

## *Original Paper*

# Governance Practices in Zimbabwean Public Higher Education Institutions

Pinias Chikuvadze<sup>1\*</sup> & Samuel Mugijima<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Curriculum & Educational Management Studies, Bindura University of Science Education, Bindura, Zimbabwe

<sup>2</sup> Department of Information Systems, Women's University in Africa, Harare, Zimbabwe

\* Pinias Chikuvadze, E-mail: chikuvadzepinias@gmail.com

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### **Abstract**

*This conceptual paper sought to cross-examine the enactment of governance practices in public higher education institutions. The discussion was guided by qualitative content analysis approach with the view to provide a rich and thick inquiry into the issue. In this context, 60 articles, which met the inclusion conditions were purposively sampled and later on interrogated through content analysis. The discussion noted that governance as a concept had various definitions depending on the context. In addition, in public higher education institutions, there are governance policies, and procedures guiding institutional activities. In the same context relationship between stakeholders and public higher education institutions guided by a systems of governance practices. However, the implementation of these in public higher education institutions with the view to achieving the set was hindered by multi-faceted challenges. Therefore, this draws interest to several issues related to how effective are the public higher education institutions' operational mechanisms, and the effective use of both the human, financial and infrastructural resources in the interest of the relevant stakeholders. Thus, Zimbabwe's public higher education institutions are employing rudimentary governance practices to advance substantial implementation of set goals, as far as the 'Heritage-Based Education 5.0' doctrine was concerned.*

### **Keywords**

*Governance practices, heritage-based education, public higher education institution, Zimbabwe*

## 1. Introduction

In Zimbabwe, higher education institutions through the “Heritage-Based Education 5.0” doctrine are considered a fertile ground for innovation, and successful industrialisation (Chikuvadze & Chidarikire, 2022). It is against this background that contemporary society views higher education institutions as an indispensable centre for socio-economic, scientific, and technological advancement. This is made possible through the establishment of a conducive environment in institutions to bring about knowledge creation, integration, utilization, and social reconstruction (Ukpong, 2020). It is in this context that most societies preoccupy themselves with the advancement of governance practices in public higher institutions. This has prompted the enactment, and advancement of good governance practices in public higher education institutions in modern times, and its significance has been underlined in different spheres of the economy (Castrillón, 2021). It is in this context that the concept of good governance practices has been acknowledged to have a major role in the management and leadership of public higher education institutions in both developed and developing countries (Ozberk et al., 2019).

In this regard impressions such as business development, re-engineering, total quality management, strategic management, social conscience, and business ethics have become axioms in contemporary public higher education institutions (Mulili & Wong, 2011). Thus, there is an extensive agreement on how public higher education institutions’ governance systems contribute towards the achievement of the society’s vision (Jahanian & Ebrahimi, 2013). However, there exist partial information, more particularly public higher education institutions’ governance structures and operational systems (Jones, Shanahan & Goyan, 2004; Wanyama et al., 2009). It is against this background that in this conceptual paper we adopted a holistic approach to interrogate carefully chosen literature sources, with view to appreciate governance practices in Zimbabwean public higher education institutions.

## 2. Method

In this conceptual paper, we followed a qualitative content analysis approach (Creswell, 2013) in interrogating issues. In educational study, this approach was crucial since it rendered the regular governance activities in higher education institutions noticeable, which most often would go unchecked (U-Sayee & Adomako, 2021). Hence, we aimed at assessing and summarizing the outcomes from consulted sources, with the view to contribute towards the closure of existing gaps in literature on issues to do with governance practices in the Zimbabwean public higher education institutions. It is in this context that the relevant information was sourced through structural analysis of 85 purposively sampled documents (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010) using keywords: “Governance practices” OR “Public Higher Education Institutions” OR “Zimbabwe”. These targeted articles were retrieved mostly from the following major educational databases: Education Database (ProQuest), ERIC, Education Research Complete (EBSCO), JSTOR, Teacher Reference Center (EBSCO), Science Direct (Elsevier), AOSIS and Emerald Insight. The inclusion or exclusion criteria that we employed led to us excluding 25 documents.

