

Conceptualising Anglican Theology's Role in Fostering a Convivial Society in the Context of Education 5.0: A Case Study of the Matabeleland Diocese

Albert Mvundla Ncube^{1*} 

AFFILIATIONS

¹Department of Religious Studies and Philosophy, University of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe.

CORRESPONDENCE

Email: albertmncube@gmail.com*

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Abstract: This paper explores the Anglican Diocese of Matabeleland's pursuit of healing and reconciliation within the context of Education 5.0. This inquiry arises from the troubling reality that, despite the passage of over three decades, many individuals continue to bear the scars of Gukurahundi, which jeopardises the harmonious development envisioned in Education 5.0. The study employs the lens of post-foundationalism to examine the role of the Anglican Diocese of Matabeleland in fostering a convivial society. This is a transformative paradigm paper that uses qualitative research as its design. Data were collected through interviews and focus group discussions with 20 participants, who responded to two pivotal questions: What challenges do unhealed survivors face, and how can Anglican theology complement the efforts of Education 5.0 in promoting a convivial society? Data were analysed using a thematic approach. The findings reveal that the people of Matabeleland grapple with multiple challenges rooted in unresolved issues stemming from Gukurahundi, thereby endangering the developmental aspirations intrinsic to Education 5.0. I

conclude the paper by arguing for a negotiated theology that seeks to address the aspirations of the populace, not merely on a spiritual level, but across all dimensions of life. Consequently, Education 5.0 emerges as a foundational platform for fostering a negotiated theology aimed at healing and reconciliation in Zimbabwe.

Keywords: Gukurahundi, justice, Anglican Diocese of Matabeleland, healing and reconciliation, education 5.0.

1. Introduction

A nation's pursuit of development is profoundly reflected in the educational frameworks it designs to address the challenges faced by its citizens. Zimbabwe, as a developing country, has championed an agenda for development encapsulated in the concept of Education 5.0. The aspirations of Education 5.0 are broadly conceived, accommodating a multitude of disciplines to facilitate maximal citizen engagement in national development (Togo & Gandidzanwa, 2021). This innovative approach is viewed by the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC henceforth) in 2023 as critical to enhancing interdenominational cooperation in peacebuilding, urging diverse stakeholders such as churches to collaborate in addressing the legacies of violence (ZCC, 2023). Commencing this discourse, I argue that Education 5.0 serves as a powerful catalyst for reconciliation and community advancement, especially in post-conflict societies where historical grievances and divisions persist.

Nevertheless, while the aspirations of Education 5.0 are commendable, they cannot exist in a vacuum, especially in Matabeleland, where the aftermath of the Gukurahundi massacres continues to resonate among those affected. Gukurahundi is a term used to describe the killing of the people of Matabeleland and the Midlands by the Mugabe regime between 1982 and 1987. It is estimated that 20,000 people were killed, and some were injured based on being dissidents aligned with the later Vice-President Joshua Nkomo (Sibanda, 2021). The survivors have not received a formal apology from the perpetrators; consequently, such individuals are in need of healing and reconciliation to

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enable genuine participation in national development. The foregoing assertion is substantiated by Brouneus (2009), who posits that development cannot thrive in the absence of reconciliation. Cognisant of this, the paper reconceptualises the theological approach of the Anglican Diocese of Matabeleland in the context of Education 5.0, aiming to establish trust and collaboration among community members to achieve favourable outcomes for development initiatives (Lansing et al., 2023).

I began this section by appreciating the various scholarly efforts that have been undertaken to examine Gukurahundi from diverse perspectives, including that of religion. Notably, Ndlovu (2022) explored the challenges emanating from the discourse of reconciliation in Zimbabwe, particularly in relation to the Gukurahundi atrocities of the post-independence era. Much of the scholarship aimed at confronting this nation's ugly past has been profoundly influenced by cultural (African) and religious (Christian) concepts, notably the Bantu concept of Ubuntu and the Christian approach to conflict resolution, which often rests upon the tenet of "forgive and forget." Ndlovu (2019) posits that justice must serve as the primary vehicle facilitating the transition to reconciliation. In addition, Ndlovu (2019) notes the complexities inherent in the Gukurahundi narrative, significantly framing it as an act of political annihilation directed against the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) as an alternative party, and its predominantly regional supporters. The study argues that oftentimes these narratives (i.e. of actors) frequently emerge outside the purview of the Government of Zimbabwe's formal arrangements, including the testimonies of survivors themselves. Sibanda (2021) conducted a significant analysis, uncovering that the linguistic conventions used by state actors prior to and during Gukurahundi did not, in themselves, incite genocide; rather, they created two social climates: one that legitimised tribal and political animosity, thereby dismantling the social and ethical sanctions against genocide, and another that unmasked the state-sponsored genocide, masquerading as a necessary military action against dissidents. His pivotal argument highlights the manner in which power is "enacted through discourse," wherein linguistic acts both prepare for and sustain physical and material actions, thereby bestowing legitimacy upon the execution of the Gukurahundi atrocities (p. 23).

