

## **LOVE, SEX, MONEY, CELL PHONE, BEER OR BEAST FOR A JOB: CORRUPT PRACTICES WITHIN ZIMBABWE'S EDUCATION SECTOR: IMPLICATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This paper discusses some corrupt practices within Zimbabwe's Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture and their implications on sustainable development (SD). It focuses on three issues, namely: corruption, bribery and nepotism. It shows that these illegal activities are rampant in the recruitment, deployment and transfer of teachers throughout the country. Some of the issues discussed include: corrupt activities of staffing officers, how the corruption game is played, causes and consequences of the corruption and its overall impact on the education system. Policy recommendations are also discussed at the end of the paper. The research findings are based on a questionnaire survey that was administered among 110 Bachelor of Education students at Great Zimbabwe University in October 2004. They included 56 men and 54 women, all of them trained teachers. The paper argues that corruption is increasingly becoming part of the ministry's Informal Sector as shown by the emergence of clandestine syndicates. Unless drastic measures are taken to curb this development, the image of the ministry may be tarnished beyond repair and this is a threat to sustainable development at national level.

**Keywords:** Corruption, Education, Recruitment, Transfer, Sustainable, Development

### **INTRODUCTION**

Since independence in 1980, the Zimbabwean Government has set up several legislative measures against corruption by top government officials and civil servants. For example, the leadership code of the early 1980s was aimed at preventing political leaders in the ruling party (ZANU-PF) from 'amassing wealth through the abuse of office and public resources' (Muparutsa, 2005:8). Later on, the appointment of the Sandura Commission in 1989 and the Utete Commission in 2003 to probe into the activities at Willowvale Motor Industries and the Fast Track Land Redistribution Programme, respectively, echoed similar sentiments of an anti-corruption stance in the country. In 2004 an Anti-corruption and Anti-Monopolies Special Affairs Ministry was set up. It culminated in the arrest of top government officials including a minister (*The Manica Post 18-24 February, 2005 page 8*). In the same year, the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe Governor placed several banks and financial institutions under curator-ship in order to save them from corrupt practices. These developments indicate that in Zimbabwe, just as in other African countries, corruption has become a major challenge calling for drastic solutions.

This study investigates corrupt practices within the Ministry of Education, Sport, Art and Culture in Zimbabwe. It is a countrywide study based on a questionnaire survey that was administered among 110 Bachelor of Education students of Great Zimbabwe University (formerly Masvingo State University). These students were drawn from most provinces in the country and comprised 56 men and 54 women. The survey was conducted in October 2004 and it focused on the issues of staff recruitment, deployment and transfers. Consequently, it probes into the activities of headmasters, staffing officers (at both district and provincial levels) and provincial education officers. The findings drawn from an analysis of the data suggest that corruption in the form of bribes and nepotism is increasingly becoming part of the education ministry's informal economy. The syndicate nature of these corrupt activities is a threat to professionalism and demands drastic measures in order to curb them. This paper also makes reference to some contemporary researchers on unethical behaviour among professional people. Examples are Bersoff (1999), Wark and Krebs (2000), Shumba and Matina (2002).

### CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

Studies on corruption within Zimbabwe's education system are not new. For example, Zindi (1994) has explored sexual harassment of female students by male lecturers in tertiary institutions such as colleges and universities. Shumba and Matina (2002) pursue the same theme. They conclude that sexual harassment is rife in the country's tertiary institutions and suggest that each institution should develop a clear policy on the problem so as to educate and protect potential victims. Corruption is a 'dishonest or immoral behaviour by politicians or people who work for the government' (*The Longman Active Study Dictionary, 2000:151*). The same dictionary also defines a bribe as 'money or a gift that someone gives to a person in an official position to persuade them to do something dishonest' (page 76). Corrupt practices are modes of unethical behaviour among professional people. They take various forms such as bribery, nepotism, regionalism, tribalism, favouritism and sexual harassment. As criminal offences, they are liable to prosecution in courts of law. This is because they tarnish the image of organisations where they prevail.

