recommendations for sustainable reforms responsive to local contexts (cf. Chapter 4, Section 4.4; Ridhoi, 2023b:2).

In conclusion, the strategic timing of curriculum Africanisation—through early commencement and ongoing reinforcement—is fundamental for ensuring the depth, relevance, and sustainability of these initiatives. Initiating the process early, paired with continuous integration and review (as detailed throughout Chapter 4), ensures that culturally grounded and reflective citizens are effectively shaped within the Zimbabwean context. This approach preserves cultural continuity while equipping learners to thrive both locally and globally.

4. What should be done to Africanise the private secondary schools' curricula through hunhu in Zimbabwe?

The findings of this study underscore that authentic Africanisation of the curriculum through *hunhu* in Zimbabwean private secondary schools requires a multifaceted approach grounded in cultural relevance and active stakeholder participation (Mazodze et al., 2023:69; Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:12). As discussed throughout this work, effective curriculum reform must be rooted in local cultural values, identities, and lived experiences, as emphasised in Chapter 6, Section 6.6, and further explored in Chapter 6, Section 6.4.1 (Ngubane & Makua, 2021:4). Embedding traditional knowledge alongside modern academic content fosters a deep sense of belonging and social cohesion among learners, supporting the overarching goal of cultural continuity and sustainable societal development (Mazodze et al., 2023:75; Mutanga, 2022:15).

The necessity of continuous review and evaluation mechanisms, highlighted in Chapter 6, Section 6.4.7.2, is well supported by Garira (2024:13), who stresses that adaptive and reflective curriculum processes are critical for maintaining relevance and effectively integrating *hunhu* principles. This aligns with the broader focus on curriculum adaptability and ongoing improvement discussed in Chapter 6, Sections 6.4.3 and 6.4.5.

The pivotal role of educators as key stakeholders is recognised in Chapter 6, Section 6.4.4, which emphasises the need for professional development in culturally responsive pedagogy (Ridhoi, 2023a:26; Mazodze et al., 2023:77). Equally, the active involvement of community members, parents, and traditional leaders is essential in shaping curriculum content that resonates with local realities—a theme elaborated in Chapter 6, Section 6.4.2 and Section 6.5 (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:14).

Assessment practices must also be realigned with *hunhu* principles, moving away from individualistic, exam-centric strategies towards collaborative and formative approaches that foster teamwork, social cohesion, and cultural values (Ngubane & Makua, 2021:11; cf. Chapter 6, Section 6.4.7). The literature reviewed in earlier

chapters further supports this shift, underscoring that curriculum change must be inclusive, continuous, and participatory (Brás, 2021:8; cf. Chapter 5, Section 5.4).

The comprehensive framework for Africanising curricula presented here aligns with theoretical insights from Chapter 2, which foreground *hunhu* as a guiding philosophy and advocate for community-based approaches (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:7). These ideas are reinforced by empirical evidence from interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis, as detailed in Chapter 6, Sections 6.3.2.1 through 6.3.3 (Mazodze et al., 2023:69).

In conclusion, transforming the curriculum into an Africanised, culturally relevant framework requires strategic planning, robust stakeholder collaboration, continuous evaluation, and pedagogical innovation. This comprehensive approach, integrating insights from all relevant stakeholders, is essential to foster an inclusive, vibrant, and culturally immersed educational environment. Ultimately, it aims to nurture learners' cultural identities while equipping them to thrive in an increasingly globalised world.

5. Which aspects of the private secondary schools' curricula should be Africanised through hunhu in Zimbabwe?

The findings in this theme demonstrate that effective Africanisation of curricula in private secondary schools requires a comprehensive, integrated approach addressing multiple key aspects. As discussed in Chapter 6, Section 6.4.5, curriculum content currently relies heavily on imported syllabi with limited integration of local and indigenous knowledge (Mazodze et al., 2023:69). Embedding *hunhu* principles into subject matter—particularly within history, social studies, and languages—is essential for fostering cultural identity and pride among learners, aligning with curriculum reform frameworks outlined in Chapter 4, Section 4.3 (Brás, 2021:3; Mazodze et al., 2023:70).

The significance of resource development and teacher training is strongly emphasised in Chapter 6, Sections 6.4.4 and 6.4.4.2, and further supported by Ridhoi (2023b:1), who affirms that effective Africanisation depends on equipping educators with relevant pedagogical skills and locally appropriate teaching materials. The necessity of ongoing professional development is also highlighted in Chapter 3,

Section 3.2, which stresses that teacher preparedness and capacity-building are critical for implementing culturally responsive teaching practices rooted in *hunhu* (Ngubane & Makua, 2021:11).

Furthermore, the themes of stakeholder involvement and community participation, detailed in Chapter 6, Section 6.4.4, highlight that curriculum reform should be participatory, engaging educators, parents, community leaders, and learners themselves (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:13). This participatory ethos ensures that curriculum modifications remain responsive to local contexts and traditional practices, as advocated by systems theory and participatory frameworks outlined in Chapter 2, Section 2.3 (Magrath, Aslam & Johnson, 2019:16).

Structured implementation frameworks, discussed in Chapter 6, Section 6.4.4, are also essential—facilitating systematic integration of *hunhu*, traditional knowledge, and local contexts (Mazodze et al., 2023:74). These should be supported by pilot programmes and continuous evaluation, as outlined throughout Chapter 5, particularly in Sections 5.4.2.4 and 5.4.3, to ensure that Africanisation remains relevant, adaptive, and rooted in the lived realities of Zimbabwean communities (Garira, 2024:13).

Moreover, as highlighted in Chapter 2, Section 2.4, seeing curriculum change as a holistic process requires acknowledging the sociocultural and political dimensions that influence education. This reinforces that Africanising the curriculum through *hunhu* is not merely a matter of adding content, but a transformative, systemic process (Mutanga, 2022:21). The need for effective leadership and stakeholder collaboration, as discussed in Chapter 3, Section 3.3, is further underscored by the literature (Makua, 2021:5).

In conclusion, the effective Africanisation of curricula through *hunhu* requires comprehensive integration of indigenous values into curriculum content, pedagogical practices, resource development, stakeholder engagement, and continuous evaluation. This multidimensional approach is vital for fostering culturally conscious learners prepared to navigate both local and global spheres (Brás, 2021:8; Mazodze et al., 2023:77). These aspects are interconnected across the study's chapters,

affirming that successful curriculum reform is a sustained, participatory, and dynamic process rooted in Zimbabwe's cultural fabric.

6. Why should the private secondary schools' curricula be Africanised through hunhu in Zimbabwe?

The analysis of current curriculum content in Chapter 6, Section 6.4.6, reveals that existing syllabi rely heavily on external models, such as the Cambridge curriculum, and often lack sufficient Zimbabwean historical and cultural content (Mazodze et al., 2023:71). This gap underscores the need for curricula that genuinely reflect local realities to fortify learners' national and cultural identities (Brás, 2021:3; Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:13). These findings align with discussions in Chapter 5, Section 5.2, which highlight the importance of local contextualisation of educational content to promote cultural pride and social cohesion (Mutanga, 2022:17).

Insights from Chapter 6, Section 6.4.7.2, further emphasise that continuous assessment and curriculum review, aligned with adaptive learning principles, are crucial for maintaining relevance and fostering cultural consciousness (Garira, 2024:13). These principles are echoed in Chapter 3, Section 3.3.1, which advocates for reflective pedagogical practices and curriculum flexibility (Ngubane & Makua, 2021:11).

Broader theoretical perspectives in Chapters 4 and 5 support the strategic integration of *hunhu* as a powerful approach to decolonising education (Chimbi & Jita, 2022a:143). Such integration preserves indigenous heritage while enhancing learners' competitiveness in a globalised world, in line with discussions in Chapter 2, Sections 2.3.1 and 2.3.2 on curriculum relevance and national development (Mazodze et al., 2023:75; Mutanga, 2022:21). Strategies discussed in Chapter 6, Section 6.4.6.2, for merging local heritage with global competencies, reinforce that Africanising curricula through *hunhu* not only fosters cultural pride but also equips learners with the skills necessary for meaningful participation in diverse contexts (Ridhoi, 2023a:27).

The need to Africanise the curricula of private secondary schools through *hunhu* in the Northern Central District of Zimbabwe is thoroughly supported by empirical

findings across multiple chapters and sections. As detailed in Chapter 6, Section 6.4.6, embedding local cultural values within the educational framework is vital for promoting cultural identity, social cohesion, and relevance (Mazodze et al., 2023:71). This argument is reinforced by Chapter 6, Section 6.4.2, which advocates for active stakeholder involvement—including educators, parents, and communities—in curriculum development (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:14). Participatory approaches ensure that curricula incorporate indigenous knowledge authentically, making education more relevant and empowering for learners (Brás, 2021:8).

Building on this, Chapter 6, Section 6.4.3, highlights that early integration of *hunhu* principles fosters a strong sense of cultural identity from childhood, reinforcing lifelong pride and social responsibility (Mazodze et al., 2023:74). This aligns with general systems theory as discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.3, which emphasises that culturally responsive education from an early age enhances learners' personal and social development (Magrath, Aslam & Johnson, 2019:17).

Furthermore, Chapter 6, Section 6.4.7, emphasises that clear guidelines for curriculum reform—through pilot programmes, resource development, and ongoing evaluation—are essential for a strategic and systematic approach to Africanisation (Garira, 2024:13). This connects to Chapter 3, Section 3.2.1, which advocates for *hunhu* as an integrative process ensuring curriculum relevance and responsiveness to societal needs (Ngubane & Makua, 2021:10).

In summary, the compelling need to Africanise private secondary school curricula through *hunhu* is supported by both empirical evidence and scholarly literature. This process not only strengthens cultural identity and social cohesion but also empowers learners for meaningful engagement in both local and global contexts.

7. What are the guidelines for Africanising the private secondary schools' curricula through hunhu in Zimbabwe?

The literature and empirical findings collectively emphasise that the Africanisation of curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe's private secondary schools should begin in early childhood education and continue as an ongoing process throughout secondary education (Mazodze et al., 2023:74; Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo,

2021c:10; cf. Chapter 4, Section 4.3.3). Initiating Africanisation at the foundational stages is essential for embedding cultural values, fostering a strong sense of identity, and cultivating pride in indigenous heritage. Both participants and scholars agree that early exposure to *hunhu* principles lays a solid foundation for learners' moral and social development, which is especially vital in a post-colonial context (Ngubane & Makua, 2021:4).

Furthermore, the process of Africanisation must not be viewed as a discrete or finite project but as a continuous, adaptive effort requiring regular evaluation and ongoing updates (Garira, 2024:13; cf. Chapter 4, Sections 4.4.1.3 and 4.4.3.4). Recognising that culture and societal values are dynamic, the literature advocates sustained implementation throughout the educational journey to ensure that these principles remain relevant and responsive to learners' evolving experiences (Mazodze et al., 2023:77). Ongoing engagement promotes the durability and authenticity of curricular reforms, reinforcing learners' cultural identities and community values.

To effectively foster a culturally grounded and meaningful educational system, the integration of *hunhu* principles should begin early and be continuously maintained throughout secondary schooling (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:12; cf. Chapter 4, Section 4.4.1.3). This approach ensures learners develop a deep-rooted understanding and appreciation of their cultural heritage, contributing to increased social cohesion, moral integrity, and national identity. Such a timing strategy aligns with systems theory's emphasis on early socialisation and continuous cultural engagement (Magrath, Aslam & Johnson, 2019:17).

Stakeholder involvement is also essential, as emphasised in Chapter 4, Section 4.6. The active participation of educators, community leaders, and parents in shaping and implementing these guidelines anchors curricula in local realities and promotes ownership and sustainability (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:14). Resource development and teacher training, outlined in Chapter 4, Sections 4.4.1, 4.4.3, 4.5.2, and 4.5.3.1, further support these guidelines by enhancing educators' capacity to integrate *hunhu* values into teaching and curriculum content (Ridhoi, 2023b:1).