Thus, 60 documents that included books, policy documents, peer-reviewed journals, and audit reports made up the source of data for the issue under discussion. Those considered relevant for the study covered issues to do with governance systems in the Zimbabwean public higher education institutions. This helped us to comprehend governance practices as a concept and its influence on learning activities in public higher education institutions. Thus, this allowed for the documentation of the empirical evidence from different sources with the view to come up with rich data (Blanche et al., 2006). In this context, we regarded the consulted sources as something in their own right as a ‘field’ of research (Maluleke, 2020). In this regard, we had faith that the sources selected through sound judgement could illustrate the issue under investigation. Data generation can be generated through the use of various methods, such as interviews, literature reviews, etc. (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). In this conceptual paper, we were guided by the desktop literature review methodology (Chikuvadze et al., 2021). In this regard, an inductive approach was used in the analysis of the data sourced from the targeted sources and this allowed the researchers to establish the trends and themes (Chikuvadze et al., 2022).

### **3. Results**

The results in this section are presented according to the following themes: conceptualisation of governance practices in the context of public higher education institutions, the benefits of integrating governance practices into public higher education institutions’ operational processes, and governance systems in public higher education institutions.

#### *3.1 Conceptualisation of Governance Practices in the Context of Public Higher Education Institutions*

It’s important to acknowledge that the concept of governance practices is not new as it has been in existence since human organizations were formed. It has been embraced in diverse parts of the world with variations from country to country. The words like best governance practices have become so widely held in business (Maune, 2017). This was done to separate management and legal owners of modern institutions. In practice, the interest of those who have effective control over public higher education institutions can differ from the interests of those who supply it with external funding, for example, donor agencies such as UNICEF, UNESCO, among others. This has led to the existence of the ‘principal-agent’ problem where the management is seen as pursuing activities detrimental to the interest of the stakeholders. Hence the need to deal with the issue of accountability by individuals through a mechanism that reduces the principal-agent problem in public education tertiary education institutions (Khan, 2011). It is against this background that the concept of governance practices comes into play with the view to mitigating the ensuing problem in public higher education institutions. Hence, this section gives an insight into governance practices as a concept in the context of public higher education institutions.

Thus, best governance practices in the context of public higher education institutions can be acknowledged as being concerned with the need to create a balance between institutions’ economic and social goals, whilst reassuring the effective use of resources in the provision of quality goods and

services. In this context best governance practices can be as acknowledged referring to the procedures, rules, and regulations, which guide how public higher education institutions plan, organize, and control their activities to do with teaching, community service, research, innovation, and industrialization (Jiang & Kim, 2021). This is affixed to accountability, transparency, and responsible use of authority, stewardship, and bringing into line the interests of higher education institutions and society. This calls for the creation of a suitable legal, economic, and institutional environment that allows for the public higher institution to thrive in line with its mandate of advancing shareholder value and human-centered development as enshrined in the statutes (Matei & Drumasu, 2015). Thus, public higher education institutions are conscious of their accountabilities to the stakeholders, environment, and society.

It can be acknowledged that governance practices are concerned with the structures and processes for decision-making, accountability, control, and behavior at the top of organizations (Ramírez & Tejada, 2018). In this sense, good governance can be highlighted as the system of rules, procedures, relationships, and control of those who exercise the authority, accountability, leadership, and direction aimed at ensuring accountability, and efficient use of resources towards achieving the set societal and institutional goals (Almagtome et al., 2020; Armstrong & Unger, 2009). Therefore, in public higher education institutions, best governance practices are concerned with the processes, systems, and procedures as well as the formal and informal rules, which oversee the administration and learning activities. All this is done in a manner that addresses the leadership role concerning processes and procedures in the context of the institutional framework.