In some African countries, corrupt practices at workplaces have become a national problem. In Ghana for example, 'corruption' and 'bribery' are now household terms. Hardly a day passes without these words being mentioned in public and private places. Nukunya (1992:237), a renowned professor of Sociology in that country, after defining corruption as 'the use of public office for private gain', goes on to give a detailed definition of the two terms:

*"It means in effect dishonesty. Behind the action of bribery and corruption is the fact that in the modern rational bureaucratic organization, people employed in state and private institutions are paid salaries mutually accepted by employer and employee. Yet some employees using their official positions demand or accept extra payments for themselves from the people they are paid to serve when they render these services"*

Corruption is a complex problem, which takes various forms and can operate at different levels. For example, it may involve organized groups (syndicates) or individuals. That is why it cuts across many social circles, business establishments and political parties. *Nepotism* is another form of corruption even though it does not involve the use of money. Its goal is to promote kinship ties or family recognition. According to Nukunya (1992:238), it "helps the beneficiaries to improve on their

own positions and the kin group as a whole gains in the end". The same applies to tribalism and regionalism whose aim is to provide favours to selected groups of people at the expense of others.

Researchers on unethical behaviour claim that people in positions of responsibility are pushed into immoral activities by several factors. These, according to Bersoff (1999), include conflicts between two or more strongly held goals or values, a high personal cost for doing the morally correct thing and desperate circumstances. One of the main objectives of this study is to examine the major causes of corruption among Ministry of Education officials in Zimbabwe. Theoretical views such as those of Bersoff (1999), Wark and Krebs (2000) are invoked in the discussion in order to explain the moral dilemmas that these people face in executing their professional duties.

### **THE RESEARCH PROBLEM**

This study examined the problem of corruption within Zimbabwe's Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture. It sought to answer five basic questions:

- a) Are there any corrupt practices in the recruitment, deployment and transfer of teachers in Zimbabwe?
- b) If so, what forms do they take?
- c) What are their causes and consequences and who are the main culprits?
- d) What is their *modus operandi*? and
- e) What implications do these activities have for SD at national level?

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Corruption is a growing problem in developing countries such as Zimbabwe. It undermines the successful implementation of government policies, wastes material and financial resources, causes inefficiency at work places and damages a country's image at national and global levels. For this reason, it should not escape the attention of scholars and researchers. In Zimbabwe, corruption is a topical issue and is likely to undermine the country's quest for sustainable development. Consequently this study seeks to contribute to the on-going research and debate on the problem, with a view to suggesting possible solutions to this national crisis.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

An open-ended questionnaire comprising 27 items was developed in order to obtain information from 110 respondents who included 56 men and 54 women, who were all trained teachers pursuing the Bachelor of Education Degree at Great Zimbabwe University. Most (101 or 92%) of them had been in the teaching profession for more than four years after completing their initial college training. The bulk of these students (69 or 63%) had served the Ministry of Education, Sport, Art and Culture for at least seven years by October 2004 when this survey was conducted. The questionnaires were completed in one -seating during a lecture period. Students were asked to keep their responses secret so as to ensure confidentiality. The data that were collected from their responses formed the basis upon which this report was founded. It is pertinent to note that even though the sample of respondents was drawn from one institution of higher learning (Great Zimbabwe University), they came from all provinces of Zimbabwe. This gave the study a national coverage (Table1).

**Table 1: Distribution of Respondents according to their Provinces**

Province	Male	Female	Total	Percentage (%)
Masvingo	20	31	51	46
Manicaland	13	7	20	18
Midlands	3	6	9	8
Matebeleland South	5	3	8	7
Mashonaland Central	6	0	6	5.5
Mashonaland West	2	4	6	5.5
Mashonaland East	3	1	4	4
Matebeleland North	2	1	3	3
Harare	2	1	3	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100</b>

While the majority of the respondents came from Masvingo (51 or 46%) and Manicaland (20 or 18%), respectively, the rest (39 or 36%), were drawn from the remaining part of the country including Harare. It is also significant to note the gender characteristics of the sample. While men constitute 51% of the sample, women comprise 49%. On the basis of this information, it can be argued that there is some degree of gender balance in the study.

### **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS**

Two characteristics of the 110 respondents were used in this survey. They included the period of service in the Ministry of Education, Sport, Art and Culture and whether or not they had personally experienced any problems in getting employed, deployed or transferred. Questions 6 and 9 of the questionnaire covered these issues, respectively. Table 2 below, summarises the responses of the students to Question 6. Some 8.2% had been in the teaching field for up to three years. A further 29% had served the ministry for periods ranging from four to six years. The bulk of the respondents (36.4%) were seasoned professionals who had been in the field for up to ten years. The last category comprises those who had served the ministry for more than ten years. They constituted 26.4% of the respondents. Due to their long periods of service in the ministry, the last two categories of respondents were quite informative. Their long service had given them a deeper insight of the clandestine activities of staffing officers at both district and provincial levels. Since they constituted the majority of the respondents (62.8%), their views were taken seriously in the final analysis of the data.