Ongoing assessment mechanisms are vital for monitoring and refining curriculum implementation, ensuring that reforms remain aligned with both traditional values

and contemporary educational standards (Garira, 2024:13; cf. Chapter 6, Section 6.4.7). This iterative process reflects the principles of curriculum transparency and responsiveness discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.3, which stress adaptability and inclusivity (Ngubane & Makua, 2021:11).

Furthermore, contextually relevant curriculum materials reflecting Zimbabwean heritage and the principles of *hunhu* are vital, as advocated in Chapter 6, Section 6.4.2 (Mazodze et al., 2023:69). These resources serve as key tools for operationalising the guidelines and embedding African values into daily classroom practice.

Collectively, these interconnected insights highlight that the guidelines for Africanising curricula through *hunhu* are not merely procedural but form a dynamic, culturally grounded roadmap. They advocate for a participatory, evaluative, and flexible approach that recognises the centrality of community involvement and indigenous knowledge, ensuring that curriculum reforms are both meaningful and sustainable in the pursuit of authentic African educational experiences.

7.5 PROPOSED GUIDELINES FRAMEWORK FOR AFRICANISING THE PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS' CURRICULA THROUGH *HUNHU*

The guidelines for Africanising the curricula of private secondary schools through *hunhu*, as articulated in Theme 7 (Section 6.4.7), offer a comprehensive blueprint for fostering culturally authentic and sustainable educational reforms (Mazodze et al., 2023:77). These guidelines emphasise the establishment of clear frameworks and structured processes to facilitate the systematic integration of *hunhu* principles (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:14). Supporting this, Chapter 4, Section 4.4.3.4 advocates for the development of a policy framework that encourages continuous evaluation and adaptation, ensuring that curriculum reforms remain relevant and responsive to societal needs (Garira, 2024:13).

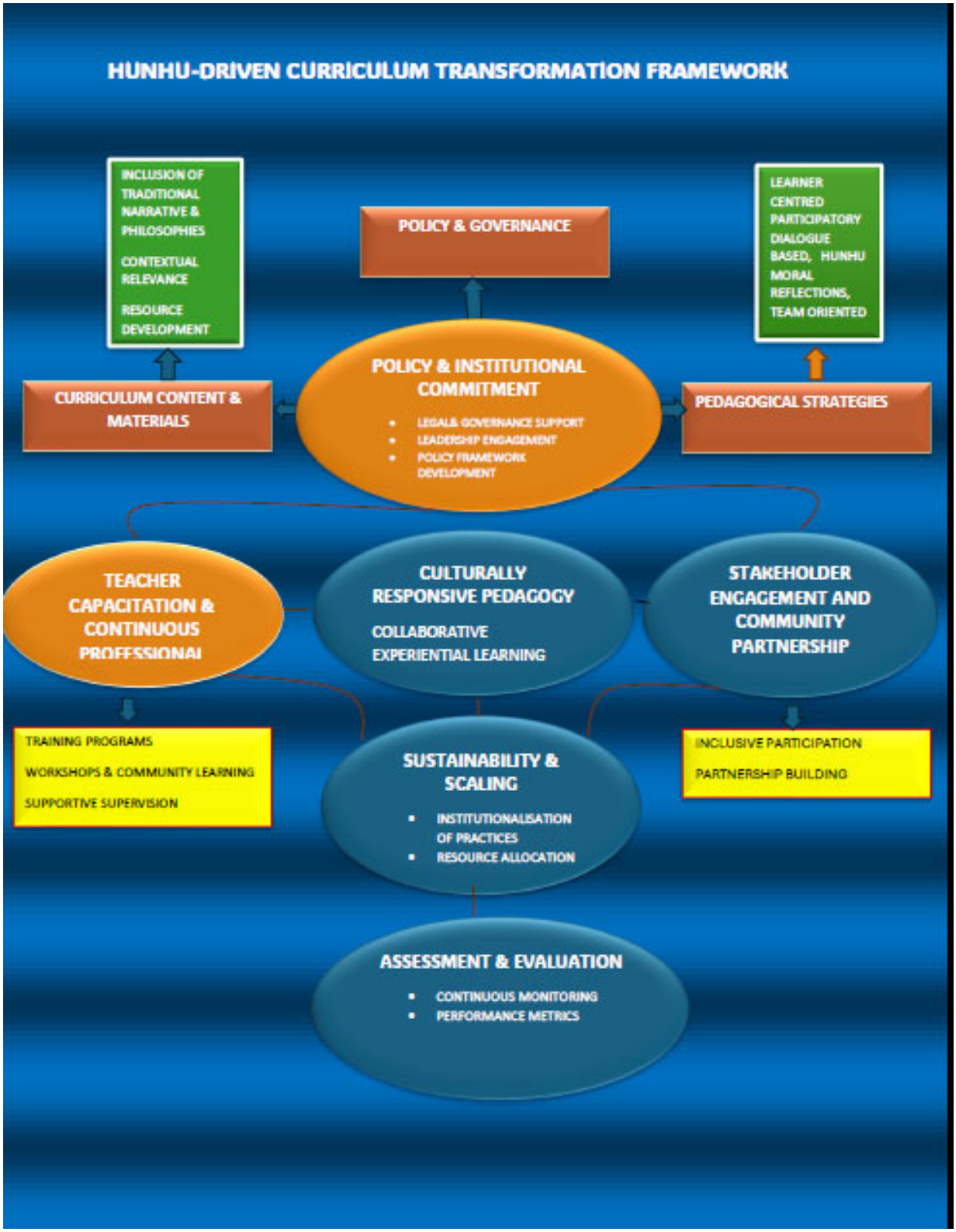
The Hunhu-Driven Curriculum Transformation Framework (HDCTF) provides a comprehensive and systematic guide for operationalising Africanisation in private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe. Structured around core

components, it ensures procedural clarity, contextual relevance, and sustainability. Key elements of this guiding framework include:

- **Clear policy and procedural frameworks** to support consistent and ongoing integration of *hunhu* values (cf. Chapter 4, Section 4.4.3.4; Garira, 2024:13).
- **Continuous evaluation and iterative adaptation** to maintain curricular relevance and cultural responsiveness (Mazodze et al., 2023:77).
- **Stakeholder engagement and collaborative decision-making** involving educators, community leaders, parents, policymakers, and learners to ensure participatory reform (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:14).
- **Capacity-building and professional development** for teachers, equipping them with the knowledge and skills needed to deliver culturally grounded content (Ngubane & Makua, 2021:11; Ridhoi, 2023a:27).
- **Resource development** tailored to local contexts, including teaching materials that authentically reflect Zimbabwean heritage and *hunhu* values (Mazodze et al., 2023:69).

The HDCTF, as illustrated in Figure 7.1, serves as a strategic roadmap for policymakers, school leaders, and educators. It highlights that Africanising curricula is an ongoing, dynamic process requiring systemic support, active community involvement, and a commitment to cultural sustainability.

In summary, these guidelines—supported by both empirical findings and scholarly literature—lay the foundation for transformative curriculum reform that is participatory, contextually relevant, and future-oriented for Zimbabwe's private secondary schools.



Source: The researcher's own construct from the findings

Figure 7.1: The *Hunhu*-Driven Curriculum Transformation Framework (HDCTF) to facilitate Africanising of the private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe

7.5.1 Description of the HDCTF

Framework (HDCTF) is designed as a holistic, dynamic system for Africanising private secondary school curricula in Zimbabwe. At its apex, Policy and Institutional Commitment provides foundational direction, ensuring reforms are systematically guided and aligned with national educational objectives (Mazodze et al., 2023:77; cf. Chapter 4, Sections 4.4 & 4.5). Central operational elements—Curriculum Content and Materials, Pedagogical Strategies, and Teacher Capacitation and Professional Development—form an interactive core, each shaping and reinforcing the others. Stakeholder Engagement and Community Partnership and Assessment & Evaluation are tightly linked to this core, fostering inclusivity and continuous feedback. Sustainability & Scaling secure the longevity and expansion of best practices, while multidirectional arrows in the framework illustrate the adaptive, systemic interplay between all elements (cf. Chapter 4, Section 4.4.3.4).

7.5.1.1 Interactions between the elements

These elements are mutually reinforcing and interconnected. Policy and Institutional Commitment establish the enabling environment for transformation, guiding all subsequent actions (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:14). Curriculum Content and Materials and Pedagogical Strategies translate policy into practice, embedding hunhu principles in everyday classroom experiences. Teacher Capacitation ensures that educators have the skills to deliver an Africanised curriculum, while Stakeholder Engagement and Community Partnership keep the process inclusive and contextually relevant (Ngubane & Makua, 2021:11). Sustainability & Scaling institutionalise reforms, and Assessment & Evaluation ensure continuous improvement and curriculum fidelity (Garira, 2024:13). This dynamic, iterative process aligns with the systems theory approach emphasised throughout the study (Magrath, Aslam & Johnson, 2019:17).

The next section provides a description of the framework elements and their implications for Africanising the curricula of private secondary schools.

1. POLICY GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT

This element forms the foundation for guiding and regulating the transformation process. It includes policy initiatives, resource development, and the establishment

of governance structures that prioritise the inclusion of traditional, national, and indigenous values in the curriculum. Policy and Governance ensure the alignment of reform efforts with national education goals and community expectations. Policy Framework Development: Develop policies that centre *hunhu* in curriculum design, implementation, and evaluation (Mazodze et al., 2023:77; cf. Chapter 4, Section 4.4.3.4).

Policy Framework Development:

Policy Framework Development: Develop policies that centre hunhu in curriculum design, implementation, and evaluation (Mazodze et al., 2023:77; cf. Chapter 4, Section 4.4.3.4). Establish national and institutional policies that explicitly endorse the integration of *hunhu*, emphasising its centrality in curriculum design, implementation, and evaluation (*cf*. Chapters 4, Sections 4.4 & 4.5).

Legal and Governance Support: Enact legislation mandating the inclusion of indigenous knowledge and cultural values, ensuring accountability and institutional prioritisation.

Leadership Engagement: Secure commitment from top management and policymakers to champion *hunhu* principles and foster a culture of inclusivity and cultural integrity.

2. CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY

Teaching that reflects and honours learners' backgrounds, promoting collaborative and experiential learning (Ngubane & Makua, 2021:11; cf. Chapter 4, Section 4.4.3.3).

Adopting team collaborative and experiential learning will not only reinforce teamwork, a sense of belonging but also forge cultural identity (*cf*. Chapters 3 & 6, Sections 6.4.7 & 6.4.2). To uphold this element, there is a need to train educators to utilise teaching practices that recognise and honour learners' cultural backgrounds and promote social-emotional competence (*cf*. Chapter 4, Section 4.4.3.3)

Collaborative and Experiential Learning: Incorporate group activities, community-based projects, and experiential methods that foster teamwork, respect, and social cohesion (*cf*. Chapter 6, Sections 6.4.4 & 6.4.7).

3. CURRICULUM CONTENT AND MATERIALS

Adapt and develop content that reflects *hunhu* and is locally relevant (Mazodze et al., 2023:69). This component focuses on adapting and developing curriculum content and learning materials that reflect *hunhu* principles. It ensures that what is taught is contextually relevant and grounded in African values, traditions, and worldviews.

Contextual Relevance: Adapt content to reflect local histories, practices, and socio-cultural realities, making learning meaningful and rooted in learners' lived experiences. Revise existing materials or create new resources emphasising African culture. Regular updates of resources to reflect African perspectives

Resource Development: Develop teaching materials that are culturally sensitive, inclusive, and age-appropriate, ensuring accessibility and representativeness.

Inclusion of Traditional Narratives and Philosophies: Embed indigenous stories, philosophies, and languages across subjects, especially in literature, history, social studies, and languages, to reinforce cultural identity (Chapter 6, Sections 6.4.7 & 6.4.2).

