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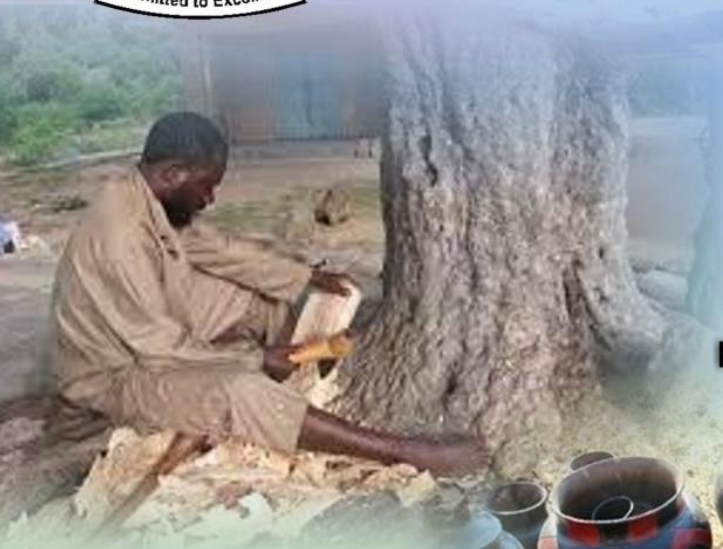

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The purpose of the *Kuveza neKuumba - Zimbabwe Ezekiel Guti University Journal of Design, Innovative Thinking and Practice is* to provide a forum for design and innovative solutions to daily challenges in communities.

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Developing Effective Student Leadership in Higher Learning Institutions for Creating Sustainable Futures in Zimbabwe

EVERNICE MUNANDO & BERNARD CHINGWANANGWANA

Abstract

The article is based on a study that sought to identify the strategies aimed at developing effectiveness in student leadership among higher learning institutions for sustainability measures. Student leadership has become one of the fundamental elements of higher education institutes' governance matrix and the involvement of students in the management and governance of these institutions is key. As a way of human capital development towards inclusive and transformative leadership, leadership different strategies have been used globally to produce excellent leaders hence the aim of this study is to determine the strategies that have been used in the case of Zimbabwe aimed at fostering leadership as a way of promoting sustainability. The study recommends enforcement of leadership framework and the assessment of the success of the framework in moulding student leaders a positive note, student leadership development has contributed to significant changes in the understanding of what leadership entails among students by basically helping them in knowing what it all means to be a leader and as well led to development of institutions. Some institutions are still lagging behind in fostering inclusive sound and inclusive student leadership due to a lack of funds to organise workshops on leadership The adoption of a student leadership framework includes certain policies such as the Student Representative Council (SRC) which governs or regulates student leadership at campus will lead to the fulfilment of the

needs of students and as well the good governance of higher education institutions.

Keywords: coaching, training, university, leader, sustainability and institution.

INTRODUCTION

This article critically discusses strategies that are being used to develop student leadership in higher education institutions and analyses their effectiveness with greater emphasis on Zimbabwe's higher education institutions. The intention of understanding these strategies is to build a future that is sustainable. National College for School Leadership (2006) perceives that an investment in student leadership is a direct investment in tomorrow's leaders for the schools and the communities. The Government of Australia (2017) posit that student leadership is a key component in higher education and the inclusion of student leaders has become a priority area for institutions with strategies such as courses that has become more common in developing leaders. Cáceres-Reche *et al.* (2021) argue that leadership is a great challenge to both societies and institutions which requires to be solved so as to achieve their goals, aspirations and objectives this case promoting leadership since the youth has become an important part of decision-making and participation in these recent decades hence promoting thee student by equipping them with the possible skills is fundamental for the sustainability of these higher education institutions. Kouzes and Posner (2017) posit that leadership is not an innate talent but rather a set of behaviours and abilities that are learned and developed, hence the need to develop strategies that can help develop leadership in students. Skalicky and Caney (2010) have realised that the development of student leadership programmes has proliferated in the higher education sector and has become more targeted and explicit in developed countries such as the United States of America while

in the global south, the initiatives of student leadership development have evolved through peer learning and academic mentoring programmes. The Australian Government (2017) observes an increase in the adoption of leadership programmes for students in the last two decades in most of universities.