**Table 2: Period of Service in the Teaching Field**

Period of Service in Years	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
0-3	9	8.2
4-6	32	29.0
7-10	40	36.4
Over 10 years	29	26.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100</b>

Question 9 asked the respondents whether they had personally experienced any problems in getting employed, deployed or transferred, as mentioned earlier. Some 23 women and 9 men answered in the affirmative. In other words, 32 or 29% of the respondents had experienced personal encounters with these problems. Those who fell outside this category relied on indirect sources of information such as rumours, speculations and allegations. Although their views were not ignored, they were not taken as seriously as those of their counterparts who had first-hand knowledge. Table 3 provides a summary of the age-sex structure of the latter category. It is worth noting that women had more personal encounters with corrupt officers (72%) compared to their male counterparts. Two possible reasons can be given to explain this phenomenon. Firstly, women seek transfers more frequently than men due to their desire to join their spouses who may be employed in towns and cities. Secondly, in patriarchal societies such as Zimbabwe, women are more vulnerable and prone to some forms of harassment by their superiors (lecturers, bosses or employers) than their male counterparts (Zindi, 1994). It is also significant to note that most victims (male and female) are relatively young (below 46). This is probably a reflection of the predominance of this age group in the country's teaching profession. It is also an indication of the sample from which the data was derived (undergraduate students of Great Zimbabwe University).

**Table 3: Age-sex Structure of the Victims**

Age Category	Male	Female	Percentage of Female Victims
Below 25	0	0	0
26-35	6	14	44
36-45	2	6	19
46 and above	1	3	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>72</b>

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This section examines the corrupt activities of the officials, how the corruption game is played and its overall effects on the victims.

### **CORRUPT PRACTICES WITHIN THE MINISTRY**

According to Makoni and Kujinga (2000) education in Zimbabwe is no longer rewarding partly because of corruption, which has invaded the civil service. Questions 13 and 14 were addressed to those respondents who had personally experienced cases of corruption within the ministry. Respondents were asked to list and briefly explain the nature of the corrupt activities they had encountered. This section outlines and discusses the common illegal practices of the ministry officials.

Which corrupt activities are common in Zimbabwe's Ministry of Education, Sport, Art and Culture? Three responses were given. They included corruption, nepotism (or favouritism) and bribery. Corruption, in general, involved any illegal or unprofessional practice exercised or conducted by headmasters, staffing officers and any other employees within the ministry. For example, some staffing officers deliberately overstaff some schools in order to victimise certain teachers who will then be ordered to transfer to remote schools. In this case, overstaffing is used as a scapegoat for the forced transfer of the teachers affected. Another example is that of staffing officers who ignore the requests of a female spouse who wants to join her family in town. The most common reason given by staffing officers is that there are no vacancies in urban or peri-urban schools. This is quite logical considering the competition for such vacancies. The truth, however, may be that such vacancies are reserved for other people who are not on the waiting lists. In general, corrupt officers do not follow the laid down procedures in deploying, employing and transferring teachers. Some teachers can go for years without being considered at all. Eventually, owing to their desperation, they resort to corrupt strategies in order to achieve their goals.

Nepotism is another common practice. Corrupt civil servants within the ministry employ double standards, one for friends and /or relatives and another for ordinary people. Those who are closely connected to the officials often receive favourable treatment. They get first preference when it comes to recruitment, deployment and transfers. They are deployed in good schools close to towns and cities. In some cases, they fill urban vacancies without having to be registered on the staff waiting lists. Questionnaire respondents from all provinces including Harare mentioned the problem of nepotism. Just like other forms of corruption, it is a national problem. It should be noted that although staffing officers are the major culprits in corruption, nepotism and bribery, they often connive with some headmasters.