A study by Chitando and Taringa (2020) examines the sluggish progress in confronting Gukurahundi, despite post-Mugabe government calls for courage and openness. Their inquiry explored critical themes surrounding the churches' engagement with Gukurahundi within a framework of forgiveness, asserting that the pervasive silence, coupled with profound feelings of anger and pain among survivors, necessitates not only an apology but also an appeal to Indigenous concepts and practices. While the aforementioned studies have made noteworthy contributions to the understanding of the challenges associated with Gukurahundi, there remains ample scope for further work aimed at creating a convivial society. Thus, this article seeks to bridge the existing gaps by examining Gukurahundi through the lens of the Anglican Diocese of Matabeleland and the concept of Education 5.0. None of the preceding studies have pursued a synergy between these two dimensions to facilitate healing and reconciliation. This research is distinctive in its application of post-foundationalism theory, which challenges grand narratives and universal truths, thereby acknowledging the situatedness (i.e., contextual nature) of knowledge production (Smith, 1999). Cognisant of the foregoing, the study aims to offer a novel perspective on dealing with Gukurahundi from an educational standpoint while appreciating the theological undertones necessary to create a convivial society. In the following section, I shall explain in detail the concept of Education 5.0.

1.1 Unpacking education 5.0

Education 5.0 represents a philosophical paradigm woven into Zimbabwe's contemporary curriculum, yet its origins and contextual foundations remain somewhat elusive. Scholars such as Muriza and Bondai (2020) and Togo and Gandidzanwa (2021) suggest that Education 5.0 may be an extension of Education 3.0. In defining Education 5.0, Ahmad et al. (2023) state that it "refers to the

fifth industrial revolution in education by leveraging digital technologies to eliminate barriers to learning, enhance learning methods, and promote overall well-being” (p. 1). These authors assert that Education 5.0 is an educational manifestation of the fifth industrial revolution, which harnesses digital technologies to dismantle barriers to learning, refine pedagogical methods, and foster overall human educational endeavours. Fisher, Thompson, and Brookes (2020) further postulate that the objective of Education 5.0 is to cultivate in students the critical faculties (i.e. thinking), problem-solving acumen, and teamwork (i.e. collaborative skills) necessary to navigate an ever-evolving landscape. While the scope of Education 5.0 heavily incorporates technological advancements, its implications resonate profoundly within the social sciences, particularly in empowering learners to address societal challenges through cooperative engagement.

This methodology enables students to devise strategies for conflict resolution and actively participate in initiatives that promote healing and reconciliation. Supporting this perspective, Shahidi-Mamedani (2024) underscores that “human-centricity and the ethical use of technology are integral components of [Education 5.0], which emphasises quality of life, productivity, social responsibility, and sustainability” (p. 1). Key to this argument is that Education 5.0 puts the human person at the centre of learning, as well as the ethical application of technology, if and only if “quality of life, productivity, social responsibility, and sustainability” are our priorities. In the context of healing and reconciliation, particularly in reference to Gukurahundi, Education 5.0 offers people “complex projects, especially considering that current global challenges and threats require multidisciplinary teams, adequate communication, creativity, leadership, and respect for other people’s and partners’ opinions and cultures in order to be solved” (Lantanda, 2020, p. 1820). In other words, the author states that Education 5.0 facilitates complex, multidisciplinary projects that necessitate effective communication, creativity, leadership, and respect for diverse viewpoints and cultures to ensure development. Efforts to address social problems such as Gukurahundi should embrace Education 5.0 so that President Mnangagwa’s mantra, “leaving no one and no place behind” (Lantanda, 2020), aligns well with the central promise of Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Etienne, 2014).