4. PEDAGOGICAL STRATEGIES

Learner-Centred Approaches: Promote participatory, dialogue-based pedagogies that encourage active learner engagement and moral reflection aligned with *hunhu* values (Brás, 2021:8; *cf*. Chapter 3, Section 3.3; Chapter 4, Section 4.2).

5. TEACHER CAPACITATION AND CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Ongoing training and mentorship equip teachers to deliver Africanised curricula (Ridhoi, 2023a:27). Teachers play a key role in curriculum transformation. This component involves regular training programmes, workshops, and supervised learning opportunities to equip teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to integrate *hunhu* into their teaching practices. Training Programmes: Implement ongoing capacity-building initiatives to familiarise educators with *hunhu* principles, indigenous knowledge, and culturally relevant pedagogies (*cf*. Chapter 3, Section 3.3.1; Chapter 4, Section 4.5.3.1).

Workshops and Community Learning: Facilitate workshops engaging community elders, cultural practitioners, and parents to foster collaborative curriculum development and shared ownership.

Supportive Supervision: Establish mentorship and reflective practices to reinforce sustained adherence to hunhu-based pedagogies.

6. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Successful curriculum transformation relies on the involvement of all stakeholders, including parents, community leaders, and other partners. This component encourages active participation from the broader community, fostering shared responsibility and ensuring that the curriculum remains responsive to societal needs. Inclusive Participation: Engage educators, learners, parents, community leaders, and policymakers in curriculum design, review, and implementation processes to ensure contextual resonance and ownership (Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2021c:14; *cf*. Chapter 6, Sections 6.4.2 & 6.4.4).

Partnership Building: Foster collaborations between schools, community organisations, and cultural institutions to support resource provision and cultural immersion activities (*cf*. Chapter 4, Section 4.5.3.2, 4.5.3.3)

Feedback and Reflection: Create avenues for ongoing stakeholder feedback to inform curriculum adjustments, ensuring responsiveness and adaptability (*cf*. Chapter 2, Sections 2.3.2 & 2.3.3 Chapter 4, Section 4.4.3.4)

7. SUSTAINABILITY AND SCALING

Sustainability ensures that curriculum reforms are not only implemented but also maintained and expanded over time. This involves the institutionalisation of best practices including embedding *hunhu* principles within institutional routines, policies, and accreditation standards to ensure long-term commitment. Institutionalise and extend best practices for lasting impact (Mazodze et al., 2023:77).

Resource Allocation: Ensure dedicated funding, time, and human resources to support ongoing curriculum development, training, and community activities.

Scaling and Replication: Use pilot programmes and best practices to inform wider implementation across regions, adapting strategies as required.

8. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Continuous monitoring and evaluation are critical for measuring progress, identifying challenges, and informing ongoing improvements. This component establishes mechanisms for regular assessment to ensure that the curriculum remains relevant and impactful. Develop formative and summative assessment tools that measure moral growth, social cohesion, and cultural understanding, balancing academic standards with cultural values (Garira, 2024:13; *cf*. Chapters 2, Sections 2.3.3; Chapter 6, Sections 6.4.2 & 6.4.7). Shift from standardised tests to holistic, project-based assessments. Regular assessment to monitor, review, and improve curriculum relevance.

Continuous Monitoring: Implement regular evaluation mechanisms to assess curriculum fidelity, teacher effectiveness, and learner outcomes, enabling iterative improvements.

Performance Metrics: Establish indicators related to social-emotional competencies, community engagement, and cultural pride to gauge programme success.

In summary, the HDCTF provides a structured pathway emphasising policy support, culturally relevant content, pedagogical innovation, capacity-building, stakeholder collaboration, assessment alignment, and sustainability measures. This framework operationalises the principles of *hunhu* systematically, ensuring that curriculum transformation is holistic, culturally grounded, and capable of fostering social cohesion, moral development, and cultural pride amongst learners, thus aligning with the systemic challenges and opportunities identified in the study.

7.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

The literature review in Chapters 2, 3, and 4, along with the empirical data presented in Chapter 6, provided insight into strategies that can be implemented to Africanise the curricula of private secondary schools through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe. The following recommendations are proposed based on the study's findings and are intended for stakeholders responsible for Africanising the private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe. These recommendations are structured to address different levels: national, provincial, district, and school to ensure comprehensive and feasible implementation aligned with the study's framework.

7.6.1 Governance Level: Recommendation to the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education

The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) should:

- develop and disseminate clear national guidelines and policies that explicitly integrate *hunhu* principles into the curriculum.
- facilitate the integration of resource development for Africanisation by allocating dedicated funding and expertise.
- establish participatory committees: Form national and provincial committees comprising educators, community leaders, parents, and cultural experts to guide curriculum Africanisation.
- foster partnerships with cultural institutions: Develop policy frameworks and establish official collaborations between the Ministry of Education and local cultural organisations.
- schedule periodic curriculum reviews: Implement national policies mandating regular curriculum review cycles to ensure continuous cultural relevance.
- launch awareness campaigns emphasising the importance of Africanisation for unity and pride.
- promote stakeholder engagement strategies by establishing platforms for dialogue amongst policymakers, educators, community leaders, and learners to foster collective ownership and support for curriculum Africanisation.

7.6.2 Provincial and district level

Provincial education departments and districts should:

- organise capacity-building workshops and ongoing professional development programmes focused on *hunhu*-based pedagogies and curriculum integration.
- build capacity through professional development: Organise regional workshops and training sessions to enhance teachers' understanding of *hunhu* principles and indigenous knowledge.
- develop indigenous-based curriculum materials: Support regional education offices in creating and distributing contextually relevant teaching resources.

- incorporate cultural content into assessment: Develop assessment guidelines and standards at district or provincial levels that capture cultural competencies.
- encourage cultural education and community projects: Facilitate district-level initiatives and partnerships that promote cultural festivals, community projects, and local heritage activities.
- district authorities should pilot the curriculum in select schools, systematically evaluate progress, and coordinate to assess changes, monitor outcomes, and ensure ongoing feedback for improvement.

7.6.3 In-school and community level

Schools and communities should:

- implement early and sustained curriculum integration: to embed *hunhu* values from primary levels and maintain focus throughout secondary education.
- conduct teacher training workshops: Schools should organise ongoing professional development sessions for teachers on culturally sensitive pedagogies.
- develop indigenous-based curriculum materials: Teachers and school curriculum coordinators to create or adapt teaching resources based on local stories, proverbs, and traditions.
- promote the use of local languages: Schools to incorporate indigenous languages in instruction and assessments.
- incorporate cultural content into assessment: Teachers design classroom assessments that evaluate both academic performance and cultural understanding.
- embed *hunhu* principles into curriculum goals: Clearly define and communicate curriculum aims rooted in *hunhu* values within school programmes.
- encourage cultural education and community projects: Initiate school-based projects and events showcasing local customs, fostering experiential learning.

7.6.4 Overall recommendation

A comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system should be established at all levels to assess the ongoing effectiveness of Africanisation initiatives in the curriculum, ensuring continuous improvement aligned with the model's guidelines. Revaluation and feedback loops are crucial for maintaining curriculum relevance and addressing emerging challenges, in line with the study's emphasis on continuous improvement.

These recommendations are designed to operationalise the study's main contributions: a framework and guidelines for Africanising private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* and ensuring their feasible implementation across different levels within Zimbabwe's education system.

7.7 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The research contributes to understanding the Africanisation of private secondary schools' curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe. It offers insights into effective strategies for curriculum reform, stakeholder engagement, and the importance of continuous evaluation. The findings offer a practical framework for policymakers, educators, and community stakeholders to foster culturally relevant education, enhance teacher professional development, and improve learner engagement and outcomes. Additionally, the study contributes to the existing literature on curriculum innovation and systemic educational reform within African contexts.

7.8 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Building on the identified themes, the following areas are recommended for future research:

- Curricular Africanisation strategies: Investigate the most effective approaches and pedagogical methods for embedding African principles, such as *hunhu*, across subjects to enhance learner cultural identity.
- Stakeholders in curriculum change: Explore how educators, parents, and community members can be more effectively involved in curriculum reform processes to ensure inclusivity and sustainability.

- Timing for implementation: Conduct longitudinal studies to determine the most impactful stages and durations for introducing Africanisation initiatives at different educational levels.
- Action steps for implementation: Examine practical frameworks and best practices for executing curriculum Africanisation, focusing on resource allocation and capacity-building.
- Curricular aspects for Africanisation: Research how specific curricular components, like content and assessment methods, can be aligned with African values to promote relevance and cultural pride.
- Rationale for Africanisation: Study the deeper socio-cultural and educational benefits of Africanising curricula to reinforce cultural identity and global competitiveness.
- Guidelines for Africanisation: Develop and test comprehensive policy frameworks and guidelines that support consistent and authentic curriculum Africanisation across diverse school contexts.

7.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The limitations of the study include its confinement to three private secondary schools in the Northern Central District, which was because of logistical, financial, and time constraints. Additionally, only 13 participants took part in the research. The original schools selected were hesitant to grant permission because of the sensitive nature of the study, with some perceiving the topic as political rather than academic. As a result, the researcher had to select alternative schools with similar characteristics. Furthermore, the scope was limited by the scarcity of published sources on the Africanisation of the curriculum, particularly regarding private secondary schools (formerly all-white). Despite these challenges, the researcher adhered to rigorous qualitative data collection and analysis procedures to ensure the trustworthiness of the results. Nonetheless, caution is advised when applying these findings because of the limitations.

7.10 SUMMARY

Chapter 7 synthesised the study's main findings, drawing together theoretical, empirical, and contextual insights to provide a comprehensive conclusion on the

Africanisation of private secondary school curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe. Building on the foundation laid in previous chapters, the chapter recapitulated the research aims, summarised key themes, and emphasised the critical importance of embedding *hunhu* values to foster cultural identity, inclusivity, and social cohesion. The synthesis highlighted the necessity of a systemic approach, guided by general systems theory, in which stakeholder engagement, early intervention, resource development, teacher training, and continuous evaluation were central to effective curriculum reform. The chapter introduced the *Hunhu*-Driven Curriculum Transformation Framework (HDCTF) as a practical model for operationalising these insights, emphasising policy support, participatory processes, culturally relevant content, and sustainable implementation. Based on the study's conclusions, actionable recommendations were proposed for policymakers, school leaders, and communities, advocating for clear guidelines, ongoing professional development, robust resource allocation, and institutional commitment at all levels. The chapter acknowledged the research's contributions to both practice and scholarship, while also noting limitations such as sample size and contextual scope. Finally, the chapter called for further research to refine strategies and ensure that curriculum Africanisation remained dynamic, inclusive, and responsive to Zimbabwe's evolving educational landscape, thereby positioning *hunhu* as a cornerstone for meaningful and lasting educational transformation.

7.11 CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

The empirical study aimed to explore the process of Africanising private secondary school curricula through *hunhu* in Zimbabwe. This research has significantly contributed to understanding the Africanisation process within this context. Additionally, it has developed a guiding framework to facilitate the Africanisation of curricula in private secondary schools across Zimbabwe. The findings from this study provide valuable insights into the integration of African principles into curriculum design and implementation in private secondary institutions. Specifically, the study identified key factors and strategies essential for effectively embedding *hunhu* and other indigenous values into educational content and pedagogical approaches. This research is likely to make a modest yet meaningful contribution to the body of knowledge on curriculum reform in private secondary schools, particularly within Harare, Zimbabwe. Furthermore, it is amongst the few studies that have sought to

develop a comprehensive guiding framework aimed at Africanising curricula through *hunhu* in the Zimbabwean private schooling sector. Therefore, careful consideration of the study's recommendations and the proposed framework may assist the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) in implementing successful Africanisation initiatives and advancing culturally relevant education in Zimbabwe.