Therefore, governance practices refer to how the authority is exercised by relevant stakeholders in the stewardship of the public higher education institutions' total assortment of assets and resources to sustain and aggregate its value and fulfillment in the context of its vision (Oruc & Sarikaya, 2011). Thus, public higher education institutions do not only maximize shareholders' value but balance this with the interests of employees and students, and parents to achieve viable goods and service. In this context, good governance practices work to accomplish the objectives of the public higher education institution and bring about respectable relations among the stakeholders including the administration, staff, and students (Jamali et al., 2010). In this context, good governance practices are considered as guidance in generating and supporting greater performance and sustainability in the institution's operational processes guided by the national code of governance practices (Government of Zimbabwe, 2014). All this is grounded in 'ubuntu' philosophy, to ensure that public higher education institutions' operational processes are properly run, goals achieved, and funds managed with high standards of propriety and probity (Chimbi & Jita, 2022).

The promise of governance practices in public higher education institutions is to improve the proficiency of all, and concern for the advancement of national goals through deliberating, and harmonizing professional and permissible necessities within a democratic and ethical framework. It is a commitment to the fight against corruption, and bad leadership in public higher education institutions by, drawing a clear link between the cultural value system and ethical procedures. This context propels

higher education institutions the belief that best governance practices require an interdisciplinary approach founded in a series of systems derived from disciplines such as law, management, and economics. Hence, it is in this context that in Zimbabwe best governance practices are considered a set of processes, customs, value codes, policies, laws, and structures governing the way a corporation is directed, controlled, and held accountable (Chimbari, 2017). Thus, this progression in thinking about governance practices is not always reflected in the governance of public higher education institutions, a great deal of which seems to be worried about considerations related to a need to have more ‘business-like’ governance structures. This is because several developing countries encounter numerous challenges, which include insecure political regimes, and policy inconsistencies among others. These issues require more intricate solutions than purely taking on governance concepts.

However, there is a dearth of literature on best governance practices in developing countries, such as Zimbabwe, and public higher education institutions in particular (Dumbu, 2018; Mukwambo, 2019). However, the situation is starting to transform slowly and the concept of good governance practices is now being acknowledged as crucial in educational management and leadership. It is against this background that best governance pillars in higher education institutions’ operational processes should integrate reporting and acquiescence with regulations, integrity, fairness, transparency, and accountability. Hence, from this discussion, governance practices are all about managing public higher education institutions, while ensuring performance, transparency, and accountability in the application of authority over processes, policies, laws, and investment in the production of quality goods, and services.

### *3.2 Benefits of Integrating Governance Practices into Public Higher Education Institutions’ Operations*

It should be acknowledged that the concern for governance practices has been at the centre of the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science, and Technology Development’s “Heritage-Based Education 5.0” strategic plan geared towards the provision of quality service in higher education institutions (Togo & Gandidzanwa, 2021). In this regard, public higher education institutions’ operational systems are expected to work for the betterment of the citizens’ livelihoods in line with all stakeholders’ expectations. Thus, best governance practices need to be responsive to the citizens’ demands and needs. This is determined relatively by the governance structures such as rule of law, regulatory quality, and control of corruption to which the higher education system is attached. In addition, it is a fact that the governance of public higher education institutions, requires the involvement of both the public and non-governmental actors to shape the guiding policies and procedures. In this regard, best governance integrates issues such as management, leadership, resources, and competitiveness in a move aimed at providing quality goods and services.

In this context when implemented in public higher education institutions, best governance practices ensure that these are well-run to the extent that they earn the confidence of interested players such as the industry, investors, and lenders. Thus, good governance practices safeguard against corruption and

mismanagement while promoting operational values in public higher education institutions in a democratized and enabling environment. On another note, the quality of governance provides stakeholders with a level of assurance that the operations at the institution are conducted in a manner that meets their expectations. Hence, there is less uncertainty associated with those interested in quality education and training, such a situation encourages potential investors/sponsors to be prepared to partner with the institution.