The strategies for student leadership in higher education institutions should not only aim at producing leaders for the institutions but seek and achieve the formation of young students who can contribute to political and cultural transformation through their skills and experience (Lopez 2017). Deal and Yarbrough (2020) contend that leadership development for students is an increasingly important part of the higher education experience. The development of students in leadership should aim at forming students who are capable of managing themselves, who can work with others, and who strengthen their own resilience for the benefit of future education systems and world sustainability. Osmani *et al.* (2015) assert that universities have been vested with a significant role of developing leaders of tomorrow. A qualitative approach has been used for this research with data collected through literature review approach, looking on the previous studies that have been done to understand the same concept in various locations. Thematic data analysis was used in the presentation of the results obtained from the study. The findings indicate that student leadership development has been done in various ways as proposed by the universities. the involvement of students in the leadership training and coaching has contributed to various changes in these students and significant changes in the institutions and students became acutely aware of leadership actions and behaviours they seek to portray and exhibit in these responsibilities. This article further buttresses the fact that student leadership development is fundamental for the development of sustainability of higher education institutions and a future full of responsible and

principled decision-making leaders for the society. It is proposed that more programmes aiming to increase the competence of student leadership for sustainable purposes should be increased among higher education institutions for the expansion of student involvement in decision-making for future growth of these colleges and universities.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This article is premised in the zeal to promote sustainable development through active participation of students in the governance structures in higher education institutions through the understanding of the effort and strategies that are being put to develop these leaders in these institutions. For student leaders to be effective advocates for their needs and the needs of other students, there is need for their training to acquire the specified skills that help them in executing their duties and foster the sense of community and trust that the institution authorities and students rely on. The National College for School Leadership (2006) describe student leadership as a concept that rests at the heart of improving schools and promoting young people to realise their potential by developing essential skills, motivation and confidence in them to be able to engage directly in the development of schools by improving their learning experience. The main idea is to understand how leadership is being nurtured among higher education institutions in Zimbabwe to ensure that effective student leaders are being developed to be contemporary and future leaders who are capable of solving various problems that are surrounding the higher education. The main idea of this study is ensured that there is clarity on who is responsible for student leadership and how it is done at different higher education institutions in Zimbabwe. Therefore, this study seeks to unveil the activities, courses, experiences and other opportunities that have been used to develop student leadership in Zimbabwe's higher education institutions.

THEORIES UNDERPINNING THE STUDY

This study has adopted the Skill Approach theoretical framework to determine the importance of training students and the strategies used. The theory assumes that leaders should have the requisite skills or them to be effective in their roles. Katz (1995) observes three basic skills for leadership that are technical, conceptual, and human and these skills are vital in different levels of leadership. Zaccaro *et al. (*2000) identify problem-solving skills, social skills, and solution-construction skills as three main important skills for leaders in higher education centres. These three skills are vital for solving problems related to students' well-being, detaing possible alternatives for solving the contemporary solutions and for interacting with other students, knowing what they require and how to communicate it to the authorities, and understanding each one's scenario. This approach is described as leader-centred that helps identify the key significant leadership skills that enable one to accomplish their roles of directing their subordinates towards the success of their objectives.

Northhouse (2018) contends that the skill approach focuses on skills and abilities that can be learned. Manyibe (2007) asserts that universities should emphasise equipping the students with leadership skills that are necessary for effective leadership and are described by the Skill approach. The Transformational Leadership Theory seeks to explain how the actual behaviour of a leader influences their role in leadership and this can be used in identifying strategies that can be developed for the development of student leaders. This theory was first conceived by Bass (1985) and according to his assumptions, it contains for characteristics that a leader ought to have that are: the idealised influence, individual consideration, inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation. Hence in all the strategies that are used to develop leaders in higher education institutions it is vital that they invest in it for future effective