Moreover, Education 5.0 endorses value-based education, research-driven learning, project-oriented approaches, and experiential education that consider student aspirations while providing flexibility (Babu, 2024, p. 65). In addition, Education 5.0 promotes collaborative teaching, personalised learning experiences, and a commitment to lifelong education. In this framework, the individual human experience is central to the educational process by using more humane instruments and methods to enhance individualised learning (Shahidi-Mamedani, 2024). This article posits that the principles of Education 5.0, in concert with the Anglican Diocese of Matabeleland’s theological emphasis on healing and reconciliation, can collectively create (or engender) a convivial society, one poised to effect meaningful social transformation.

1.2 Theory: Post foundationalism

Post-foundationalism is a theory that critiques grand narratives and universal truths, acknowledging the situatedness (i.e. contextuality) of knowledge production (Smith, 1999). There is no consensus regarding its origins, but some attribute it to Locke. According to Muller (2009), the post-foundationalist approach compels us to listen to the stories of people in real-life situations. Its aim is not merely to describe a general context but to confront us with specific and concrete situations. Although this approach is also hermeneutical in nature, it moves beyond mere hermeneutics, being more reflexive and situationally embedded in epistemology and methodology. This theory advocates for the establishment of transformative-collaborative spaces, in stark contrast to fundamentalism and exclusionary practices. It argues that the starting point of the pastoral cycle, such as providing healing and reconciliation, must begin with the practice of real life. It cannot commence by taking abstract ideas and attempting to apply them to local realities. By embracing post-foundationalism,

society can create avenues for integrating African Indigenous Religions (AIR) alongside Christianity, fostering sustainable solutions that enhance human conditions, particularly for those afflicted by injustice. This integration is particularly salient within the Zimbabwean context, where AIRs hold deep significance for countless individuals. The framework also facilitates an exploration of how the Anglican Diocese of Matabeleland may have drawn on or interacted with the healing and reconciliation paradigms intrinsic to AIRs (Mpilon, 2010), considering Education 5.0. Given that the theory advocates for fostering justice to improve human conditions, it becomes relevant to frame this study within the context of the Diocese of Matabeleland's engagement with victims of Gukurahundi, aiming for the betterment of all, including the perpetrators.

2. Methodology

The transformative paradigm was used as the methodological framework for this study, underpinning the imperative to effectuate positive change through the lens of social justice (Dube & Hlalele, 2018). This paradigm's implementation is pivotal to this article, as it ensures that the theological orientations espoused by the Anglican Church remain pertinent, practical, and responsive to the needs of the survivors, while actively promoting social justice. The research design adopted is qualitative in nature, utilising interviews and focus group discussions to gather data from 20 participants, comprising clergy, church leaders, educators, and community members, who were purposely selected. The FGD and interviews were held for a period of three months, and I met them once a week for two hours. All participants attended the interview and then met for the FGD so that one could get a sense of the group's feelings about the Gukurahundi. This was done to capture both individual and group feelings relating to the massacre and the role of the Diocese in promoting healing and reconciliation. The selection of the Diocese of Matabeleland serves as the focal case study, primarily due to its status as a domicile for survivors of Gukurahundi, many of whom are yet to experience justice, healing, or reconciliation. The case study approach is grounded in its holistic and in-depth nature, enabling a comprehensive examination of a complex issue within its natural context (Clark et al., 2021), with the goal of proposing sustainable solutions that foster healing and reconciliation. Participants were given two critical questions: *What challenges are posed by unresolved Gukurahundi atrocities among the people of Matabeleland?* and *How can Anglican theological insights, considering Education 5.0, potentially contribute to healing and reconciliation?*

Data analysis was conducted through a thematic approach, which involves the identification, examination, and reporting of patterns (themes) within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis facilitates systematic coding of data, categorisation into themes, and interpretation of underlying meanings, making it particularly suited for qualitative research by offering a flexible yet rigorous approach to data analysis, enabling the researcher to derive comprehensive insights from complex qualitative data (Nowell et al., 2017). The study was approved by the University of Zimbabwe and adhered to ethical practices, such as respect for participants, safeguarding their identities (i.e. ensuring anonymity), and ensuring that the data collected is used for academic purposes while fostering conditions conducive to healing and reconciliation. To ensure data credibility, member checking and stepwise validation were used as methodological safeguards (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell & Walter, 2016). These concepts of data credibility centre around the practice of returning the analysed data to participants to confirm whether it authentically represents their views on the intersection of Anglican perspectives and Gukurahundi.