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APPENDIX A: UNISA REGISTRATION

UNISA university of south africa

2027

A I R M A I L
MUNYARADZI C MAC
CELEBRATION SCHOOL
P.O.BOX HW 1702
BORROWDALE
HARARE
ZIMBABWE

STUDENT NUMBER : 46712402

ENQUIRIES TEL : 0800 001 870

eMAIL : mandda@unisa.ac.za

2025-04-08

Dear Student

I hereby confirm that you have been registered for the current academic year as follows:

Proposed Qualification: PHD (EDUCATION) (90019)

CODE	PAPER	S	NAME OF STUDY UNIT	NQF credits	LANG.	PROVISIONAL EXAM.DATE	EXAMINATION CENTRE(PLACE)
Study units registered without formal exams:							
e TPPCIE01			PhD - Education (Curriculum Studies)	**	E		
TPPCIE01			PhD - Education (Curriculum Studies)	**	E		

e Exam transferred from previous academic year

You are referred to the "MyRegistration" brochure regarding fees that are forfeited on cancellation of any study units.

* Your attention is drawn to University rules and regulations (www.unisa.ac.za/register).
Please note the new requirements for reregistration and the number of credits per year which state that students registered for the first time from 2013, must complete 36 NQF credits in the first year of study, and thereafter must complete 48 NQF credits per year.
Students registered for the MBA, MEL and DEL degrees must visit the SBL's MSOnLine for study material and other important information.
Readmission rules for Honours: Note that in terms of the Unisa Admission Policy academic activity must be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the University during each year of study. If you fail to meet this requirement in the first year of study, you will be admitted to another year of study. After a second year of not demonstrating academic activity to the satisfaction of the University, you will not be re-admitted, except with the express approval of the Executive Dean of the College in which you are registered. Note too, that this study programme must be completed within three years. Non-compliance will result in your academic exclusion, and you will therefore not be allowed to re-register for a qualification at the same level on the National Qualifications Framework in the same College for a period of five years after such exclusion, after which you will have to re-apply for admission to any such qualification.
Readmission rules for MaD: Note that in terms of the Unisa Admission Policy, a candidate must complete a Master's qualification within three years. Under exceptional circumstances and on recommendation of the Executive Dean, a candidate may be allowed an extra (fourth) year to complete the qualification. For a Doctoral degree, a candidate must complete the study programme within six years. Under exceptional circumstances, and on recommendation by the Executive Dean, a candidate may be allowed an extra (seventh) year to complete the qualification.

BALANCE ON STUDY ACCOUNT: 22425.00

Payable on or before:

Immediately: 7450.00	2025/03/31: 0.00	2025/05/15: 7512.00	2025/08/15: 7513.00	
	2025/11/15: 0.00	2026/03/15: 0.00		

Yours faithfully,

Prof MM Lepota
Acting Registrar

1031 D 00 0

UNIVERSITEIT VAN SUID-AFRIKA PRETORIA UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

University of South Africa
Preller Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150
www.unisa.ac.za

APPENDIX B: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

UNISA university of south africa

UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2023/02/08

Ref: **2023/02/08/46712402/21/AM**
Name: Mrs S MUNYARADZI
Student No.:46712402

Dear Mrs S MUNYARADZI

Decision: Ethics Approval from 2023/02/08 to 2028/02/08

Researcher(s): Name: Mrs S MUNYARADZI
E-mail address: 46712402@mylife.unisa.ac.za
Telephone: +263 719954509

Supervisor(s): Name: Prof. M.M. MAJA
E-mail address: majam@unisa.ac.za
Telephone: +27124296201

Name: Prof L.D.M. LEBELOANE
E-mail address: lebelldm@unisa.ac.za
Telephone: +27124294433

Title of research:

Africanising the curricula of private secondary schools through hunhu/ubuntu in Zimbabwe: A case study

Qualification: PhD Curriculum studies

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for the period 2023/02/08 to 2028/02/08.

*The **medium risk** application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2023/02/08 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.*

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to the relevant guidelines set out in the Unisa Covid-19 position statement on research ethics attached.

University of South Africa
Preller Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150
www.unisa.ac.za

2. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
3. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee.
4. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
5. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing.
6. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
7. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.
8. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date **2028/02/08**. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

The reference number **2023/02/08/46712402/21/AM** *should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.*

Kind regards,

Prof AT Motlhabane
CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC
motlhat@unisa.ac.za

Prof Mpine Makoe
ACTING EXECUTIVE DEAN
qakisme@unisa.ac.za

University of South Africa
Preller Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150
www.unisa.ac.za

APPENDIX C: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Disclaimer: Participants did not want their names, or their school names disclosed in the study. In a bid to uphold confidentiality, their names and the names of the institutions have been blocked out.

UNISA university of south africa

REQUEST TO THE MINISTRY OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

420 Riviera Road
Crowhill
Harare

03 June 2024

Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
Ambassador House 88 Kwame Nkrumah Avenue
Cnr Second Street,
Harare, Zimbabwe.
Tel: (+263-242) 799914/704421/705153/705281/791127/791538
Email: admin@mopse.gov.zw

Dear Sir/ Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE MINISTRY OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

TITLE: Africanising the curricula of private secondary schools through hunhu/ubuntu in Zimbabwe: A case study

My name is Sekai Munyaradzi, and I am doing research under the supervision of Professor Margaret Maja and Professor Oupa Lebeloane in the Department of

Curriculum and Instructional Studies towards a Doctor of Education Degree (Curriculum Studies) at the University of South Africa. I hereby request your permission to conduct a study entitled **Africanising the curricula of private secondary schools through hunhu/ubuntu in Zimbabwe: A case study**

The study will entail interviewing 13 participants from 3 private secondary schools in the Northern Central District including two History teachers, one HOD, and one member of the governing board responsible for parent liaison from each of the three schools, as well as the district schools' inspector (DSI) of Northern Central District. Data of this study will be collected through semi-structured one-on-one interviews, analysis of documents and observation of History teachers during classes. Interviews and observations will be approximately 30-45 minutes in length. Data will be collected during the second and third term.

The aim of the study is to explore how the private secondary schools Africanise the curricula through hunhu in Zimbabwe. Three private secondary schools will be selected. I also undertake to ensure that confidentiality and anonymity during the study will be maintained, and that data obtained will be kept in a safe place upon completion of the study. The participants' participation will always remain voluntary, and they can withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

Should you have any questions regarding this study, or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please contact me at +263 772 954509 or by email at 46712402@mylife.unisa.ac.za or you can alternatively contact my supervisor at 012 429 6201 or by email at majam@unisa.ac.za.

Hoping for your positive response.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

SEKAI MUNYARADZI

STUDENT RESEARCHER (UNISA)

REQUEST TO NORTHERN CENTRAL DISTRICT

420 Riviera Road
Crowhill
Harare

03 June 2024

The District Schools Inspector
Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education Northern Central District
Tel: +263242303683/ +2632422932056/ +2638644058190/ Cell +263772693220/
Email: info@northerncentral.ac.zw

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE MINISTRY OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

TITLE: AFRICANISING THE CURRICULA OF PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS THROUGH HUNHU/UBUNTU IN ZIMBABWE: A CASE STUDY

My name is Sekai Munyaradzi, and I am doing research under the supervision of Professor Margaret Maja a Senior lecturer in the Department of Curriculum and Instructional Studies towards a Doctor of Education Degree (Curriculum Studies) at the University of South Africa. I hereby request your permission to conduct a study entitled **Africanising the curricula of private secondary schools through hunhu/ubuntu in Zimbabwe: A case study**

The study will entail interviewing 13 participants from 3 private secondary schools in the Northern Central District including two History teachers, one HOD, and one member of the governing board responsible for parent liaison from each of the three schools, as well as the district schools' inspector (DSI) of Northern Central District.

Data of this study will be collected through semi- structured one-on-one interviews, analysis of documents and observation of participants. Interviews and observations will be approximately 30-45 minutes in length. Data will be collected over a period of one term.

The aim of the study is to explore how the private secondary schools Africanise the curricula through hunhu in Zimbabwe. Three private secondary schools will be selected. I also undertake to ensure that confidentiality and anonymity during the study will be maintained, and that data obtained will be kept in a safe place upon completion of the study. Participants' participation will always remain voluntary, and they can withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

Should you have any questions regarding this study, +263 772 954509 or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please contact me at or by email at 46712402@mylife.unisa.ac.za or you can alternatively contact my supervisor on 012 429 6201 or by email at majam@unisa.ac.za.

Hoping for your positive response.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

SEKAI MUNYARADZI

STUDENT RESEARCHER (UNISA)

REQUEST TO SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

420 Riviera Road
Crowhill
Harare

03 June 2024

The Headmaster
School A

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT PhD RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOL

TITLE: AFRICANISING THE CURRICULA OF PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS THROUGH HUNHU/UBUNTU IN ZIMBABWE: A CASE STUDY

My name is Sekai Munyaradzi, and I am doing research under the supervision of Professor Margaret Maja a Professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instructional Studies towards a Doctor of Education Degree (Curriculum Studies) at the University of South Africa. I hereby request your permission to conduct a study entitled **Africanising the curricula of private secondary schools through hunhu/ubuntu in Zimbabwe: A case study**

The study will entail interviewing 13 participants from 3 private secondary schools in the Northern Central District including two History teachers, one HOD, and one member of the governing board responsible for parent liaison from each of the three schools, as well as the district schools' inspector (DSI) of Northern Central District.

Data of this study will be collected through semi- structured one-on-one interviews, analysis of documents and observation of participants. Interviews and observations will be approximately 30-45 minutes in length. Data will be collected over a period of one term.

The aim of the study is to explore how the private secondary schools Africanise the curricula through hunhu in Zimbabwe. I also undertake to ensure that confidentiality and anonymity during the study will be maintained, and that data obtained will be kept in a safe place upon completion of the study. Participants' participation will always remain voluntary, and they can withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

Should you have any questions regarding this study, or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please contact me at +263 772 954509 or by email at 46712402@mylife.unisa.ac.za or you can alternatively contact my supervisor on 012 429 6201 or by email at majam@unisa.ac.za.

Hoping for your positive response.

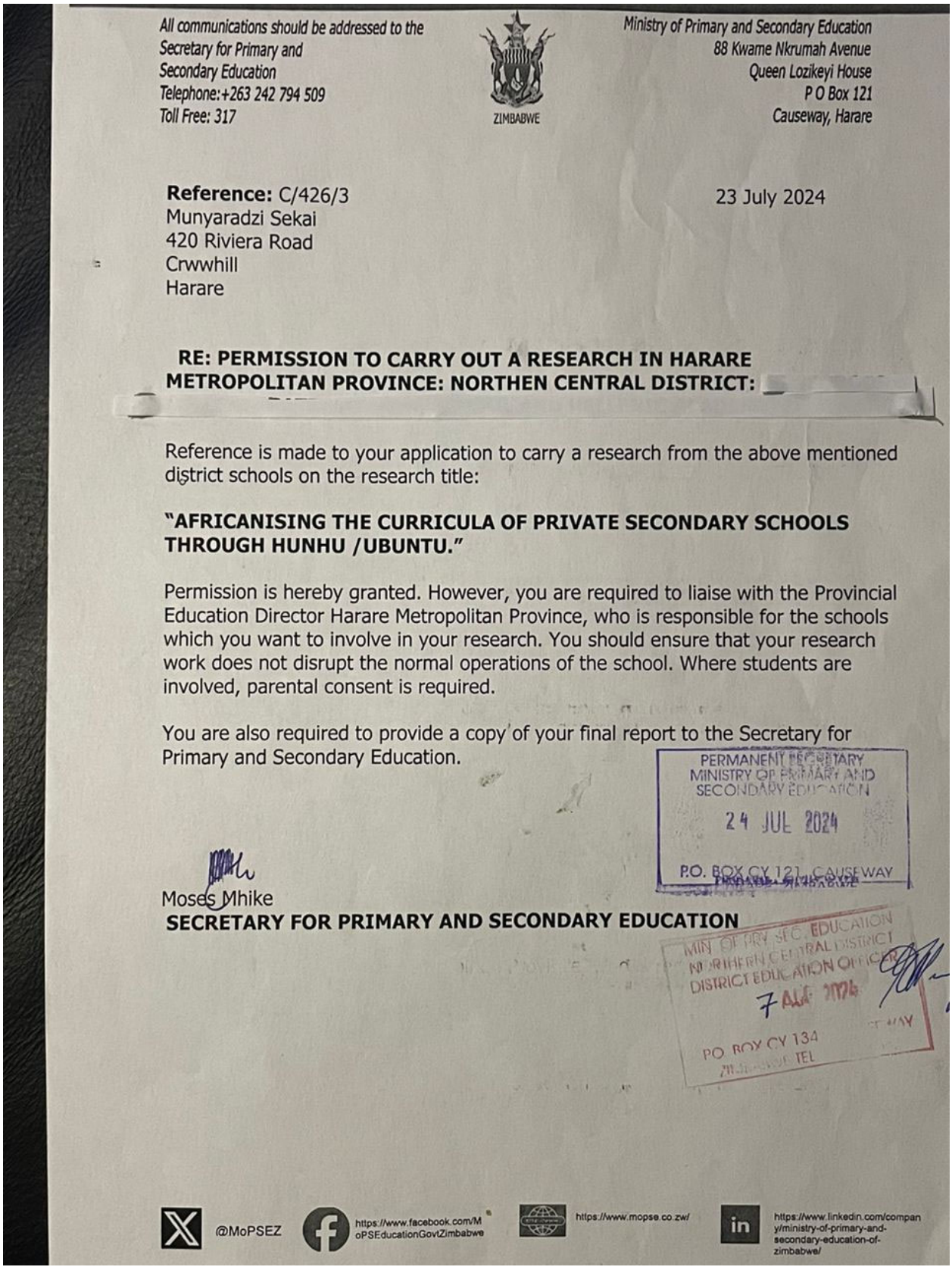
Yours sincerely

[redacted]