It can be noted that the application of governance practices in public higher education institutions is necessary as it can attract both local and foreign investors since they are assured that their investments are secure and efficiently managed, and in a fair, and transparent process; enhance the accountability and performance of those entrusted to manage institutions, and promote efficient use of scarce resources. In line with these benefits to public higher education institutions, Zimbabwe has made some significant transformations in patterns of financing public higher education institutions. In addition, quality assurance, and accreditation systems; curriculum reforms; scientific; and technological innovations are now at the centre of the government's agenda (Thondhlana et al., 2020). However, Zimbabwean higher education institutions continue to wrestle with technical hitches such as insufficient solutions to pre-existing problems, some of which are the expansion of higher education coverage in a sustainable way, reduction of inequalities of access and outcomes, and improvement of educational quality and relevance. It is against this background that the next section discusses the governance systems used in public higher education institutions.

### *3.3 Governance Systems in Public Higher Education Institutions*

In several developing African countries higher education institutions are facing challenges, ranging from economic to educational (Teferra & Altbachl, 2004). This calls for these countries to come up with means and way of addressing the encountered challenges. It is against this background that governments are forced to come up institutional philosophies geared towards the transformation of management and leadership styles (Asiya, 2020). In this context, sound governance practices are essential since they create the need for the incorporation of a multifaceted system in public higher education institutions (Isukul & Chizea, 2017). For instance, in Zimbabwe, higher education institutions with their structures, standards, and procedures are seen as the bedrock of advancement to the desired aspirations of the "Heritage-Based Education 5.0" doctrine. Thus, it is, by and large, acknowledged as an essential mechanism for stimulating sustainable socio-economic transformation in line with the government's goals. In this context, the importance of public higher education institutions in Zimbabwe cannot be taken too lightly, since it is seen as a catalyst in the process of nipping in the bud the unacceptable state of the social and economic well-being of the society (Mawoyo, 2012). In this regard, public higher education institutions need better organisational structure fortification, and this, in turn, creates an improved value through their engagement in national development. This is made possible through the safeguarding of the rights of all stakeholders to enable them to participate freely in the institution's decision-making process.

Under such a scenario, best governance practices are designed to foster a stable environment that enhances consistency, transparency, and accountability in different schools, faculties, departments, units, among others (Argon, 2015). Thus, public higher education institutions' governance systems need to integrate all internal aspects specific to teaching, community service, research, innovation, and industrialization, and external aspects such as the interests of the government; industry; parents; commercial partners; among others. It is against this background that a sound governance practices in higher education institutions set an integrated management and leadership style in these institutions. Hence, the need for a visionary, and creative management and leadership geared towards the transformation of these higher education institutions in such a way that they can effectively implement the dictates of the “Heritage-Based Education 5.0” doctrine. This is a blueprint crafted by the technocrats in the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development to guide public higher education institutions’ processes of ideation, design thinking, innovation and industrialisation leading to country’s modernization (Muzira & Muzira, 2020; Wuta, 2022). Thus, public higher education institutions are expected to link intellectual development with psychomotor development (Tagwira, 2018).

It is in this context that these institutions are expected to have rationalized, lean, and approachable management and leadership structures to curtail the depletion of resources, as well as institute checks and balances. Under such a scenario, good governance practices are a key cog in the creation of relationships between all parties (i.e., management and other stakeholders) involved in the day-to-day institutional activities (Khan, 2011). This enables each stakeholder to recognize his/her roles and the nature of socioeconomic significance emanating from the involvement in institutions’ operations. This is consistent with the opinion of Mamina and Maganga (2019); Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2015) that public higher education institutions should no longer considered quiet places to teach and research in a leisurely manner; instead, a complex, demanding, and competitive centre for business, to which best governance practices are applicable. In this regard, public higher education institutions need to ensure that their academics have the autonomy to explore the co-areas of their profession such as teaching, community, research, innovation, and industrialization with minimum interference from other interested stakeholders.