3. Findings and Discussion

This section responds to two questions guiding the article, which are: *What challenges are posed by unresolved Gukurahundi atrocities among the people of Matabeleland?* and *How can Anglican theological insights, considering Education 5.0, potentially contribute to healing and reconciliation?*

3.1 Challenges of an unhealed nation due to the Gukurahundi conflict

The first challenges according to the data, are psychosocial trauma and unresolved grief, socio-economic marginalisation, intergenerational grievances and identity crisis and political disenfranchisement.

3.1.1 Psychosocial trauma and unresolved grief

Results indicate that one of the most profound and enduring repercussions of the Gukurahundi conflict is the deep-seated psychosocial trauma and unresolved grief that persistently afflict survivors and their descendants. The violence of the 1980s, characterised by mass killings, enforced disappearances, and widespread torture, has left families and communities in Matabeleland and the Midlands ensnared in a perpetual state of mourning. The absence of truth-telling, official acknowledgement, and meaningful redress (and reparations) has further compounded this trauma, resulting in intergenerational cycles of psychological distress (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2023). For numerous survivors, the memories of Gukurahundi transcend mere historical facts; they manifest as deeply entrenched traumas that continue to shape their daily existence. Interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) have revealed that many elderly survivors grapple with flashbacks, nightmares, and symptoms indicative of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). One participant, a 64-year-old widow from Tsholotsho, articulated her experience:

"I still wake up at night hearing the screams of my husband. He was taken from our home and never returned. I have no grave to visit, no closure, only pain." (Widow, Interview, Tsholotsho, 2024).

In addition, another participant noted that:

"Every year, when we have family gatherings, there is always a missing presence. My brother was taken when I was just a child. My mother died asking where he was. We carry this pain in silence." (Participant 5, FGD, Lupane, 2024)

The inability to adequately mourn their lost loved ones – many of whom were buried in mass graves or left unaccounted for – has compounded the psychological suffering of survivors. Research indicates that unresolved grief, especially in cases of enforced disappearances, leads to complicated bereavement disorders (Mashingaidze, 2024). A striking finding from the discussions was the extent to which the trauma has been passed down to younger generations. The implication here is that the children and grandchildren of survivors, despite not having experienced the violence firsthand, grow up in familial environments saturated with unacknowledged pain. This pervasive grief engenders feelings of resentment, alienation, and struggles with identity among the youth in Matabeleland. Consequently, an educational framework grounded in theological principles could serve as a potent catalyst for addressing these issues, fostering healing and reconciliation. The next point shifts focus to the theme of socio-economic marginalisation.

3.1.2. Socio-economic marginalisation

Research participants underscored the persistent challenges stemming from Gukurahundi, notably the socio-economic marginalisation of Matabeleland. This marginalisation has resulted in the disruption of economic activities and fostered the underdevelopment of the region, leading to widespread poverty, unemployment, restricted access to education and healthcare, and infrastructural deficiencies (Mlambo & Dube, 2023). Participants from interviews and FGDs emphasised that the region remains economically disadvantaged compared to other parts of Zimbabwe, a situation attributed to scant government investment and minimal private sector engagement. In one focus group discussion, a younger participant from Lupane lamented:

"If you go to Bulawayo today, you will see many young people loitering in the streets. There are no jobs, and many of us must go to South Africa to survive. Why does the government not invest in industries here?" (Youth Participant, FGD, Lupane, 2024).

A business owner in Bulawayo emphasised the discriminatory economic policies that limit investment in Matabeleland, stating:

"Investors are not coming to Matabeleland because we have been left out of the national economic agenda. Even government tenders hardly go to businesses from here." (Business Owner, Interview, Bulawayo, 2024)

The economic disparity is evident in statistical and analytical reports, indicating that Matabeleland harbours one of Zimbabwe's highest youth unemployment rates, estimated at a staggering 63% (Mashingaidze, 2024). This starkly contrasts with regions like Harare and the Midlands, where industrial development has flourished (Mashingaidze, 2024). According to Sibanda (2023), this economic marginalisation is not accidental but rather a systematic issue stemming from government policies that preferentially allocate development funds, economic initiatives, and public employment opportunities to other regions. In this context, a theologically infused Education 5.0 has the potential to combat marginalisation as an art form to facilitate healing and reconciliation. A significant challenge arising from this scenario is the intergenerational grievance and the ensuing identity crisis.