SEKAI MUNYARADZI

STUDENT RESEARCHER (UNISA)

APPENDIX D: MoPSE LETTER OF PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH



All communications should be addressed to the Secretary for Primary and Secondary Education
Telephone:+263 242 794 509
Toll Free: 317

ZIMBABWE

Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
88 Kwame Nkrumah Avenue
Queen Lozikeyi House
P O Box 121
Causeway, Harare

Reference: C/426/3
Munyaradzi Sekai
420 Riviera Road
Crwwhill
Harare

23 July 2024

RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT A RESEARCH IN HARARE METROPOLITAN PROVINCE: NORTHEN CENTRAL DISTRICT:

Reference is made to your application to carry a research from the above mentioned district schools on the research title:

"AFRICANISING THE CURRICULA OF PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS THROUGH HUNHU /UBUNTU."

Permission is hereby granted. However, you are required to liaise with the Provincial Education Director Harare Metropolitan Province, who is responsible for the schools which you want to involve in your research. You should ensure that your research work does not disrupt the normal operations of the school. Where students are involved, parental consent is required.

You are also required to provide a copy of your final report to the Secretary for Primary and Secondary Education.

PERMANENT SECRETARY
MINISTRY OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
24 JUL 2024
P.O. BOX CY 121, CAUSEWAY

Moses Mhike
SECRETARY FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

MIN OF PRY SEC EDUCATION
NORTHERN CENTRAL DISTRICT
DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICER
7 AUG 2024
P.O. BOX CY 134
TEL

@MoPSEZ
https://www.facebook.com/MoPSEducationGovtZimbabwe
https://www.mopse.co.zw/
https://www.linkedin.com/company/ministry-of-primary-and-secondary-education-of-zimbabwe/

APPENDIX E: SAMPLE OF CONSENT FORM

PARTICIPANTS' CONSENT LETTER

I……, have read and fully understand the request letter to participate in the research on

I also understand that confidentiality and anonymity during the study will be maintained, and that participation is voluntary.

I accept and give my consent to participate.

Signature Date

Researcher: Mrs. S. Munyaradzi

Supervisor: Prof. M.M. Maja

Co-supervisor:

APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HODS and TEACHERS

TITLE: AFRICANISING THE PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS' CURRICULA THROUGH UBUNTU/HUNHU IN ZIMBABWE: A case study

The following questions were asked during the interviews: Teachers and HODs

1. How can the curricula of Zimbabwe's private secondary schools be Africanised through hunhu in Zimbabwe? 2. Who should Africanise the curriculum of private secondary schools through hunhu in the Northern Central District in Zimbabwe?

3. When should the curriculum of private secondary schools be Africanised through hunhu in the Northern Central District in Zimbabwe?

4. What should be done to Africanise the curriculum of private secondary schools through hunhu in the Northern Central District in Zimbabwe?

5. Which aspects of the curriculum of private secondary schools should be Africanised through hunhu in the Northern Central District in Zimbabwe?

6. Why should the curriculum of private secondary schools be Africanised through hunhu in the Northern Central District in Zimbabwe?

7. What are the guidelines of Africanising the curricula of private secondary schools through hunhu in the Northern Central District in Zimbabwe?

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR MEMBERS OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BOARD (SGBs)

TITLE: AFRICANISING THE PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS' CURRICULA THROUGH UBUNTU/HUNHU IN ZIMBABWE: A CASE STUDY

The following questions were asked during the interviews**: SGBs**

1. How can the private secondary schools' curricula be Africanised through hunhu principles under your oversight as a member of the school governing board?

2. Who should be responsible within the school community for leading the Africanisation of curricula through hunhu in private secondary schools?

3. When should the curriculum of private secondary schools be Africanised through hunhu in the Northern Central District in Zimbabwe?

4. What should be done with your support as a member of the school governing board to Africanise the private secondary schools' curricula through hunhu in the Northern Central District in Zimbabwe?

5. Which areas or subjects within the school curriculum should be prioritized for Africanisation through hunhu principles?

6. Why is it important for SGBs to advocate for the Africanisation of curricula through hunhu in their schools?

7. What guidelines or practices should private secondary schools follow to ensure that the curriculum effectively reflects hunhu principles and promotes African values?

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR DISTRICT SCHOOLS INSPECTOR (DSI)

TITLE: AFRICANISING THE PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS' CURRICULA THROUGH UBUNTU/HUNHU IN ZIMBABWE: A case study

The following questions were asked during the interviews: **DSI**

1. With your oversight as the district Schools' Inspector, how can private secondary schools' curricula be Africanised through hunhu in the Northern Central District in Zimbabwe?

2. Who should be involved in driving or overseeing the process of curriculum Africanisation through hunhu within private secondary schools in the Northern Central District?

3. When is the appropriate time to initiate the integration of hunhu principles into private secondary school curricula to maximize impact in the Northern Central District in Zimbabwe?

4. What measures or procedures should district authorities implement to facilitate the Africanisation of private secondary schools through hunhu in the Northern Central District in Zimbabwe?

5. Which aspects of the private secondary school curricula require emphasis for Africanisation through hunhu in the Northern Central District in Zimbabwe?

6. Why is it essential for district education authorities to promote the Africanisation of curricula through hunhu in private secondary schools?

7. What guidelines or frameworks should district inspectors establish to ensure effective Africanisation of curricula through hunhu principles in private schools in the Northern Central District in Zimbabwe?

APPENDIX G: OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

Characteristics of learner-to-learner rapport	Yes	No
	Describe.	Describe.
Teacher to learner rapport		
Diversity depicted in teacher to leaner interaction:	Yes	No
Diversity depicted in learner-to-learner interaction:		

Aspects of hunhu portrayed in the classroom: **Individual learning:**	Yes	No
Aspects of hunhu portrayed in the classroom: Collaborative learning:		
Diversity upheld in assessments: **Multiple forms of assessments used:** **Mother tongue used to those who struggle in assessments in English:**	Yes	No

Relevance of curriculum content to the community: Does content refer to and include the Zimbabwean and African society **Do themes address Zimbabwean and African issues**	Yes	No

APPENDIX H: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS PROTOCOL

History syllabus	Yes	No
	Describe.	Describe.
Teacher's schemes of work	Yes	No
Teacher's lesson plans	Yes	No

Head Of Department supervision files: Teacher supervision files Master timetables Secondary School History syllabi	Yes	No
	Describe	Describe
District Schools Inspector school visit reports	Yes	No

.		

APPENDIX I: AN EXAMPLE OF ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEW WITH P2-S1HOD

Question 1. How can the curricula of Zimbabwe's private secondary schools be Africanised through hunhu in Zimbabwe?

Response: Cambridge is a European curriculum. Opinions must come from parents. At our school parents believe that European exam boards are superior to our Zimbabwean curriculum. Parents think that Europeans are better at crafting curricula. The how is difficult to answer because of our current situation our parents at this private school strongly believe in Cambridge curriculum because to them it is international and superior to anything African. You see we are not custodians of a curriculum that is not ours. From our private school the line is go to Europe or Americas for universities, so it is hard to convince the authorities to even think of Africanising the curriculum.

Question 2. Who should Africanise the curriculum of private secondary schools through hunhu in the Northern Central District in Zimbabwe?

Response: Head of academics in private secondary schools must work to make the curriculum relevant. We are still denying our own ethos even in our own Zimbabwe set up we need to teach to the learners giftings it is us the educators their teachers to ensure that we instil the Zimbabwean, the African philosophy especially of hunhu in our learners.

Question 3. When should the curriculum of private secondary schools be Africanised through hunhu in the Northern Central District in Zimbabwe?

Response: From the beginning of school at ECDA level, appreciation of hunhu must begin at tender age. School authorities from infants all the way to high school must teach to hunhu ethos because it makes us African and relevant.

Question 4. What should be done to Africanise the curriculum of private secondary schools through hunhu in the Northern Central District in Zimbabwe?

Response: Sometimes the element of force is necessary just to do the right thing one might say whether you like it or not change is necessary. Convincing the learner on benefits of Africanisation will sell the idea of Africanisation to the learners who would in turn sell the same idea to their parents who are mentally colonized and believe that the British curricula is superior to African curricula.

Question 5. Which aspects of the curriculum of private secondary schools should be Africanised through hunhu in the Northern Central District in Zimbabwe?

Response: The entire pedagogy must be changed. We are more of robots because we only follow teaching methodologies that are already prescribed by the British in this school. We need to include our own teaching and learning methodologies which are African for example introduce "Padare" This concept of learning will include inviting elders from the community to come and teach different subjects. For instance, they are elders that are mathematically inclined would come and teach math as well as life matters.

Question 6. Why should the curriculum of private secondary schools be Africanised through hunhu in the Northern Central District in Zimbabwe

Response: The private secondary school curricula must be Africanised in order to instil African identity in African children whether they are black or white. Being African does not only mean colour but means a way of doing life as well as life beliefs that are different from Europeans, Americans, Australians, Asians and so on. As Africans, we are respectful loving and embracing of all other people that is who we are. We are not selfish; we are not corrupt our learners need to be taught exactly that.

Question 7. What are the guidelines of Africanising the curricula of private secondary schools through hunhu in the Northern Central District in Zimbabwe.

Response: Implementation of an Africanised curriculum must include appreciation of African ethos from a tender age. Educators and parents must tell the truth about behaviours contrary to hunhu. Educators in parents must be persuasive and include hunhu in all subjects. This means the parents themselves as well as the educators must have a good and strong knowledge base of what we know involves hunhu and

must be passed on to the children. Hunhu must be taught at teaching colleges and at universities. We must make hunhu the central compass in education.

APPENDIX J: AN EXAMPLE OF ONE – ON- ONE INTERVIEW WITH P9-S3SGB

1. How can the private secondary schools' curricula be Africanised through hunhu principles under your oversight as a member of the school governing board?

Africanisation of the curriculum can only be successful through collaboration, synergizing and determination on the part of those involved. You know, change is not easy to manage. I believe it also takes readiness. Are we ready to make a serious and genuine overhaul of the curriculum? There has always been talk of Africanisation, but nothing has really materialised.

2. Who should be responsible within the school community for leading the Africanisation of curricula through hunhu in private secondary schools?