The most detailed, vivid and graphic responses dealt with the problem of bribery. In response to Question 14, respondents explained how corrupt practices were conducted. From the quotations, one can identify two types of bribes, namely, cash and kind. While the first type involves the payment of money, the second one includes a variety of assets, privileges and favours such as beer, beasts (cattle and goats), cell phones, suits, sex, and love relationships. It is significant to note that 32 (29%) of

the respondents identified bribery as a major problem. Even the non-victims (71%) also mentioned it in their responses. The following statements were quoted verbatim from some of the respondents:

*\*I paid money to be where I am. Love and intimacy are another alternative (Female Respondent).*

*\*They (staffing officers) ask you every time you go there to buy them something, for example, beer, a suit or a goat (Female Respondent).*

*\*Bribes are paid in cash or kind. For example some (teachers) had to buy suits for the Provincial Education Director's wife. Others had to succumb to his sexual advances (Female Respondent).*

*\*They (staffing officers) wanted huge sums of money in order to effect a transfer. They also wanted to exchange love for a teaching vacancy, buying suits from Meikles Stores or exchanging a place in town for a beast (cow or goat) (Female Respondent).*

*\*You pay his (staffing officer) bill at such clothing shops as Edgars or Meikles (Female Respondent).*

*\*Some headmasters give you advice on how to pay a bribe to the staffing officer (Male Respondent).*

*\*Staffing officers accept favours from some offenders in order to sweep their scandals under the carpet (Male Respondent).*

*\*Deployment is a question of whom you know, that is, nepotism. Women, especially those who are beautiful, have no problems at all. Transfers are biased towards them. Also, one should be prepared to pay cash for the favours (Male Respondent).*

*\*There is a network between the teacher who has to be deployed and those at the ministry offices. Some officers ask for bribes so that they can push up your request (Male Respondent).*

*\*Teachers in need of transfers are placed on a waiting list, which is static. If you know someone at the top of the Ministry of Education, your transfer is immediate and you need not wait for your chance. Otherwise, you have to bribe the officials (Male Respondent).*

*\*The District Education Officer demanded some money for untrained temporary teachers to get employed. The headmasters also did the same in 2001 when they were employing teachers (Male Respondent).*

*\*Staffing officers demand kickbacks in the form of beer, beasts (cows or goats), the latest cell phone models or cash to give you a vacancy in town. Ladies use their thighs for a favour while men pay high cash figures for transfers (Male Respondent).*

*\*Headmasters block teacher's transfers until bribes are paid. Ministry officials solicit for bribes demanding lots of money. They destroy marriages by refusing to transfer ladies until bribes are paid either in cash or kind (Female Respondent).*

*\*You are asked to pay their (staffing officers) accounts at credit stores such as Edgars and Meikles. Some officials demand sexual favours (Female Respondent).*

### **HOW IS THE GAME OF CORRUPTION PLAYED?**

Any criminal, who wishes to survive in the business for some time, develops some strategies of self-preservation. This section tries to explain how corrupt officials operate and why it is difficult for law enforcement agents such as the police to catch them and bring them to justice. It looks at the survival tactics employed by these officers and the syndicate nature of their activities. Question 16 asked respondents to briefly explain how staffing officers conduct their criminal activities. Below is a list of some of their quoted responses:

*\*The Ministry officials have their agents. They do not come in person; you pass on the money (bribe) via their agents (Female Respondent).*

*\*Bribes are paid through relatives of ministry officials or through a third person for example a clerk at the district offices. Rarely is it done directly and personally (Female Respondent).*

*\*The agents (clerks) receive the money (bribe) but you will never know the real official who gets it. It is a closely guarded secret (Female Respondent).*

*\*The syndicate is so well organised. Everybody in the system is getting a slice so nobody reports the other (Female Respondent).*

*\*Clerks and secretaries are used as agents or conduits to pass on bribes. They cascade the cash to the top officials (Female Respondent).*

*\*The problem is that you are never told to pay the bribes but you are told there is no vacancy. And yet another person who gets into the office after you is offered the place. The syndicate is so well organised (Female Respondent).*

*\*Sometimes bribes are conveyed through people who do not work for the ministry such as street vendors (Male Respondent).*

*\*The staffing officers do not openly ask for a bribe. However, they make things look difficult for you in order to make you desperate until you start thinking of a bribe (Male Respondent).*

*\*There is a syndicate through which bribes are paid. But this is a guarded secret (Male Respondent).*

*\*Bribes are forwarded through clerks or secretaries working for the ministry. They can also be deposited into bank or credit accounts of the staffing officers. Sometimes the payment is done through connections or relatives of the officials (Male Respondents).*

*\*When I went in person to seek transfer making a follow up of my letter, I was told there was no vacancy in my desired district but later a council worker was sent to me so that I could pay for my transfer through him. I was surprised how the man knew that I wanted to transfer (Female Respondent).*