It has to be acknowledged that the pervasive socio-economic remodeling in government as a force behind transformations in public higher education institutions. This means that public tertiary education institutions are accountable and responsible for ensuring that the procedures agreed upon by relevant stakeholders are implemented (Sunaengsih et al., 2019). Thus, these institutions are operating in under a social contract, which allows them to utilize resources in their learning processes and are expected to produce quality goods and services, in line with society’s expectations (Tagwira, 2018). This was done to make these institutions more modest in maintaining both international and local accreditation standards. In addition, higher education institutions are allowed to exercise academic freedom and managerial autonomy. However, these institutions have limited inherent rights to resources that they

utilize to produce much-needed goods and services (Shava et al., 2021). In this regard higher education sector has been one of the interests caught up in the surge in “maladministration” (Dixon & Coy, 2007). In response, the government through the responsible ministry put in place an array of legislative changes on public higher education institutions with the view to improve their governance arrangements (Garwe, 2014). It is in the above context that these institutions require the Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education (ZIMCHE), which was created through an Act of Parliament (Chapter 25:27) to register and accredit higher education institutions (Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education, 2006).

The mandate of ZIMCHE as provided for in Section 5(1) of the Act is: to promote and coordinate education provided by higher institutions and to act as a regulator in the determination and maintenance of standards of learning, examinations, academic qualifications, and research in higher education institutions (Garwe, 2018). The Act further states in Section 6(d) that the function of the Council is: to design and recommend an institutional quality assurance system for higher education institutions, that is, a system whereby the courses, programmes, and degrees offered by institutions are evaluated on a regular and objective basis, and to recommend to the Minister on institutional quality assurance standards (Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education, 2006). This initiative is designed to ensure consistent criteria, quality of standards, and expectations of society (Opara, 2011), across public higher education institutions in such matters as teaching, programmes, research, innovation, and industrialization.

Public higher education institutions are compelled to abide by the guiding and statutory requirements drawn essentially from a host of social, economic, and political (Zuva & Zuva, 2018). Therefore, the governance of public higher education institutions has evolved from the traditional self-governance model to a model more closely aligned with business corporates. In this scenario rule of law and transparency have an inclusive influence on rules, regulations, and procedures guiding the operations of public higher education institutions (Shattock, 2013). In support, De Silva Lokuwaduge and Armstrong (2015) postulated that though public tertiary institutions fall within the non-profit-making entities, however, some of them exhibit some traits of profit-making organizations. In this regard, tertiary institutions not only facilitate the government in sustaining a competitive advantage, but they stimulate research and innovation, which upshots into industrialization, and ultimately modernization of the country (Majoni, 2014). Therefore, higher education institutions are seen as one of the most effective mechanisms for socio-economic, and human capital development. On this basis, public tertiary education institutions need to be supported financially such that they can play a crucial role in providing quality goods and services to catalyse Zimbabwe’s socio-economic transformation.

It is against this background that upon being aware of the connection between public higher education institutions, science, technology, and sustainable human capital development, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization made higher education institutions one of its top priorities (Asongu, 2015; Bingab et al., 2018). For these institutions to play a strategic role in the



transformation of the country's socioeconomic and socio-political landscape, there is a need for the proper application of some aspects of best governance practices. This is done with the view to improve the public higher education institutions' efficiency and effectiveness in the production of quality goods and services (Guvhu & Museva, 2020).

It is imperative that governance practices in public higher education institutions be understood by all stakeholders, since this enables the decentralisation of control and management functions (Kranioti & Broni, 2023). In addition, the responsibility to run the affairs of public higher education institutions is decentralized to the institution's councils or senates, and the funding model gives more autonomy and freedom to the institution (Abdulraheem & Muammed, 2014). This calls for public higher institutions to be watched over by senates composed of competent members who can do their utmost in the preparation, and execution of strategies that augment the total quality management of activities. In this case, senates need to be autonomous of political interference in executing their oversight role as respective institutions will be pursuing mandates entrusted to them. However, the governance of public higher education institutions faces some challenges, since the government cannot let go of this strategic lever of socio-economic transformation.