Response: "*This is a private community school. Which means different parents as members of the community who are responsible for this school as well as the students should be at the forefront of this effort. Parents, elders, and traditional leaders have valuable knowledge and insights to share. Every community is unique and has varying needs. Schools should work closely with the community to develop a curriculum that reflects their values and aspirations."*

Question 3. When should the curriculum of private secondary schools be Africanised through hunhu in the Northern Central District in Zimbabwe?

Response: *"We should have started this process a long time ago, by long time I mean at independence. This curriculum issue should have been resolved once and for all 45 years ago. Every day that we delay, we are denying our children their cultural inheritance. We need to act urgently and decisively, Education in Africa must reflect and mirror the needs and solutions in African society. If this is true in other*

continents then it must be true in Africa that education is a bridge and the golden lock to solutions to the problems we face every day and do not have answers for. "

Question 4. What should be done with your support as member of the school governing board to Africanise the private secondary schools' curricula through hunhu in the Northern Central District in Zimbabwe?

Response: *"We need to create a learning environment that celebrates African culture and traditions. This means incorporating indigenous languages into the teaching of other subjects, music, art, and storytelling into the classroom. It also means challenging colonial narratives and presenting a more balanced view of history. But for me the biggest one is what and how the curriculum is presented. Remember education is a process. The process has tom have strategies to present the curriculum is a n African way embedded with hunhu. Everything we teach or do at school including extra curricula activities must reflect the African philosophies especially the one you are talking about, hunhu. It must be said that one can never Africanise a curriculum without teamwork, collaboration and communication from stakeholders."*.

Question 5. Which areas or subjects within the school curriculum should be prioritized for Africanisation through hunhu principles?

Response: *"All aspects of the curriculum and I mean all must be Africanised, should be infused with hunhu principles. It's not just about what we teach, but how we teach, how teachers and everyone that the learners look up to value the African way of doing things. We need to use culturally relevant pedagogies that identify with our students' backgrounds. And make the learners be proud of them "*

Question 6. Why is it important for SGBs to advocate for the Africanisation of curricula through hunhu in their schools?

Response: *"We need our Africanised school leavers to stand heads and shoulders with any other educated young person and be able to influence others to apply their way of doing things. The who world should borrow our phenomenal African philosophy and infuse it with their own curricula. A hunhu curriculum must be an option if not curriculum of choice in other counties and other continents in the same*

way that some African people have made Cambridge a curriculum of choice. Africanisation the curriculum is not just about preserving the past; it's about preparing our children for the future. It's about empowering them to be agents of change in their communities and the world. It's about building a society based on hunhu values."

Question 7: What guidelines or practices should private secondary schools follow to ensure that the curriculum effectively reflects hunhu principles and promotes African values?

Response: *"The Ministry of Education in collaboration with private Schools' authorities should provide the necessary resources and support for schools to implement these changes. This includes funding for teacher training, skills development, curriculum development, and the creation of culturally relevant materials. Especially those based on hunhu. "*

APPENDIX K: AN EXAMPLE OF ONE-ON-ONE- INTERVIEW WITH P13-DSI

Question 1. With your oversight as the district Schools' Inspector, how can private secondary schools' curricula be Africanised through hunhu in the Northern Central District in Zimbabwe?

Response: I think what we have to look at first of all, is that we are talking about Africanisation of

a curriculum. And now when you are talking about the Africanisation of a curriculum, we are saying, we are agreeing that in the 1st place it's not African. Is that your stance? I have to know here. Are you saying that it is not African now, so we are trying to Africanise it or what? Where are we actually springing from? I will agree with you that very little has been done to Africanise the curriculum in private schools since independence in terms of enforcing policy. The use of native languages is pertinent in Africanisation of the curriculum, Africanising the hidden curriculum and changing the syllabi in private schools in critical in Africanisation of the curriculum.

Question 2. Who should be involved in driving or overseeing the process of curriculum Africanisation through hunhu within private secondary schools in the Northern Central District?

Response: The government through The Ministry of education should ensure that Cambridge is stopped and that Zimbabwean curriculum takes over in private schools. The parents body as well as educators must be in support of government initiative to Africanise the curriculum.

Question 3. When is the appropriate time to initiate the integration of hunhu principles into private secondary school curricula to maximize impact in the Northern Central District in Zimbabwe?

Response: Africanisation must start from onset of school in Early Childhood Development phases and go all the way to high school.

Question 4. What measures or procedures should district authorities implement to facilitate the Africanisation of private secondary school through hunhu in the Northern Central District in Zimbabwe?

Response: Private schools must participate in government schools' programmes; it must be all inclusive to participate in government programmes. Schools' inspectors must be increased and strengthened for example there is only one schools' inspector in NCD. All schools including private schools must have one examination board. Use of African languages in the teaching of all subjects must be enforced. Learners fail because they are taught in English. Mother tongue has generative power. Exams must be in traditional languages.

Question 5. Which aspects of the private secondary school curricula requires emphasis for Africanisation through hunhu in the Northern Central District in Zimbabwe?

Response: Language culture and general material culture must be Africanised. Pedagogy must be people centred and the use of local material examples must be emphasized. Exams must be set at school level so that our learners are examined in context. It is the school that knows the relevant culture. Therefore, localized syllabi have to be administered to suite the culture and context. For example, you cannot talk of deforestation in NCD because the leaners have never seen a forest.

Question 6. Why is it essential for district education authorities to promote the Africanisation of curricula through hunhu in private secondary schools?

Response: "The curricula have to be Africanised to instil pride in our young people. At the moment the hidden curricula in private schools' points to the British culture. This culture instils inferiority complex in our learners for example; it teaches our learners to stand up in honor instead of sitting down in honor of elders. Vana havafaniri kuona nhongonya yemukuru (Sitting down in the presence of elders entails, children not seeing the crown of elders' head which is a sign of respect in the Shona culture). It is time to redress the imbalances in culture. For instance, African churches have been perceived as devilish because Eurocentric education. African religion has been demonized. We have to go back to our traditional languages to preserve our African dignity. For example, there are words that we cannot say. For example, the human anatomy private parts.,

but these words can be said openly in English. All things must be done in an African way whether black, or white people are involved in private schools. Even when teaching Agriculture, let us go back our African material culture, for example staple foods, millet, rukweza (millet) etc. rapoko, Learners must be taught pfumvudza (Zero tillage farming). Genetically modified foods are not African we need to get back t our healthy way of doing life, this why hunhu is important. Languages taught in private schools are all foreign for example, Chinese, French and Spanish. No Chewa, Tonga, Vemba is being taught in private schools, Even the sign language taught in private schools, whose signs are we using? It goes all the way to games, chess and other European games are being popularizes at the expense of our own indigenous games like Tsoro and Nhodo.

Question 7. What guidelines or frameworks should district inspectors establish to ensure effective Africanisation of curricula through hunhu principles in private schools in the Northern Central District in Zimbabwe?

Response: Communication from NCD is key. Information regarding the Africanisation of the private schools' curricula must be communicated to all private schools' authorities. All information regarding Africanisation of the curriculum must be communicated clearly.

a. *NCD must communicate to all private secondary schools' activities and programmes that are to take place in Africanisation of the curriculum.*
b. *Include all teachers in private secondary schools not as submissive participants but give them roles to do.*
c. *NCD must come up with exchange programmes for teachers and learners private and government schools on educational practice to improve methodologies.*

APPENDIX L: EXAMPLE OF OBSERVATION FOR P3-S1T1

Observation results for P3, a history lesson focusing on the topic "French Revolution."

Characteristics of learner-to-learner rapport	✓ Yes	No
Learners were respectful to each other; they listened to each during group discussions as well as during feedback session.	Learners' relationships seemed cordial. Conversations were taking places during class.	Describe.
Teacher to learner rapport	✓ Yes Learners greeted teacher. Teacher equally respectful to learners, she called the learners by name. Teacher friendly but firm. Rebuked learners sternly for not applying themselves	

Diversity depicted in teacher to leaner interaction:	✓ Yes Teacher did not only pick the gifted during discussion but also picked the struggling and helped them along.	No
Diversity depicted in learner-to-learner interaction:		✓ NO
		Learners were not in groups there was no opportunity awarded to depict diversity during interaction.
Aspects of hunhu portrayed in the classroom: **Individual learning:**	✓ Yes There was respect, and honor between teacher and	✓ No Learners laughed at each other when they gave wrong answers.

	learners.	
Aspects of hunhu portrayed in the classroom: Collaborative learning:	✓ Yes Teacher gave everyone a chance to speak. Even the ones who did not raise their hands.	✓ NO No mother tongue was used to explain abstract concepts
Diversity upheld in assessments: **Multiple forms of assessments used:** **Mother tongue used to those who struggle in assessments in English:**	Yes	✓ No Individual exercise was given, the teacher also handed out graded tests from the previous lesson.
Relevance of curriculum content to the community: Does content refer to and include the Zimbabwean and African society **Do themes address Zimbabwean and African issues**	Yes	✓ No There was no mention of Zimbabwe or Africa during the expanse of the lesson. The lesson was on French Revolution, relevance to local culture could have been drawn.

APPENDIX M: SUMMARY OF THE DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

History syllabus	✓ Yes	No
	P3- had a Cambridge syllabus. P4-did not have a syllabus in his file he confirmed that he had a Cambridge syllabus on his computer. P7- Cambridge P8- Cambridge P11- Cambridge P12- Cambridge	Describe.
Teacher's schemes of work	Yes	No

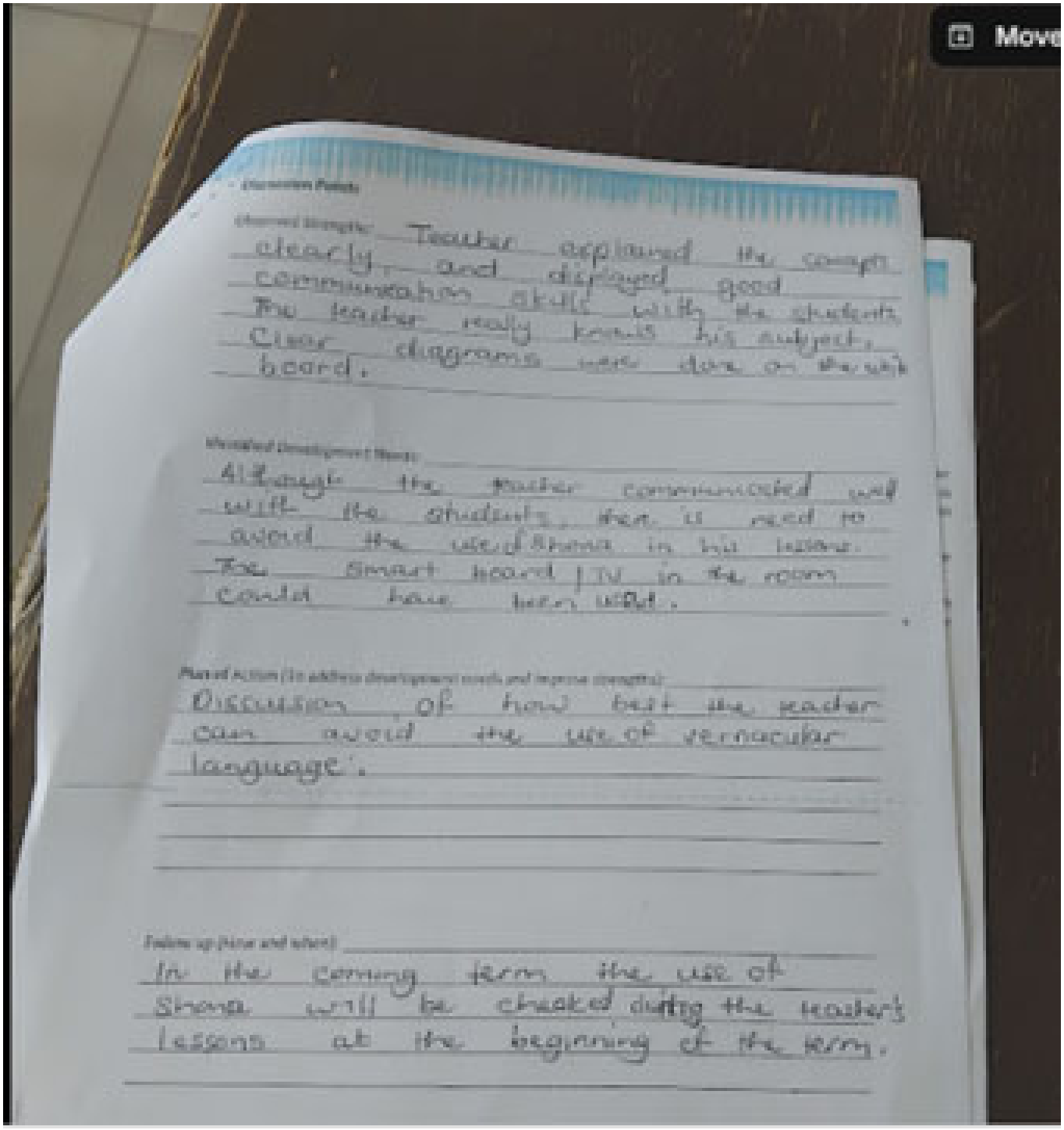
	P3- weekly plans P4- weekly plans P7- monthly plans P8-monthly plans P11-termly plans P12- monthly plans. Group work was planned for 4 in all six teachers' schemes.	Schemes were very academic there was no proof the affective domain of taken into cognizance. There were no team assessments. There was no sign of community engagement.
Teacher's lesson plans	Yes	No
one out of 6 teachers had the Lesson plan for the lesson observed. No lesson plans where in the teachers' files only schemes of work were available. Teachers us alluded that they used scheme cum plan.		No attributes of Hunhu were overtly planned for. Group tasks we planned for by the one teacher who had the lesson plans.