leaders. Garcia-Retamero and Martos (2012) describe this theory as the most effective leadership style in the present organisations. Northouse (2018) notes that transformation leadership is amongst the current and popular leadership theories whose attention is in the behaviours of a leader. This theory helps in giving guide to the trainers and institutions on how they ought to develop their student leaders taking into consideration the different behaviours of a leader that they intent to impact on leaders on today and the future. Bass (1985) argues that by transformative leadership theory, there is a possibility of change and transformation of people with an emphasis on intrinsic motivation that leads to the fulfilment of the goal as the focus of this theory is on the full person's development to becoming a leader.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Student leadership has become one of the main topics that have gained traction in most higher education institutions and steps towards the training of the students have been adopted for successful and sustainable development of contributing leaders to the development of these institutions. Several scholars posit that leadership is a profession that can be learned through a combination of professional development, experience, and mentoring (Buchanan 2017; Guthrie and Jones 2012; Elmuti 2004; Antonacopoulou and Bento 2003). Though some scholars such as (Zhihong *et al.,* 2013; De Neve *et al.,* 2013) regard leadership as a talent one is born with, there is a need to moderate it and recalibrate in it for effective leaders to be moulded in higher education institutions. Channing (2015) also supports the view that leadership can be taught and developed through learning whereby someone is involved in instructing individuals or a group of students on how leadership roles can be fulfilled. Skalicky *et al.* (2018) argue that a variety of programmes to develop student leaders have been implemented in higher education facilities for the past two decades. Kashan

et al. (2019) mention that the integration of student leadership strategies into the existing student leadership models will result in the effectiveness of the notion of student leadership in higher education terrain where the relational leadership model and leadership identity development theory are used to embrace it. The Australian Government (2017) perceives that student leadership can be incorporated into the curriculum where students receive course credit.

At a universal level, strategies have been brought forward to promote student leadership in higher education institutions. One of them is the Education Agenda 2030 which aims at the supplying of qualified teachers that helps in developing leadership in students through sharing of experience and skills in leadership with them (UNESCO 2016). Student leadership has been strengthened in many ways that include the student government representatives, institutions' leadership awards programmes, face-to-face activities through tutoring, and community volunteer activities that help students develop their leadership skills (Government of Australia 2017). Skalicky *et al.* (2018) argue that the development of leadership in tertiary institutions comes in various ways that includes programmes designed for leadership capabilities development and curricular structures and participative activities in which students are given lead roles to play. Yawson *et al.* (2020) stress the fact that colleges and universities are the right places where most leadership skills and attributes are developed in preparation for future leadership.

Formal leadership development programmes are a strategy that has been put to develop leadership skills in students in tertiary institutions. Skalicky *et al.* argue that student leadership programmes have been offered at universities around the globe. Kouzes and Posner (2017) buttress the view that leadership is a set of behaviours and abilities that can be learned and

developed and not a natural talent that one is born with hence the need to develop and train students to attain these skills. Moulding leaders through the formal leadership program consists of five key practices that are the use of a proven leadership model and development framework, formative evaluation of students, relevant, meaningful leadership experience, impactful coaching, and tools and methods that provide a rich engaging experience (Deal and Yarbrough (2020).

Jenkins (2013) discovered that more than 1500 leadership studies programmes exist around the world that help develop effective student leaders in education institutions who later become world leaders in the coming decades. Deal and Yarbrough (2020) assert that formal leadership development programmes enhance what students learn in the classroom by providing them with powerful tools for personal and professional success. It has been proven by Deal and Yarbrough (2020) that students who participate in formal leadership programmes are more engaged in their education and have a strong sense of belonging. Weber (2019) discovered that there is a direct relationship between the effectiveness of leadership training programmes that are supported by theoretical knowledge and the learning levels achieved by students. This means that the development of leaders in students is successful through the implementation of leadership training programmes that install in oneself the relevant experience required and meaningful skills for directing other students towards the achievement of certain goals as required by the institution.

National College for School Leadership (2006) argue that, in a bid to develop student leaders in London schools, the London Leadership Strategy was introduced whose focus was on development of various aspects of leadership capacity partnering with the University of the First Age. This programme

is believed to have aimed at producing training materials that direct young leaders into becoming effective leaders.

Making student leaders take charge of projects development and implementation is one of the strategies that have been used to develop young leaders into professional leaders capable of managing different tasks and make decisions on their own with little influence of the university authorities. Yawson *et al.* (2020) argue that as a strategy to develop leadership skills in student leaders, the SRC team is often given the responsibility to initiate physical and tangible projects and ensure that there is effective and successful school management that is brought about by the authorities as they ought to create an enabling environment for student participation in decision-making and the management of their institutions. It is necessary for higher education institutions seek and achieve the formation of young students with humanistic, ethical, critical and servant leadership profile to contribute towards the transformation and development of institutions. Caceres- Reche *et al.* (2021) contend that young people require orientation to the service of the public and training in ethical, social commitment and policies to ensure transformation of their institutions.

