Hunhu/ ubuntu philosophy incompatible with business ethics? Reflections on business viability in rural Shona communities in Zimbabwe.

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Abstract:

Business has always been an important component of society from time immemorial. It is difficult to imagine a society that does not have a business sector where the exchange of goods and services takes place. However, business takes place within socio-cultural and ethical contexts. This article revisits Hunhu/ Ubuntu (good ethical human behaviour) as observed by the Shona people of Zimbabwe and considers how it shapes business in rural Shona communities in Zimbabwe. It critically reflects on how rural businesspersons fare within the expectations of Hunhu/ Ubuntu viz-a-viz Western business approaches. Data were obtained from 100 informants randomly selected from rural Shona communities. The participants were former and current businesspersons involved in various lines of business. Among other issues, the interview questions were directed towards the people's motivation in starting business, the effects of Hunhu on business and the subsequent viability of rural businesses over the years. The responses provided helpful insights on the place of Hunhu in the African business environment.

Key words: Business, Hunhu/ Ubuntu, Shona community, sustainability

The computerization of rural schools in Zimbabwe: Challenges and opportunities for sustainability: The case of Chipinge District, South-east Zimbabwe.

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Abstract:

In this paper we seek to explain the relevance of introducing Computer Studies in Zimbabwe's rural schools as a means to reduce the access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) gap between rural and urban schools. We acknowledge the efforts of various stakeholders in education in introducing the Information and Communication Technology curriculum in rural schools in the last ten or so years as a commitment to bringing Science and Technology to the rural pupil. In addition, we further explore the progress that has been made by rural schools that received computers from the Government over the years. In the process, however, we observe that most rural schools have not fully embraced the ICT curriculum owing to a number of challenges. Thus, we contend in this paper that most rural schools that received donated computers had not been capacitated to fully utilise the new technology for the benefit of students, teachers and the community. As a result, most of the gadgets have been lying idle in classrooms due to lack of either proper infrastructural facilities such as computer laboratories and electricity as well as lack of trained ICT teachers. In the final submission, we implore stakeholders in education to facilitate ICT development in rural schools in Zimbabwe so as to increase access, quality and equity in education for sustainable rural development in Southern Africa. The study was qualitative in nature and relied on interviews, observations and use of the questionnaire. Using the theoretical paradigm of curriculum change and innovation, the study revealed that the use of computers for pedagogical purposes is very low in rural schools in Zimbabwe. Basing on this, the research recommends a multi sectoral approach involving government, private sector, 2 Computerization of Rural Schools in Zimbabwe: Challenges and Opportunities for Sustainable Development: The Case Study of Chipinge District, South-East Zimbabwe parastatals and other stake holders to ensure that students in rural schools benefit from the new technology.

Keywords: Information and Communication Technology, Computer Studies, rural schools.

Reflections on emerging horse and rider relationship: Media relations between Zimbabwe and China.

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Abstract

Colonialism and imperialism have several facets and in the global world systems which take into consideration political, economic and social domination, China is questioned for her quiet diplomacy and generosity in donating to the Zimbabwean media. The relationship between China and Zimbabwe has a long history which dates back to the liberation struggle when China rendered material and financial assistance. Upon the attainment of independence the relationship assumed a new dimension where China is striving to dominate the continent through manipulating the media. This paper seeks to explore strategies and techniques employed by China to control and influence media content in Zimbabwe. After being shunned by Western countries for its 'bad governance', Zimbabwe vigorously campaigned for a 'Look East' policy that ended up reviving and strengthening her ties with China. China donated critical broadcasting equipment, agricultural equipment and loans to revive the Zimbabwean economy which had seriously been ravaged by sanctions. Against this backdrop this paper therefore argues that the friendship between China and Zimbabwe is characterised by a horse and a rider relationship. Drawing examples from documentary evidence, the paper exposes the dominance of China in the media through training of personnel, exchange programs and donations.

Reflections on the media coverage of the Anglican Church management conflict in Zimbabwe.

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Abstract

This paper explored the different views and dimensions that emerged during the conflict for leadership in the Anglican Church in Zimbabwe between the year 2000 and 2013. It is not disputed that the media act as a watchdog of the society, but in the Anglican conflict it is a mystery as to whose dog the media was as evidenced by a close analysis of the comments they wrote. While it is evident and undoubtedly clear that the religious conflicts for leadership dates back to the biblical days, it is still worthwhile to expound on whether the old motivations for leadership are the same as those obtaining in the Anglican conflict. An analysis is thus essential so as to draw parallels between the ancient church leadership squabbles and the contemporary Anglican crisis. Relying mainly on newspaper documentary evidence, this paper explored the media's neutrality and role in the Anglican management conflict. The results showed that the media are active agenda setters who frame issues in a certain manner while ignoring or censoring other dimensions. From the perspectives of the public it was noted that the congregation got aligned to different media organizations, which shared their views in the unfolding disagreements. The old theories of succession and the spirit of schism slid back into place in a very glaring way; with power, priestly pre-eminence and prophetic authority taking the centre stage in the conflict in an interesting way.

Survival strategies of community newspapers during the economic crisis in Zimbabwe: A case study of The Mirror and Masvingo Star (1999 to 2010).