Head Of Department supervision files: Teacher supervision files Master timetables Secondary School History syllabi	Yes All HODs head teacher supervision files, master timetables and syllabi for all forms for history Form 1-6.	No
	Describe P2 - HOD assessment scripts for lessons, schemes of work, learner exercise books mark schedules but there was no evidence of hunhu being assessed. P6- HOD had scripts of lesson observations,	Describe

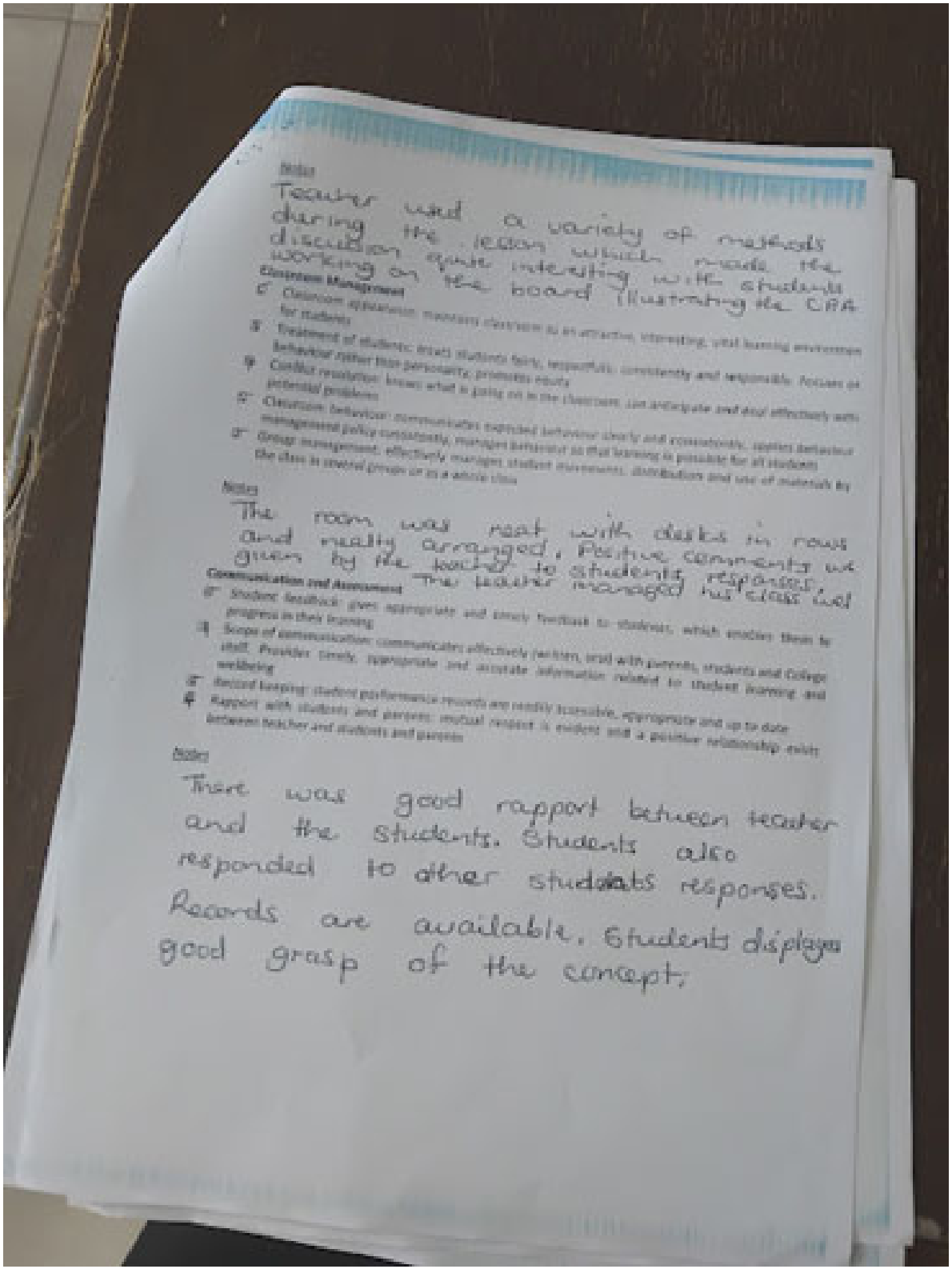
	schemes of work and exercise books checks. P10- HOD assesses lessons, books, and keep records of overall performance appraisals.	
District Schools Inspector school visit reports	Yes	No The researcher was denied access to the DSI school visits files. The DSI cited sensitivity and chose to keep the documents confidential. He, however, spoke about the criteria off school assessment visits. He confirmed that he assesses compliance and adherence to ministry policies, infrastructure and resources availability. However, there was mention of hunhu being assessed

		overtly, but the DSI passionately mentioned that it is he observes if African ethos were being followed. The researcher was told of an instance when an International School was under investigation of homosexuality, this was against Zimbabwe hunhu ethos end Ministry of Education did not tolerate that.