Successful leaders are developed through coaching. Deal and Yarbrough (2020) suggest that coaching is one of the highest impact practices a student development program can implement and suggest one-on-one coaching as a way of helping students explore unique personal challenges. Coaching is one of the prominent practices that are obtained through leadership development programmes in which students explore unique personal challenges. Deal and Yarbrough (2020) argue that coaching programmes require a proper structure that complements the rest of the leadership development experience. Yawson *et al.* (2020) perceive that student development is achieved in most institutions through the training given to the

SRC executives that is a week-long orientation to educate them to familiarise them with their responsibilities and expectations. Another way that has been used to nature student leaders is through coaching that has been done by professors and lecturers at universities, thus sharing their skills with the students. Shriberg and Harris (2012) argue that university professors have a role to play in facilitating emergent leadership by being their coaches and facilitators in leadership skill development. In North Carolina, a leadership program for coaching student leaders was designed known as the Golden LEAF Scholars Leadership Program where students are taken for a two-year leadership conference. Government of Australia (2017) state that in some institutions with leadership development fund, centres for leadership development opportunities and training have been set. In South Africa, student leadership development is provided by the Department of student Affairs and the Student Development Division of the DSA.

To foster successful student leadership, Kashan *et al.* (2019) argue that the deployment of student leadership within the classroom through lectures is a way to go in promoting leadership among the students by using different academic techniques and advanced methods of teaching. Hilliard (2010) posits that early involvement is one of the best strategies for moulding university leaders whereby leadership opportunities are made available for students to know how to serve as an office holder in various peer on-campus organisations, allowing students to acquire a well-recognized attitude of interest and commitment to academic and social life at a higher education institution. Athreya and Kalkoff (2010) contends that giving students leading roles in programme designing and implementation is another way to foster leadership skills in them. The Student Leadership Programme developed six modules that can be offered to students to develop their

leadership skills that are: the foundation module that helps students understand themselves and how to work with others; Shaping the Future in which students are equipped with the understanding of how to develop goals and vision and have a futuristic mind; Leading Leaning and Teaching that nature students with strong and positive learning culture that helps them in directing academic requirements of very student; Building a community and collaboration, where students are taught about the distribution of leadership and the context of their duties within certain groups and communities to allow them to gain skills on how to engage different people; Managing an organisation, programme or project that introduce them to how they ought to handle projects as leaders and Securing accountability, impact of your actions and taking responsibility. It is argued that engaging students in early leadership involvement will enable students to establish creditability that provides them the leverage of demonstrating trust and confidence in what they do. Deal and Yarbrough (2020) argue that leadership development is vital for strengthening communication and collaboration skills in students as they become resilient and adaptable in preparation for the world in which they are to be innovative and agile.

As a way of developing leadership in higher education institutions, different leadership development programmes have been introduced in many institutions around the globe. In the United States of America, over the past two decades, leadership development has been offered through curricular leadership programmes that has been offered on over 25 percent of its total institutions (Jensen 2017). Skalicky *et al.* (2018) perceive that higher education institutes have a role to play in the development of leadership in students. Sinem and Barry (2021) support the view that leadership skills development in young people assists them in dealing with individual and social challenges that result in the sustained development of societies.

In this regard, Wurr and Hamilton (2012) suggest that the universities and colleges are propounded to offer ample opportunity and fertile ground for leadership training learning. Fish (2011) emphasise the idea that leadership development programmes ought to provide actual leadership experience, hands-on learning activities, and a practice-based infrastructure for the students who are into leadership for them to familiarise themselves with what and how they are expected to offer as leaders in this era where sustainability is a key topic of discussion and active participation. In other words, leadership training in students requires practical experience that enables the students to have tangible skills and experience applicable to their roles as leaders, unlike theoretical knowledge that sometimes does not tie with what is on the ground. Jensen perceives that tutoring can be used to develop leadership skills in a student thus giving them a practical perspective of leadership.