3.1.3. Intergenerational grievances and identity crisis

Intergenerational grievances and identity crises represent significant challenges stemming from the Gukurahundi conflict. Intergenerational trauma refers to the psychological and emotional effects of historical violence passed from one generation to the next. Numerous young individuals in Matabeleland have been raised amidst narratives of massacres, disappearances, and displacements that occurred during this dark chapter of history (i.e. Gukurahundi). However, the absence of official acknowledgement and accountability has made it difficult for them to fully process or find closure regarding these collective memories. A university student participating in a focus group discussion expressed the following sentiment:

"Growing up, I always heard my grandmother cry when she spoke about Gukurahundi. She lost her brothers. The pain she feels has become my pain too. But what hurts me the most is that no one speaks about it publicly, as if it never happened." (Student, FGD, 2024).

In the same vein, a history teacher from Bulawayo shared:

"I am not allowed to teach about Gukurahundi in detail. The syllabus only briefly mentions post-independence conflicts, but it does not capture the pain and truth. How can our children understand their past when it is erased from history?" (Teacher, Interview, 2024)

In this context, psychologists contend that the prevalence of silent grief and unarticulated histories significantly contributes to high levels of anxiety, depression, and a pervasive sense of helplessness among younger generations (Ndlovu, 2023). The repressed nature of the Gukurahundi conflict has created a psychological burden, hindering families' capacity to achieve closure. A further consequence of this historical trauma is the distortion and suppression of Ndebele's identity, which results in the devaluation of their humanity. Many young individuals grapple with a disconnection from their historical narrative, largely due to state-sponsored narratives that either silence or marginalise their lived experiences. The exclusion of Gukurahundi from official history books and school curricula has created a significant knowledge vacuum in the history of Zimbabwe. Considering this, a theological framework is imperative to inform Education 5.0, aiming to foster a process of healing and reconciliation. Moreover, a significant challenge identified by the participants pertains to the pervasive political disenfranchisement.

3.1.4 Political disenfranchisement

Another issue highlighted by the participants is that Gukurahundi contributed to political disenfranchisement, resulting in low political participation among survivors. To elaborate on this issue, a participant from Tsholotsho noted that:

"Even today, speaking about Gukurahundi openly is dangerous. People just whisper about it because no one wants to disappear." (Elder, Interview, 2024)

In addition, one participant noted

"Most job opportunities are in Harare, and they mostly favour Shona-speaking candidates. Even when we apply for scholarships or government funding, we see a pattern of exclusion." (Graduate, Interview, 2024)

These sentiments align with Moyo's (2024) observation that historical repression leads to political apathy and engenders a profound fear of civic engagement. The foregoing observation implies that the Zimbabwean context will continue to be marked by conflict, disgruntlement, and negative perceptions against other members of society, such as the Shona people, who seem to benefit from the government directly or indirectly. Consequently, the youth in Matabeleland inherit a legacy of political marginalisation intensified by the Gukurahundi conflict. Participants often reflected on a pervasive sense of exclusion from national development policies and a lack of access to leadership opportunities. Such an approach is contrary to the theory of the study, which seeks to ensure that justice through various structures of society is established for the betterment of all.

3.2 Mitigating the challenges

This section addresses the theological foundations of the Anglican Diocese of Matabeleland in conjunction with the principles of Education 5.0. I argue that the challenges can be mitigated through a comprehensive re-evaluation of the curriculum, ensuring that it addresses themes of healing and reconciliation.

3.2.1 Theological approaches to healing and reconciliation

The Anglican Diocese of Matabeleland has played a central role in promoting reconciliation, healing, and justice for communities grappling with the aftermath of the Gukurahundi conflict. The theological frameworks for reconciliation are deeply rooted in Christian doctrines of forgiveness, truth-telling, restorative justice, and community healing, positioning the Church as a vital intermediary between survivors and the authorities. This section explores various faith-based interventions, assessing their impact and their congruence with broader theological principles.