Ultimately, dynamism in national objectives at times compromises public higher education institutions' independence. Under such conditions adherence to the stipulated governance systems becomes a nightmare. It can be acknowledged that its largely due to an undisputable close relationship between politics; and the management, and leadership in these institutions. Thus, the government through the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development is involved in the nomination of council or senate members of the public higher education institutions. In this set up the government can engage the senate someone who can be its convenient proxy for it to have a say in these institutions' operation systems (Fan et al., 2014). Some of the ministry's responsibilities include: observing public higher education institutions concerning their conformity with valid laws, composing national policies, strategic priorities, and development plans for academic education (Ndlovu, 2020). This opens doors for unwarranted interference from the parent ministry in the institution leadership's decision-making processes (Rossouw, 2010).

In this regard, it is the external governance structures through the parent ministry that hold the ultimate authority over the operational processes in these public institutions. This means that public higher education institutions have to explore means of advancing their activities, such as the use of performance contracts. In the same way, activity-based management practices bolster transparency and efficiency when conducting their activities and this leads to the achievement of set goals (Baird, 2007). Thus, contemporary public higher education institutions' environment pays great attention to targets, measurements, accountability, and the unrelenting significance of specific programmes or activities. This is against the background that public higher education institutions' management, and leadership have gradually become more outcome and customer-focused in their operations (Jarrar & Schiuma, 2007). Hence, the implementation of best governance practices seems to be an indisputable fact, though

the tempo and latitude of taking on vary depending on the public higher education institutions (Taylor, 2012).

#### 4. Discussion

This discussion was grounded in a holistic approach with the view to interrogate governance practices in public higher education institutions. In this regard, it can be acknowledged that in Zimbabwe's public higher education institutions since there hasn't been any legal framework guiding the implementation of these practices in their operational systems, doing so might encounter various challenges. Therefore, this called for the adoption of more effective governance ideals, which partly are influenced by the existing socioeconomic and political systems (Abdulraheem & Muammed, 2014; Gohari & Holsen, 2016). This can be one way of improving the existing governance systems, with the view to attracting investors in public higher education institutions through public-private partnerships. However, can be impossible since most public higher education institutions' councils/senates are composed of members who participate in multiple boards both within the public and private sectors, and this affects their performance and obligation (Garwe & Tirivanhu-Gwatidzo, 2016). Ultimately this leads to the creation of weak governance structures in public higher education institutions, thereby affecting the aspiration of the 'Heritage-Based Education 5.0' doctrine (Garwe & Thondhlana, 2019; Kezar, 2014). This calls for the effectiveness of the public higher education institutions' councils/senates to be put under scrutiny by stakeholders given the conflicts of interest and escalating issues of mismanagement (Lanning, 2006).

Consequently, the demand for appointments to public higher education institutions' councils/senates are done on merit (Fernandez-Carro, 2007). Such measures as overall investor confidence through increased transparency, strengthening of the capital market, and encouraging the use of competition to improve the performance of domestic firms have been suggested as a means to increase corporate governance systems. In addition, public higher education institutions have adopted total quality management ideals as a quality control tool for their activities (Hoecht, 2006). Hence, the need to concentrate on goals of efficiency, value for money, and performance rather than democracy or legitimacy. Thus, the centre sets the strategic framework and governance instruments, and the periphery is given operational freedom to deliver but only within this strategic framework (Leal Filho et al., 2020). Within this framework governance narrative, involves a wide range of actors and interactions that arise, and the government plays more of an influencing and less of a directing role.