Learning about leadership requires something that can be identified as the towerlight that provides brightness to its surroundings; this means that there is need for a professional who is readily available to direct the students surround them with light of how leadership ought to be delivered. The idea of a tower light in describing leadership training is that it provides light at its highest level to points lower than it thus being generous with the experience and skills embraced for the benefit of the counterparts that can be applied to how mentorship is done. Jensen (2017) assumes that mentorship is one of the most common forms of leadership training especially in universities where the older individuals train students to become leaders. Muir (2014) argue that mentorship is important for the discovery and development of leadership identity in students thus the need for higher education institutions to set aside mentors for students to develop their leadership skills. Forbes (2014) perceives that student

leadership skills should be instilled in each student during their undergraduate studies to enable them to grow with these skills in them. Mortenson *et al*. (2014) suggest that mentorship allows the transfer of skills to others through teaching and demonstration thus transmitting skills to future leaders leading to sustainability development in student leadership in institutions as the mentored leaders have the duty to transfer the knowledge to their successors. According to Thompson (2014), student leadership is often supported by university staff in carrying out their own vision giving them directions. Dugan (2011) argues that leadership development does not happen overnight hence the reason it needs to be done throughout the period one is undertaking their undergraduate degrees and a continuous process of development through various development programmes in which leaders are called to participate.

Efforts to develop student leaders have been recorded in some areas through programmes introduced to help in this development by different organisations. Skalicky and Caney (2010) argue that student leadership development can be attained by involving students in different disciplines where they work independently or with professional staff who advise them on how to take lead roles in implementing projects and other tasks given to them. Weber (2019) posit that leadership development can successfully develop as a result of a direct relationship between the effectiveness of leadership training programmes supported by theoretical knowledge and the learning levels achieved by the students. The London Challenge Team and the National College for Schools Leadership has been noted to have commitment in the development of student leaders in London schools through the introduced programmes that aims at nurturing leaders with the capacity of making a difference to their lives and the lives of others (National College for School Leadership 2006). Jensen (2017) argue that student

leadership can be achieved through the interaction with adults and peers through the involvement of students in different activities and reflective learning such as leadership training workshop participation.

Atom *et al.* (2021) suggest that for Ghana to effectively involve female political leaders there is a need for them to make an effort to ensure that women are involved in leadership in higher education institutions. Females should be involved in leadership positions in universities and colleges where they obtain experience and the skills that allow them to develop their leadership skills to become leaders who guide and leads sustainable development. Leadership is of key importance to students as these skills not only enable them to participate in the governance and administration of their institutions but later be applied in political roles at a national level and thus making up the government on which all citizens rely hence this should not be underestimated but there is need for proper training and coaching of these students for their decision-making in the future to be of high practice. In other words, leadership training among students should not only aim at the present times but be done with the future in mind. Hilliard (2010) perceives that leadership can be attained through concentration on improving leadership skills and being mentored by experienced and effective leaders who are already in this profession. Therefore, the university authorities have the mandate to mentor and direct students who are into leadership to become experts who can be given any role or task to manage without the need for supervision.

In South Africa, student leadership development is done according to the guiding legal documents such as the Policy Document on Student Leadership Development and Training. This is the guiding document that is used to ensure that students are made to understand their roles as leaders,

encouraged to grasp ethical roles and that they become the role models for their colleagues among other roles they play as leaders. Student leadership training is facilitated by the DSA in which the SRC executives are taken for training programmes. The training is said to be conducted within a space of time of 12 months. Though some training is conducted on institutional campuses to develop student leaders, off-campus training and programmes are also carried out to help student develop their leadership skills with the addition of training manuals. A variety of documents are distributed to students that help them with information on how to become effective leaders that includes the Policy on Organised student Life, Excursion Form, Constitution for Student Governance, the UP Strategic Plan among other documents that guide them on good governance (Policy on Student Leadership Development and Training (Rt461/10). Apart from that, various documents are introduced to the students that are used to develop their leadership skills. These includes strategic and policy documents among them are the Strategic Plan for the University of Pretoria, Strategic Plan of the Department of Student Affairs, Constitution for Students, Policy on Societies (Rt 459/10 amended), and the Policy on Service Providers (Rt 460/10 amended) among others.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study used desktop analysis analyse the qualitative information presented in this document. Previous studies were reviewed to understand how student leadership framework has been successful and useful in many higher education institutions around the world and also to get clarity on how these frameworks are developed and what in particular, they intend to address concerning the development of sustainable student leadership in universities and colleges. Documents including journals, reports, articles, legal frameworks and books were used as data sources for this study. The qualitative research design was used to gather, analyse and present data

contained in this study as it allows the researcher to bring full explanations and debates related to the matter being studied by the research (Bryman, 2012; Creswell, 2019). The university community has become busier by having regular exams through the modularisation system.