"The Church is where people find refuge. Survivors come to us because they know they will be heard, and their pain will not be dismissed. We encourage truth-telling because healing starts with confronting the past." (Anglican Priest, Interview, 2024)

A survivor from an FGD in Tsholotsho remarked:

"For years, we were told to forget and move on, but how do you forget your family members who disappeared? At the Anglican Diocese of Matabeleland we finally found a place where we could speak openly." (Survivor, FGD, Tsholotsho, 2024)

The Church occupies a pivotal position in the spheres of peace and reconciliation, a role that any efforts from Education 5.0 must duly recognise. Recent scholarship emphasises that faith-based organisations create platforms for survivors to articulate their experiences, challenging historical narratives characterised by silencing and denial (Mashingaidze, 2024). Community gatherings, facilitated by church leaders, have provided survivors with the opportunity to voice their grievances, fostering communal acknowledgement of past injustices. This aligns with the theory of the study, which argues that meaningful healing and reconciliation require justice and that religious leaders are positioned to facilitate conversations about justice. Consequently, the integration of Education 5.0 into the Zimbabwean context must actively engage religious leaders in peace-building efforts, drawing upon theological underpinnings to initiate conversations or dialogues that promote healing and reconciliation.

3.2.2 Education 5.0 and trauma healing and counselling through faith-based interventions

The participants in this study revealed that Education 5.0, grounded in theological principles, has the potential to promote healing and counselling, which is a vital necessity for the survivors of Gukurahundi. Faith-based trauma healing often involves prayer therapy, community support, and biblical reflection, which collectively empower survivors to articulate their grief within a supportive environment (Sibanda, 2023). In this specific context, the Anglican Diocese of Matabeleland has partnered with various Christian organisations to provide counselling programmes, trauma-healing workshops, and prayer retreats aimed at supporting survivors. A faith-based counsellor explained the methodology employed in this approach:

“Trauma is a spiritual wound as much as a psychological one. We incorporate prayer, scripture, and counselling to help survivors process their pain in a holistic way.” (Christian Counselor from Anglican Diocese of Matabeleland, Interview, 2024)

In addition, one survivor noted that.

“I was having nightmares about my father’s disappearance, but after attending Diocese of Matabeleland Church counselling, I feel more at peace. Prayer gave me strength.” (Survivor, FGD, Bulawayo, 2024)

This observation is consistent with research indicating that spirituality and religious coping mechanisms can significantly reduce the symptoms of PTSD and depression in post-conflict societies (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2023). Therefore, insights from this approach align seamlessly with the principles of Education 5.0, which advocates for a collaborative method to address human problems—an initiative that unites leaders and communities in their efforts to find solutions (Lantanda, 2020, p. 1820). The subsequent section will explore community rebuilding and reconciliation as vital by-products of this educational paradigm.

3.2.3 Community rebuilding and reconciliation initiatives from education 5.0

The study revealed that reconciliation must transcend mere individual healing; it should also extend to the construction of communities and the promotion of intergroup cohesion. The Anglican Diocese has spearheaded initiatives such as inter-community dialogues bringing together affected families, traditional leaders, and local government officials. One participant remarked that:

“We are tired of divisions. These discussions have helped us understand that we must work together to rebuild our communities.” (Youth Leader, FGD, Matobo, 2024)

In addition, an Anglican church noted

“Reconciliation is the way to go. Without it we are doomed. We need to learn to forgive even though some have not asked forgiveness for the sake of progress.”

This perspective profoundly resonates with Education 5.0, which seeks to unify communities in Zimbabwe with the intention of enhancing sustainable development for the betterment of its populace. Central to Education 5.0 is the premise that the nation's development is inextricably linked to societal cohesion; hence, efforts to reconstruct Zimbabwe should begin with community-driven initiatives underpinned by a theological approach that promotes healing and reconciliation. Numerous studies underscore the efficacy of faith-driven reconciliation initiatives in cultivating enduring social cohesion and conflict resolution (Mugabe, 2024). Furthermore, the role of the church as an advocate for policy and institutional reforms emerges as a critical element in the successful implementation of Education 5.0.

3.2.4 The church as an advocate for policy and institutional reforms

While spiritual healing is vital, survivors also demand structural reforms, truth commissions, and reparations. The Anglican Diocese has taken an advocacy role, urging the government to implement reconciliation policies that align with biblical justice principles. An Anglican leader commented:

While the significance of spiritual healing cannot be overstated, survivors equally call for substantive structural reforms, the establishment of truth commissions, and the provision of reparations.