An analysis of the above responses reveals interesting features of the illegal business. Firstly, it is highly secretive. Few staffing officers openly ask for a bribe. This ensures their job security since law enforcement agents can never gather enough evidence to convict them. Secondly, it would appear that in some provinces, staffing officers work in cahoots with other officials in the ministry such as headmasters and provincial education officers. The formation of a syndicate ensures operational efficiency and since all members share the bribes, nobody can report the others. Thirdly, the use of agents such as clerks, secretaries and street vendors is an effective security measure. It prevents the staffing officer's public image from getting tarnished. He/She retains dignity as a professional person in spite of the underground activities he/she is involved in. Finally, since bribes can be deposited into personal bank or credit accounts, few people can be suspicious enough to be able to alert the police. In the light of the above facts, it can be argued that the ministry officials have developed an effective, secretive and watertight system that would be a hard nut to crack for any law enforcement agent. This probably explains why the system has managed to survive for several years without recording many casualties.

The study also aimed at establishing how much clients are supposed to pay in cash. The figures given by the respondents were quite variable from one province to another. They have also increased considerably over the years. Question 19 asked the respondents to complete a table in order to show how much money the staffing officers have been demanding over the years. Table 4 depicts the statistics given for one of the provinces.

**Table 4 Cash Bribes Demanded by Staffing Officers in one of the Provinces**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Bribe in Cash Z\$</b>
2001	10 000-00
2002	100 000-00
2003	700 000-00
2004	1 200 000-00 to 5 000 000-00

The variation of figures from one province or district to another has three implications. Firstly, there is no uniformity in the bribes paid. Secondly, there is probably some room for bargaining between the client and the staffing officer. This bargaining process is probably done through the agents who also get a share of the bribes. Once an agreement has been reached, the client is expected to pay the bribe before he/she gets a job or a transfer. Thirdly, there is probably no coordination at inter-district and inter-provincial levels. This is inevitable since corrupt activities have to be tightly controlled locally if they have to survive for some time. It should also be noted that there are no defaulters in this game of corruption. Those who fail to pay up are not served until they have done so. Their transfers or recruitment into the service are shelved until they have fully paid up the bribes. This explains why some teachers can go for years without being considered for transfers.

#### **THE PLIGHT OF TEACHERS WITHIN A CORRUPT MINISTRY**

What happens to those teachers who resist paying bribes? This was the essence of Question 21. A variety of responses were given. The following list of excerpts from respondents provides a summary:

*\*Those who resist paying bribes are punished or victimised.*

*\*No favours are given to them. They will not get jobs or transfers.*

*\*Their requests are simply ignored.*

*\*They are told that there are no vacancies.*

*\*False accusations can be levelled against them as punishment.*

*\*They are denied promotions and they can be falsely accused of committing some acts of misconduct.*

*\*They are deployed in remote areas.*

The above quotations yield interesting results on the plight of teachers in the country. Firstly, those who are morally upright and cannot accept bribes are in a vulnerable position since they can be punished for their stance. Their requests

are ignored, their promotions blocked and they can also be falsely accused of having committed some acts of misconduct by ministry officials. Secondly, they live in fear and this keeps their morale low, which undermines professionalism at the work place. This probably helps to explain why examination performance in schools has deteriorated over the years (*The Manica Post, 4-10 March 2005 page1*). Thirdly, married women bear the brunt of this problem. They are caught up in a dilemma in which they have to choose between marital fidelity and their job security. In the wake of the AIDS pandemic, this has serious implications on the marriage institution and society in general. Fourthly, even single women are also caught up in the dilemma since they are prone to sexual harassment as well. Finally, the use of arbitrary transfers robs the ministry of its credibility as a professionally run organization. Since some headmasters are also involved in corrupt activities, morally upright teachers find themselves in potentially vulnerable positions. This exposes them to moral dilemmas (Wark and Krebs, 2000), which undermine their morale at work. These are negative consequences for the country's education system as a whole.

### **WHO IS TO BLAME?**

A study of this nature would not be complete until it has examined the causes of the current crisis. According to Murambauori (2005:8) government is partly to blame because of its 'half-hearted efforts to address the plight of teachers' and ministry officials. Addressing a rally at Nhedziwa Secondary School in Chimanimani (Manicaland) in 2005, President Mugabe echoed similar sentiments. He admitted that the government was partly to blame for the deteriorating standards in the education system (*The Manica Post, 4-10 March, 2005:1*). In response to Question 25, questionnaire respondents confirmed the validity of this argument. They cited low salaries and the high cost of living as major causes of the current crisis. Education officers as part of the civil service have also been struggling to survive. Economic hardships have pushed some of them into corrupt activities such as those that have been discussed in this paper. Poorly paid civil servants such as those in the Ministry of Education, Sport, Art and Culture are caught up in a dilemma in which they have to choose between survival on the one hand and professional integrity on the other. While individuals may differ in the way they perceive their circumstances (Wark and Krebs, 2000), there is no doubt that economic hardships have a strong influence on how they perform their duties at their work places. From this perspective, it is clear that government is partly responsible for the development and perpetuation of corrupt activities among civil servants in the country.