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Abstract

This paper sought to expose the strategies and methods utilised by community newspapers in Zimbabwe to remain in business in a hyper-inflationary environment. The economic crisis aided with a serious political crisis between the year 1999 and 2010 makes it difficult to comprehend how community newspapers survived during that time. While the period accounts for highest newspaper mortality rate in the country, it remains a mystery as to the techniques employed by The Mirror and Masvingo Star community newspapers to remain viable. The study strives to investigate survival methods that are feasible and can be practically used by the media to maintain viability during an economic and political crisis situation. Interviews with key stakeholders that is, the owner, editors and journalists who practised during the time as well as documentary evidence were used. It is argued that community newspapers maximised on the political polarisation to remain afloat. It is also argued that content became highly sensationalised to keep reader's interest. The community newspapers maximised on the news value of proximity as the major media players closed bureaus thus becoming the best option for information that was close to the people. Though most sectors of the economy closed shop donor funded civic society remained and thus offered alternative sources of revenue. It was concluded that political diversity is health in a democracy as it allows vibrant editorial slants to co-exist as political parties associate themselves with a particular newspaper.

Labour appropriation in Buhera District, South-Eastern Zimbabwe 1890-1930: The accidental proletarianization of an African peasantry by a foreign capitalist oligarchic enterprise

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Abstract

This presentation seeks to argue that before colonial rule, the African peasant population in Buhera District [formerly called Charter District] was producing only at subsistence level: they did not seek employment outside their villages because they pursued a communal system of production which was both economically self-sufficient and self-sustaining. Colonial records show that this African peasant population of Charter stood at thirty-two thousand people even as early as 1880s. [N9/1/5, NC Charter to CNC Salisbury, 31 March 1899]. The argument of this research is that such a large human population would need a consistent and reliable supply of staple grain and other traditional foods for its daily needs. Therefore pre-colonial Charter peasantry communities pursued a successful communal mode of production which largely depended on the availability of abundant, fertile and well-watered agricultural land: accompanied by huge supply of willing organized labour which was largely provided by men, women and children. Our argument stems from the fact that during this pre-colonial era, land was neither bought nor sold but belonged to the whole community under the collective management and administration of chiefs and their subordinates who distributed land to all able-bodied adult males in the community who needed such land.

This research will largely be based on primary evidence, that is, **oral traditions** and **colonial documents** but secondary published and unpublished supplementary sources will also be consulted in our endeavour to shade light on the area under research.

Keywords: appropriation, proletariat, agriculture, land, colonial enterprise

The Shona proverb as an expression of *unhu/ Ubuntu*

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Abstract

This paper is a discourse on the Shona proverb as a conduit for the transmission and expression of fundamental attributes of ubuntu. The research argues that traditional Zimbabwean institutions drew sustenance from the country's value systems and experiences embodied in the Shona proverb. The Shona proverb, as a product of the historical and cultural experiences of the Shona people, unravels the worldview of the Shona people. It is the submission of this paper that ethos which constitute ubuntu are embodied in the Shona proverb. Unhu/ubuntu is vital in creating the necessary general framework within which people can pursue their life's existential projects necessary for development. Zimbabwe therefore needs recourse to the wisdom encapsulated in the Shona proverb in order for her to experience equipoise, harmony, serenity, balance and peace, which are the basis for Africa's progress.

"Woe to me if i do not preach the gospel!" (1 Corinthians 9:16):re-reading Paul's message to the Corinthians in the context of Zimbabwe crisis

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Abstract

Paul, like Jesus Christ, was chief propagator of the Gospel generally referred as 'Good News' the English equivalent of the Greek. He preached the Gospel to the world to transform society from social, economic, political, cultural and spiritual domination to establish the Kingdom of God on earth. This paper therefore observes that though Africa is a continent in crisis in general and Zimbabwe a country in crisis in particular, it is mandatory to preach a message of redemption boldly without fear or favour to those who abuse power and authority to the total detriment of many hence the caption, "Woe to me......!" Situating ourselves in Paul's times (re-reading) will go a long to pave way for us to address poor leadership, tragic mismanagement of available resources and abuse of power which translates to social, economic, political and spiritual domination to the total deprivation of majority. This paper argues continually that Paul transformed the societies he lived in politically, socially, economically and spiritually through preaching the message of transformation. Zimbabwe needs such preachers of the calibre of Paul if it longs to retain its status as, 'jewel of Africa's crown' hence the call to boldly preach the Gospel of peace, justice and dignity for the people of Zimbabwe to live life holistically.

"Corporate governance and ethics": a precursor of corporate growth and development

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Abstract

This article serves as a scholarly enquiry on the role of corporate governance and ethics in organizations in their desire to grow and develop towards sustainable development in service provision to the nation. The study applied an ubuntu- anthropological philosophy to attain its set aim and objectives. The article argues that effective corporate governance and ethics are critical if institutions are to successfully manage risk in their desire to grow and develop. The institutions need an educated and knowledgeable board of directors with a sound accounting and financial background, a highly qualified senior management and a well paid and motivated workforce if they are to be efficient and effective in their service delivery to the nation. The article asserts that effective corporate governance and ethics implementation are indispensable if organizations in emerging economies are to survive into the foreseeable future. It further maintains that corporate integrity, market discipline, accountability, transparency, fairness, social responsibility and good business ethics were critical for institutions to successfully attain their missions, visions and core values. Finally the article recommend organizations to successfully manage business risks by adhering to the King II report and recommendations as well Basel Committee`s Accords stipulations not overlooking the crucial aspect of employing highly educated and experienced labour force for that serves as a precursor for corporate growth and development