FINDINGS

The findings showed that leadership framework for the development of student leadership skills is the way to go towards the proper enforcement of leadership roles of students in higher education institutions in Zimbabwe. It provides opportunities and resources for students to gain leadership experience through the use of various strategies and systems. Student leadership is declared to be a purely leadership development and training for the future rather than the present hence the framework is the guideline of leadership of student to feature into the future dynamic and lead to sustainable development of education institutions in Zimbabwe. Muyambo *et al.* (2022) perceives that there have been rapid changes in the way humans live and work that has led to an outcry for global educational reforms with the consideration of student leadership leading to the development of many policies for its moulding and development. The development of student leadership among the students requires a common agenda where the vision of the institution and the student aim at the same goal of working towards the sustainability of these institutions hence. The need for effective communication which is consistent and open so as to create more ground for interaction and sharing of leadership skills through mentorship and coaching.

Results have indicated student participation in community development as a strategy towards student leadership development. The framework insists on giving student chances and allow them in leading development in communities and

volunteerism as a solution that leads to the development of leadership skills in students. This has indicated to be productive as the students get a chance to interact with different leaders from the society where they get an opportunity to be coached and mentored into the expected leaders that will guide the governance and development of their institutions in adapting to the chances occurring in this 21st century. Patrick (2020) argue that fostering student leadership is important not just political education but student representation, activism and advocacy. The results show that leadership development in Zimbabwe's higher education institutions have been implemented through the decentralisation of power by university authorities thus delegating leadership roles to students and allowing them to participate in the governance of their institutions that allows them to grasp leadership skills and experience. SRC Constitution for Midlands State University provide that the SRC is the highest decision-making student body in universities. This shows the role of institutions in promoting leadership among students by giving them the chance to make decisions on matters relating to students and the institution. Bukaliya and Rupande (2012) argue that Zimbabwe's higher education institutions have adopted the Representation Democracy Model as a strategy towards the thrust of democratizing the institutions through student participation which is done via their SRC team. Student leaders are given certain powers to deal with emergence issues, to act as the administrative committee, execute any mandate transferred to it thus preparing them to future leadership roles and decision-making. This provides the student leaders the experience of how to coordinate their subordinates through the integration of the SRC with the students as they discuss administrative matters concerning the affairs of the students.

Apart from that, students are made faculty leaders where they work daily on the running of different faculties on the campus.

Leadership development have been discovered to be done through the appointment of different leaders for academic progress of the students learning purposes. This have been done through the selection of different representatives within faculties, departments and classes. Bukaliya and Rupande (2012) discovered that the participation of students in the affairs of their educational institutions reflect the embracement of democracy as a strategy towards the development of student leadership among Zimbabwe higher education facilities. These appointments can be regarded as a strategy towards the development of leadership skills in students by allowing students' voices to be heard by the lecturers, chairman and deans of different faculties through to the top authorities. As leaders ought to be organisers of activities, this provides student leaders the opportunity to organise activities related to their lectures, through organising lecture rooms, assignments and other communications between the lecturers and the students and participating in meetings for the growth and management of various departments in which they are part of.

The findings indicate that the appointment of patrons to guide the student representative councils is one of the strategies that have been used by universities in Zimbabwe to develop student leadership in their institutions. Patrons who are the Deans of Students have the responsibility of advising the council of student leaders on the right decisions to make. Besides university professors, lecturers, chairmen of departments and deans of faculties are playing major role in promoting the participation of student leaders in the administration of their institutions that is significant for the embracement of leadership skills and experience. Bukaliya and Rupande (2012) note the formation of student unions in higher education institutions as the foundation of these premises where the wishes of the students are represented thus allowing the voices of the students to be heard and eliminating the old forum where

the administration imposed their will on students thus a strategy towards sustainable leadership and the promoting of student representation in Zimbabwe's institutions of higher education.