Apart from low salaries, respondents mentioned other causes such as greed, lust and nepotism. The desire to live beyond their means and failure to control their sexual desires push some officials into corrupt practices. Un-bridled nepotism and favouritism also have similar consequences. A self-justification process in which antisocial acts are 'interpreted or construed in an ethically acceptable manner' precedes these causes, according to Bersoff (1999:419). In other words, individuals who commit crimes of this nature first rationalise their immoral acts positively. This justification process encourages them to ignore the rules and regulations that govern their professional conduct. Implicit in this scenario, is the lack of an effective anti-corruption mechanism within the system. This has led to the development of syndicates that stretch from the top to the bottom of some provincial education systems. Law enforcement agents such as the police may not be aware of the magnitude of the problem even though a few culprits have been arrested in the past.

## **IMPLICATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

This study has revealed three main weaknesses within the country's education system, which undermine SD. Firstly, officials have not been well paid for a long time (Murambauri, 2004). This has tended to de-motivate them and has pushed some of them into corrupt practices discussed in this paper (Bersoff, 1999). Secondly, the lack of an effective anti-corruption mechanism within the system is also a contributory factor. Although civil servants are governed by rules and regulations, which are well known, this has not helped in preventing corruption at their work places (Wark and Krebs, 2000). Thirdly, law enforcement agents only respond to reported cases of corruption. Unreported cases can go on for years without publicity. This weakens the ability of the police to monitor the illegal activities of some civil servants such as education officers and headmasters.

Recently, Zimbabwe has adopted millennium development goals (MDGs) '*as a planning framework for a strategy to achieve sustainable development. The initiative is being spearheaded by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare. National time-bound targets and indicators for the eight goals were set through a consultative process*' (Chimhowu, et al, 2010:62). One of these goals is the eradication of poverty and hunger. A poor and hungry society (including the civil service) is prone to corrupt tendencies. In the light of the above facts, three policy recommendations can be made. Firstly, there is an urgent need to improve the working conditions of all civil servants including those in the Ministry of Education, Sport, Art and Culture. Salaries should be revised so as to match the prevailing cost of living. This would ensure that officers live above the poverty datum line and are not easily tempted to resort to illegal strategies of survival.

Secondly, an anti-corruption mechanism or watchdog should be set up at both provincial and district levels in order to monitor the activities of civil servants in the ministry. In order for it to be effective, it should not be part of the ministry and should not be answerable to it. Its mandate should include reporting any cases of corruption to such law enforcement agents as the police force. In order for it to be effective, it should be well funded and its employees should be well paid. This would reduce their vulnerability to bribes and other corrupt tendencies (Nukunya, 1992). Associated organizations such as the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and the Central Intelligence Organization (CIO) can also work closely with the anti-corruption unit. Finally, there is need for the government to restore the lost sense of professionalism among civil servants in general. This study has shown that corruption has become part of the education ministry's informal economy. Reversing this trend will require some drastic measures such as re-education and re-orientation of the whole system. Careful planning and research should precede such strategies.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

This paper has discussed the activities of some officials in Zimbabwe's Ministry of Education, Sport, Art and Culture, which are threats to SD. It has shown that corrupt practices are rampant in the recruitment, deployment and transfer of teachers. It has also identified the causes of these activities and discussed their consequences at national level. Moral issues pertaining to these developments have been examined in the light of contemporary theories of unethical behaviour such as those of Bersoff (1999) and Wark and Krebs (2000). Based on a questionnaire survey administered among 110 trained teachers who were

studying at Great Zimbabwe University in 2004, the study shows that corruption has become a national problem that calls for drastic measures in order to curb it. Three policy recommendations are made. They include the improvement of salaries and conditions of service of education officers, headmasters and teachers in general, the setting up of an anti-corruption unit or watchdog within the ministry at provincial and district levels and the restoration of professionalism within the education sector.

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