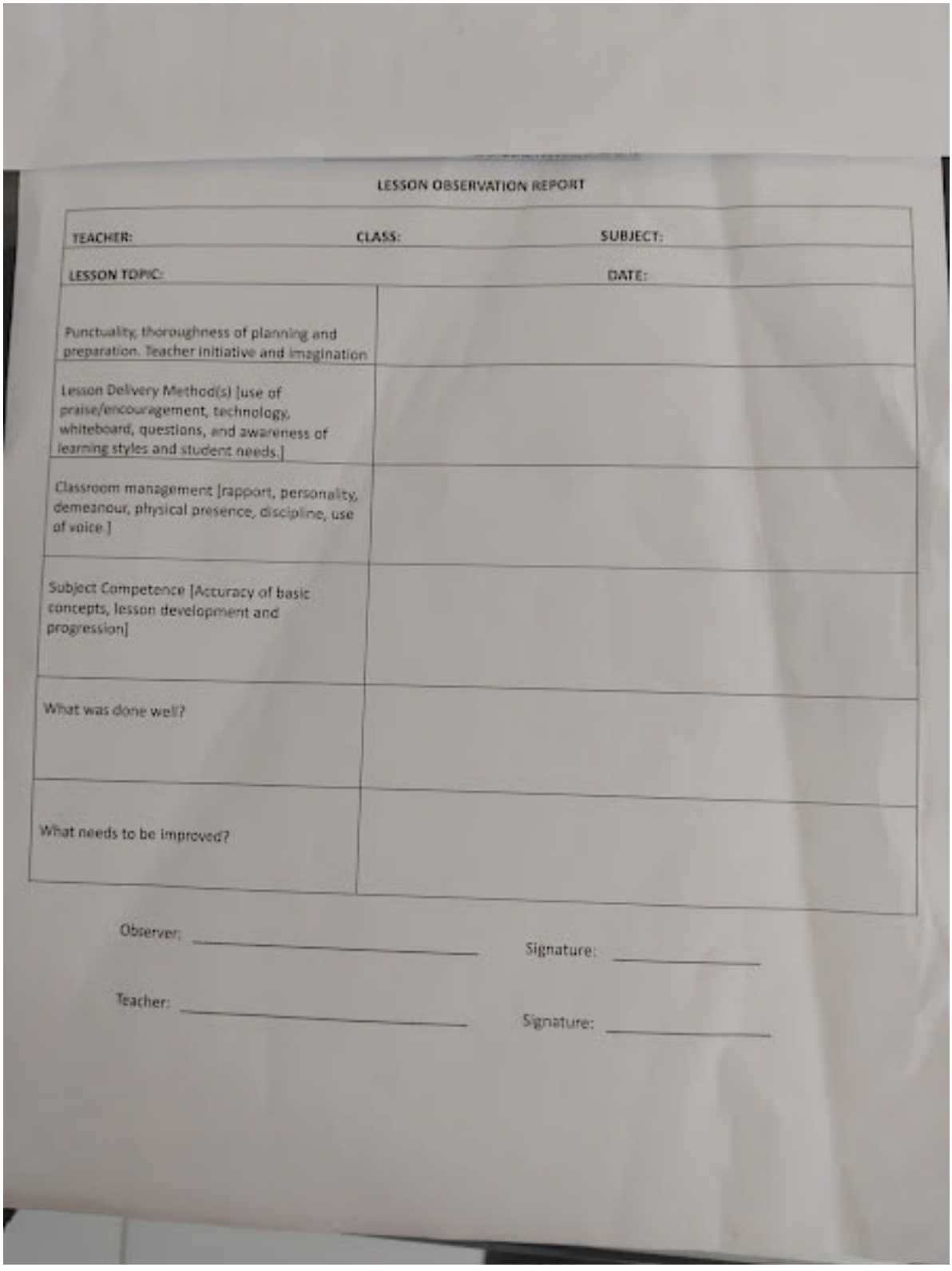
APPENDIX N: SAMPLE SUPERVISION SCRIPTS



Photograph 1. Sample Supervision Script



Photograph 2 Sample supervision script



LESSON OBSERVATION REPORT

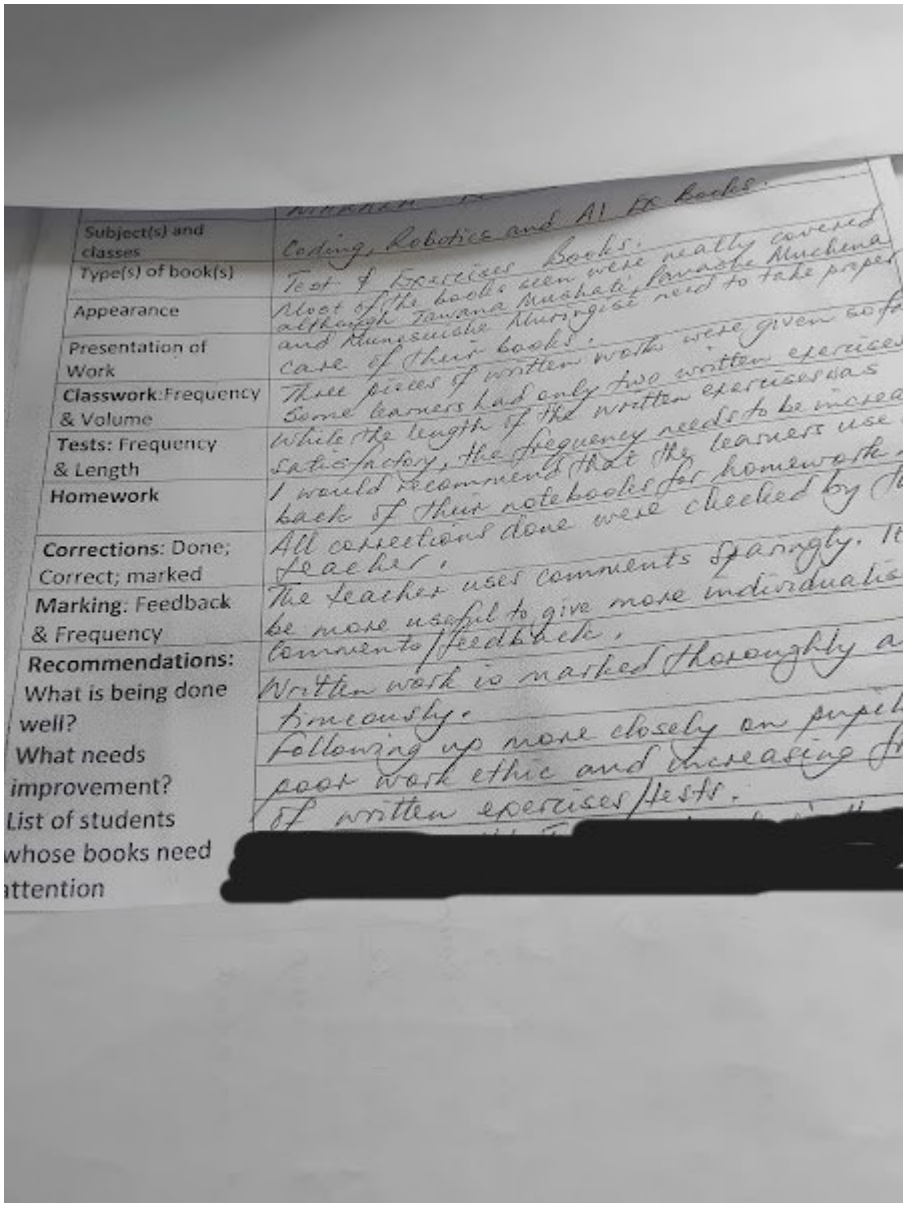
TEACHER:	CLASS:	SUBJECT:
LESSON TOPIC:		DATE:
Punctuality, thoroughness of planning and preparation. Teacher initiative and imagination		
Lesson Delivery Method(s) [use of praise/encouragement, technology, whiteboard, questions, and awareness of learning styles and student needs.]		
Classroom management [rapport, personality, demeanour, physical presence, discipline, use of voice]		
Subject Competence [Accuracy of basic concepts, lesson development and progression]		
What was done well?		
What needs to be improved?		

Observer: _____ Signature: _____

Teacher: _____ Signature: _____

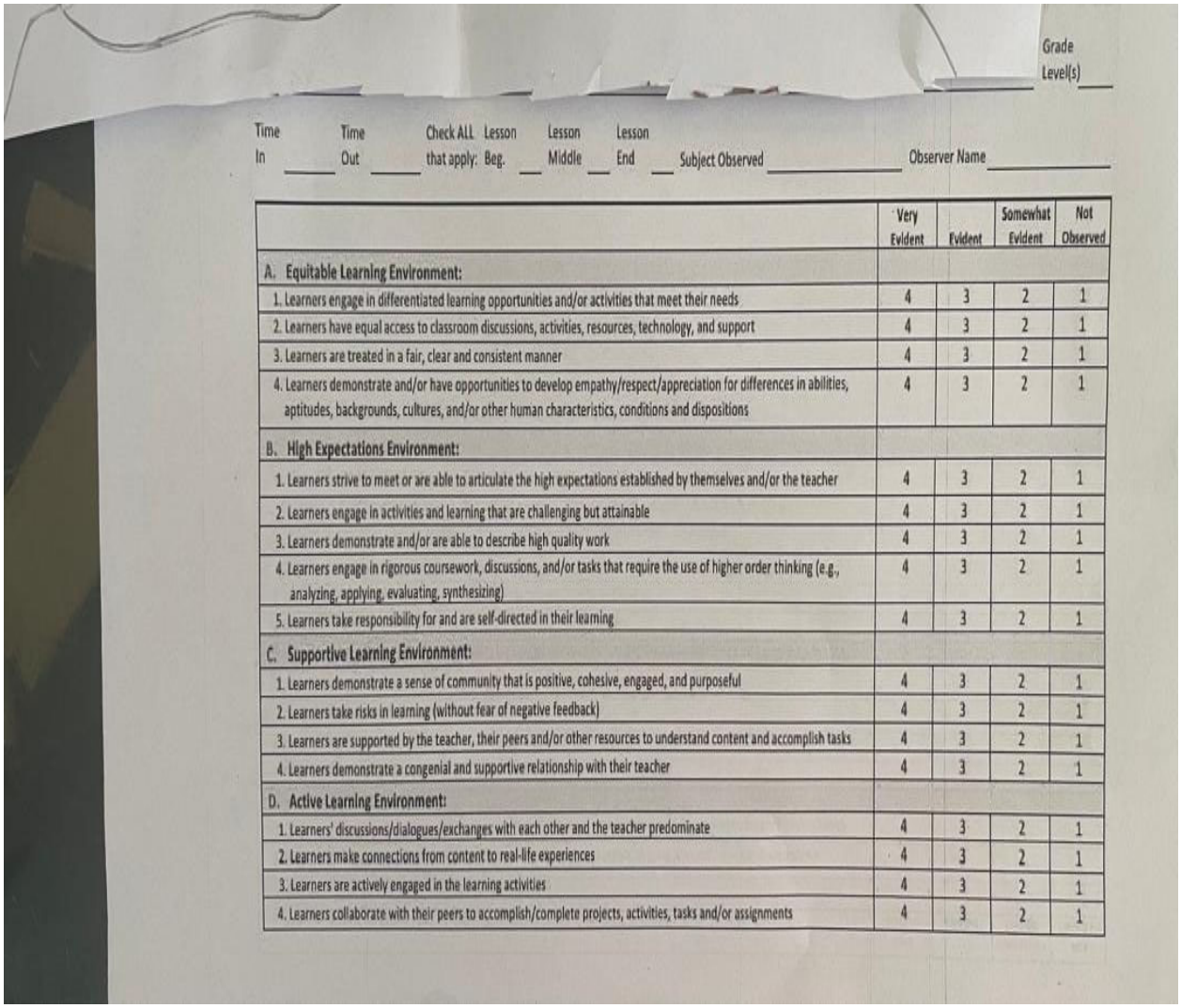
Photograph 3 (P6, S2HOD)

Sample supervision template



Subject(s) and classes	Coding, Robotics and AI Ex Books.
Type(s) of book(s)	Test & Exercises Books.
Appearance	Most of the books seen were neatly covered although Tawana Mushati, Panashe Muchena and Munesuishe Muringisi need to take proper
Presentation of Work	care of their books.
Classwork: Frequency & Volume	Three pieces of written works were given so fa Some learners had only two written exercises
Tests: Frequency & Length	While the length of the written exercises was satisfactory, the frequency needs to be increa
Homework	I would recommend that the learners use back of their notebooks for homework
Corrections: Done; Correct; marked	All corrections done were checked by t teacher.
Marking: Feedback & Frequency	The teacher uses comments sparingly. It be more useful to give more individualis comments/feedback.
Recommendations: What is being done well?	Written work is marked thoroughly a timeously.
What needs improvement?	Following up more closely on pupil poor work ethic and increasing fr
List of students whose books need attention	of written exercises/tests. [redacted]

Photograph 4 (P2, S1HOD) Sample supervision template



Grade Level(s) ____

Time In _____ Time Out _____ Check ALL that apply: Lesson Beg. ___ Lesson Middle ___ Lesson End ___ Subject Observed _____ Observer Name _____

	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
A. Equitable Learning Environment:				
1. Learners engage in differentiated learning opportunities and/or activities that meet their needs	4	3	2	1
2. Learners have equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support	4	3	2	1
3. Learners are treated in a fair, clear and consistent manner	4	3	2	1
4. Learners demonstrate and/or have opportunities to develop empathy/respect/appreciation for differences in abilities, aptitudes, backgrounds, cultures, and/or other human characteristics, conditions and dispositions	4	3	2	1
B. High Expectations Environment:				
1. Learners strive to meet or are able to articulate the high expectations established by themselves and/or the teacher	4	3	2	1
2. Learners engage in activities and learning that are challenging but attainable	4	3	2	1
3. Learners demonstrate and/or are able to describe high quality work	4	3	2	1
4. Learners engage in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks that require the use of higher order thinking (e.g., analyzing, applying, evaluating, synthesizing)	4	3	2	1
5. Learners take responsibility for and are self-directed in their learning	4	3	2	1
C. Supportive Learning Environment:				
1. Learners demonstrate a sense of community that is positive, cohesive, engaged, and purposeful	4	3	2	1
2. Learners take risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback)	4	3	2	1
3. Learners are supported by the teacher, their peers and/or other resources to understand content and accomplish tasks	4	3	2	1
4. Learners demonstrate a congenial and supportive relationship with their teacher	4	3	2	1
D. Active Learning Environment:				
1. Learners' discussions/dialogues/exchanges with each other and the teacher predominate	4	3	2	1
2. Learners make connections from content to real-life experiences	4	3	2	1
3. Learners are actively engaged in the learning activities	4	3	2	1
4. Learners collaborate with their peers to accomplish/complete projects, activities, tasks and/or assignments	4	3	2	1

Photograph 5 (P10, S3HOD)

Sample supervision template

APPENDIX O: TURNITIN REPORT

Similarity Report

PAPER NAME
46712402 46712402_Chapters 1-7.docx

AUTHOR
SEKAI Munyaradzi

WORD COUNT
71775 Words

CHARACTER COUNT
450629 Characters

PAGE COUNT
260 Pages

FILE SIZE
1.7MB

SUBMISSION DATE
Jan 19, 2026 12:01 AM GMT+2

REPORT DATE
Jan 19, 2026 12:11 AM GMT+2

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Summary

APPENDIX P: LANGUAGE EDITING CERTIFICATE

Mike Leisegang
Freelance Copy-Editor and Proofreader

Phone: +27 82 857 8733
Email: mike@wellspotted.ink
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Certificate of Editing

This serves to confirm that copy-editing and proofreading services were rendered to Sekai Munyaradzi for "Africanising the Private Secondary Schools' Curricula Through Hunhu/Ubuntu in Zimbabwe: A Case Study" with a final editable page count of 205 and 275 references from 24th February 2026 to 28th February 2026.



I am a member of the Professional Editors' Guild (member number LEI004) and commit to the following codes of practice (amongst others):

- *I have completed the work independently and did not sub-contract it out*
- *I kept to the agreed deadlines and/or communicated changes within reasonable time frames*
- *I treated all work as confidential and maintained objectivity in editing*
- *I did not accept work that could be considered unlawful, dishonest, or contrary to public interest*

I uphold the following editing standards:

- *proofreading for mechanical errors such as spelling, punctuation, grammar*
- *copy-editing that includes commenting on, but not correcting: structure, organisation and logical flow of content, basic formatting (headings, page numbers), eliminating unnecessary repetition*
- *checking citation style is correct, punctuating as needed and flagging missing or incorrect references*
- *commenting on suspected plagiarism and missing sources*
- *returning the document with track changes for the author to accept*

I confirm that I have met the above standards of editing and professional ethical practice. The content of the work edited remains that of the student.

Michael John Leisegang

Date: 28 February 2026

WELL SPOTTED

Certificate in Freelance and In-house Copy-editing and Proofreading

Note: I am not accountable for any changes made to the above document by the author or any other party subsequent to my edit.

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