Student leadership development has been done in many universities through the involvement of student leaders in the processes the university where they gain different skills in leadership. One of the key involvements is the participation of student leaders in the disciplinary of students as members of the Student Disciplinary Committee. Section 25, subsection 1(d) of the National University of Science and Technology Act (Chapter 25:13) mentions that one student should be nominated by the Students' Union to be part of the disciplinary committee thus allowing student leaders to develop skills on how to deal with issues of discipline within the institution and again ensuring how legal framework is enforced within an institution or an organisation. This is also noted in other universities (University of Zimbabwe Act [Chapter 25:16], Section 23, subsection 1(d); Lupane State University Act [Chapter 25:25] Section 27, subsection 1(d). According to the Zimbabwe Open University Act [Chapter 25:20] Section26, subsection 1(c), two students are nominated to be part of the student disciplinary committee with one from the department of the offender or the same faculty. Therefore, is can be applauded to be a strategy that tertiary education facilities are taking as a way to train and promote the production of skilled student leaders who are aware of legal procedures within an institution setting that will help them develop to be effective leaders who are aware of the law and how to deal with various issues that are related to the institution or organisation's code of conduct and how applicable and punishments that comes with different offences related to it.

DISCUSSION

Though they have been immense effort devoted to helping develop student leaders in higher education institutes, Skalicky *et al* (2018) argue that there has been a lack of clarity regarding how to develop leaders in these institutions due to the failure to define what leadership is all about. most universities only focus on developing students towards the chosen professions, however it can be noted that promoting life skills that contribute to sustainability is a way of attaining a future that is sustainable. Student leaders are not getting the full support through training, coaching and mentorship, though they are given roles to play in the management and governance of institutions, their ability to make right decisions is a reflection of the learning opportunities given to them to know more about leadership form how they ought to behave and how they should lead themselves to rational decisions. Jensen (2017) argue that institutions ought to use a holistic approach to teaching students for them to be successful in all the competencies skills in leadership as higher education is identified as with a significant role in the development of leadership capacity. Leadership is a skill that can be learned and developed in each student therefore though democratic approaches are adopted in choosing leaders for institutions, some potential leaders are disadvantaged due to the lack of proper training and coaching hence the need for holistic approaches to leadership development in students.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends enforcement of leadership framework and the assessment of the success of the framework in moulding student leaders. The study persists that the implementation of the framework will lead to the acquirement of knowledge, development of skills and experience in leadership in students. The study recommends the introduction of programmes that support student leadership development

through their involvement in the governance of the institution or community development programmes that requires their ideas and lead roles. In conclusion, the framework is the way to go towards the empowerment of student leaders in school governance and the expected leadership that will result in sustainability of higher education institutions regardless of the current changes. The success of the leadership framework is key to the development of student leadership skills and the sustainable development of higher education institutions. It is argued that student leadership framework has variety benefits that boost the student leadership development among students and as well govern its proper implementation for the productivity of their institutions through the contributions of young brains that work exquisitely towards the growth and sustainability of the institutions in dealing with the current issues that are affecting them. The framework will not only benefit the institutions but the students themselves in shaping themselves into becoming future leaders who will transform the world and their personnel lives in managing different companies and organisations in Zimbabwe and all over the universe.

The study designed many proposals in which it has recommended that leadership courses should be introduced as part of the modules that are studied by every student as leadership is not a talent one is born with but can be developed in oneself, thus teaching leadership will help student embrace these skills and implement them for successful future planning and management of resources within the institution. Therefore, among the modules that are taught in universities and colleges, leadership modules should be compulsory to all students. The study also proposes that universities and tertiary institutions must form leadership frameworks that can be used as guidelines in the training of student leaders to allow the students to acquire all the necessary skills and exposure required for them to become effective leaders who have the

capacity to lead a sustainable future for the institution and the societies in which they are heads. The study recommends that besides giving student to lead as leaders in different programmes, there is need for them to receive caching and mentorship through workshops and field experiences. Programmes that allow students to learn more about leadership should be more common in all institutions.

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