Therefore, the onus must lie with the public higher education institutions themselves to have fair and transparent arrangements in place, which ensures efficient leadership contributing towards a quality learning environment. In addition, respective institution councils have to take steps that ensure an oversight arrangement at this level via the establishment of checks and balances within the system. In this sense, there is a shift from vertical to lateral forms of educational management, and leadership (Greany, 2018). Thus, power is decentralized downwards to the lower tiers, i.e., internal audit, faculty

deans, chairpersons, among others. In such systems, coordinating power is shared amongst various actors operating at various levels, thereby creating different levels of inquiry. In this instance “best practices” extent across the system, based on trust, “clannish” beliefs, repetitive interfaces, and interdependency within public higher education institutions (Lusk, 2008). In this regard, the ZIMCHE has evolved a robust scheme of international standards for the accreditation of programmes in the system (Garwe, 2018). In this case, it sets the benchmarks in consultation with public higher education institutions and adherence to international standards. This has had a salutary effect on the commitment of the system managers to the quality of their programme delivery.

It is important to note that accreditation and audits play a crucial role in assuring fairness, accountability and transparency by public higher education institutions in their operations. In line with this exercise, ZIMCHE developed the basic minimum academic standard for accreditation for every programme in the higher education system (Phuthi, 2022). For instance, the result of a programme-based accreditation exercise is in terms of a programme being found to be worthy of “full accreditation” or the worst case, “denied accreditation” (Garwe, 2014; Nwankwo, 2018). Hence, the need for institution’s administration to make sure that all programmes attract full accreditation. Based on its experience over the years, ZIMCHE realized the inadequacy of absolute reliance on programme accreditation to handle quality assurance in all its ramifications in a world now characterized by nation-states committing resources to nurture world-class institutions to face the challenges of globalization (Muzungu, 2019). In this context, ZIMCHE crafted the minimum benchmarks for programme design and credit weighting for public higher education institutions (Mashiri, 2015). This is one way or another other influenced the setting of institutional vision, mission and strategic goals, institutional governance and administration, institutional resources, quality of instruction, research, and extension services. The development of institutional quality audit mechanisms took into consideration the operational environment that should enable the conduct of functions such as teaching, community service, research, innovation, and industrialization (Togo & Gandidzanwa, 2021). Thus, ZIMCHE interacts with public higher education institutions through the performance of its quality assurance function.

However, these improvements that are aimed at improving the quality of higher education come with a lot of requirements, which have a bearing on the government budget (Pawandiwa et al., 2022). Hence their success grounded in accountability, political stability, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law, and control of corruption enhance educational outcomes, which ultimately benefit the community through quality goods and services (Nyarukwa, 2021). Public higher education institutions have to realize that governance both as a system that is attached to the dynamics and governance grounded in the principles of good governance, namely: transparency, autonomy (independence), accountability, responsibility, equality, and fairness, are needed in universities to achieve continuous good performance for stakeholders (Garwe & Thondhlana, 2019). Thus, values of

governance practices in public higher education institutions can be internalized into the culture, which becomes a system that strengthens its competitive advantage.

From this discussion, we acknowledged that the integration of good governance practices into public higher education institutions' operational systems has various benefits. For instance, it improves the quality of instruction, thus providing students and the public value on the money invested in competence-based education and training. In addition, the governance systems enhance adequate utilization of resources invested in these public higher education institutions. Further to this, governance systems play a more effective role in human capital formation, ensuring quality leadership, and services to the stakeholders. Thus, institutional management, and leadership, is accountable and responsible for the existing governance systems that expected to ensure the protection of stakeholders' interests in line with the success of the "Heritage-Based Education 5.0" doctrine. In this regard, we concluded that in spite of the challenges encountered by Zimbabwean public higher education institutions have made some attempts to implement best governance practices with the view to meet the "Heritage-Based Education 5.0" doctrine's aspirations. From this discussion we recommend that the success of this doctrine in public higher education institutions should be based on acceptance and pursuit of best governance practices.

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