The Anglican Diocese has assumed an advocacy role, pressing the government to enact reconciliation policies that resonate with the principles of biblical justice. A leader within the Anglican community remarked:

"We preach healing, but healing must also come through justice. The government must recognise past wrongs, offer reparations, and ensure non-recurrence." (Church Leader, Interview, 2024)

In addition, one participant noted

"Healing comes from both God and people. The Church has helped us find hope, but we also need the nation to recognise our pain." (Survivor, FGD, Bulawayo, 2024)

The Church is called to engage in inclusive national discussions, advocate for educational reforms, and bolster legal protections for survivors, thereby reinforcing the biblical mandate of justice and righteousness (Mlambo & Dube, 2023). The theological approaches employed by the Anglican Diocese of Matabeleland in the realms of healing and reconciliation centre on the principles of truth-telling, biblical forgiveness, recovery from trauma, community revitalisation, and justice advocacy. While faith-based initiatives provide survivors with invaluable emotional and spiritual support, there remains a pressing need for comprehensive policy reforms and structural justice to ensure enduring national healing. This underscores the assertion that development cannot genuinely occur without a commitment to truth-telling and the actualisation of justice for the survivors. Consequently, it is important for the nation to incorporate Education 5.0 into its curriculum, recognising that theological tenets are essential for mapping the trajectory of truth-telling and justice, thereby ensuring the effective implementation of Education 5.0. I conclude by arguing that the rebuilding of relationships is vital for creating a stable social environment, one that is conducive to sustainable development (Somasundaram & Sivayokan, 2013).

3.2.5 Education 5.0: Addressing historical and socio-economic marginalisation

The study noted that Education 5.0, as initiated by the Zimbabwean government, represents a significant paradigm shift from traditional educational models by emphasising five key pillars: teaching, research, community engagement, innovation, and industrialisation (Mugabe, 2024). This model aspires to harmonise education with national development aspirations, thereby fostering economic inclusivity and addressing social inequities stemming from historical injustices, such as Gukurahundi. By equipping citizens with essential skills and knowledge, as well as fostering an understanding of their historical context, Education 5.0 presents a profound opportunity for healing, reconciliation, and economic empowerment within Matabeleland. This was insightfully alluded to by one of the participants, who noted that:

"Education should not just be about getting degrees; it should be about fixing our broken society. If we use Education 5.0 wisely, we can heal our past and build a better future." (Participant, FGD, 2024)

In addition to the above, a clergy noted

Education has always been the key for development, and embracing a philosophy like Education 5.0 would assist affected people to see that there is hope for bring healing and reconciliation premised in values of social justice

There is clear evidence from the participants that education is a vehicle for success for any country seeking healing and reconciliation following past traumatic experiences. As such, education should intentionally address social challenges, and in the case of Zimbabwe, this can be conceptualised

through Education 5.0. However, for the people to benefit from Education 5.0, there must be genuine political will, adequate funding, and sustained commitment from all stakeholders, including the government, academia, civil society, and local communities. It is only through such concerted efforts that Education 5.0 can emerge as a transformative catalyst for healing and sustainable development in Zimbabwe.

4. Conclusion

This paper focuses on the challenges faced by the unhealed populace of Matabeleland due to Gukurahundi, illustrating the myriad obstacles that contribute to a persistent absence of healing and reconciliation within the region. The crux of the argument posits that development efforts aimed at rebuilding Zimbabwe that ignore the vital processes of healing and reconciliation are inherently doomed to fail in meaningfully contributing to a better Zimbabwe. Furthermore, this article highlights the potential contributions of the Anglican Diocese of Matabeleland's theological initiatives towards the actualisation of Education 5.0. It is emphasised that while Education 5.0 prioritises technological advancements, it also encapsulates a critical element of healing and reconciliation, emphasising the importance of collaboration and a unified vision for national development. Consequently, the article argues that the challenges posed by Gukurahundi cannot be ignored; rather, they require a direct and engaged approach akin to the strategies employed by the Anglican Diocese of Matabeleland. Nonetheless, it is imperative that these strategies remain consonant with the objectives pursued by the government through Education 5.0.

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Data Availability: The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. Access will be granted to researchers who meet the criteria for data sharing established by the institutional review board or ethics committee.

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