

A Critical Reflection on the Persistence of Electoral Instigated Violence in Zimbabwe (2000-2018)

BY

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DECLARAION STATEMENT

I Vincent Motau declare that this dissertation hereby submitted for the degree Master of Arts in Political Science is my original work in design and execution. All materials or sources used herein have been duly acknowledged by means of complete references. This study, to my best knowledge and understanding, has not been presented to this or any other institution of higher learning in South Africa or elsewhere.

Signed: 

Date: 13/06/2022

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DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to my parents, Mr. Motau William and Mrs. Nemukula Masindi, who have always wished for my success, as well as my lovely fiancée, Ramatsa Elizabeth and my siblings. This dissertation would not have been feasible without their love and support.

ACRONYMS AND ABBRIVIATION

| | |
|-----------|---|
| AU | African Union |
| EMB | Electoral Management Body |
| EU | European Union |
| MDC | Movement for Democratic Change |
| R2P | Responsibility to Protect |
| SADC | Southern African Development Community |
| SADCC | Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference |
| UN | United Nations |
| USA | United States of America |
| UNIVEN | University of Venda |
| ZANU (PF) | Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front |
| ZESN | Zimbabwe Election Support Network |
| ZEC | Zimbabwe Electoral Commission |

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the causes of Zimbabwe's electoral violence from 2000 to 2018. It was underpinned by the defective democracy theory in understanding the dynamics that shape the conditions for violence each time Zimbabwe holds elections. This study is premised on the fact that politically motivated violence towards, during and immediately after elections is a common feature in Zimbabwe, particularly the period after 2000. Given this trend in politically motivated violence against opposition supporters in Zimbabwe, this study specifically looks at the period from 2000 to 2018. This period was chosen because it witnessed one of the most terrifying incidents in the history of Zimbabwe's general elections. This is also the period where ZANU (PF) faced one of its toughest challenges from an opposition party since independence in 1980. It is also the period when the SADC became involved in trying to find a lasting solution to the country's election related violence. The study was qualitatively done. Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources. Interviews and document analysis were used to collect data. Data collected enabled the assessment of the imperatives that underlie the country's propensity for violence every time elections are held. ZANU-PF's insatiable quest to remain in power and the party's failure to acknowledge the main opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) characterises its intolerance of those who oppose its rule. This study argues that due to ZANU-PF's intolerance of opposition parties, MDC party members are kidnapped, intimidated and tortured by its unruly hooligans to prevent them from voting for the latter. The study concludes that during elections, the ruling ZANU-PF party abuses the country's security forces by deploying them to manipulate the electoral process. Using the defective theory, the study explains the existence of electoral violence in Zimbabwe. To achieve sustainable peace and uphold the rule of law during and immediately after elections, the study suggests the country's continuous engagement with the international community.

Keywords: Electoral violence, Coup de tat, Elections, Democracy, Sanctions, Conflict

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Zimbabwe's elections between 2000 and 2018 were violent and the 2008 ones were the worst. In these elections, the stakes were high given that the election of that country's president was the focal point. In this case, the ZANU-PF government and its supporters made sure that its candidate won, no matter at what cost. It is within this context that causes of Zimbabwe's electoral violence should be investigated. The crisis and violence in Zimbabwe during elections led to the European Union (EU) and the United States of America imposing both economic and travel sanctions on Zimbabwe's top government officials. The sanctions were imposed in response to the political violence, human rights violations, the absence of the rule of law, and the deteriorating democratic practices by the ZANU (PF) government. In many respects, these core problems still exist in Zimbabwe even today. Political parties and civil society groups have raised concerns about that country's political violence, repressions and reform deficits.

The sanctions mantra is that sanctions are intended to ensure that Zimbabwe adheres to the 'rule of law' and upholds human rights principles as enshrined in the United Nations Charter (UN). Interestingly, countries that imposed sanctions on Zimbabwe have some of the most appalling records on human rights and the rule of law. In the US, for example, the sanctioned police killings of black people, the deliberate policies that encourage the continued discrimination against black people, and that Biden's predecessor saw nothing wrong in publicly attacking and attempting to silence media critical of his rule speak of hypocrisy.

The economic sanctions against Zimbabwe led to the unprecedented number of immigrants flocking to its neighbouring countries since 2000. In short, Zimbabwe's economic sanctions seriously impact on its economy. This Chapter introduces this study and provides its background. It also outlines this study's aim, objectives and research questions.

1.2. BACKGROUND

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) is an intergovernmental organisation established by the region's countries. It has 16 countries, i.e; South Africa, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho, Eswatini, Mozambique, Malawi, Tanzania, Madagascar, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mauritius, Seychelles, Zambia, the Comoros and Angola. Its predecessor was the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) (established in 1980). SADC aims to consolidate the region's social, economic and political cooperation, in addition to ensuring its member states' security.

Since its formation in 1992 the SADC has played an important role in maintaining peace, security and cooperation among its member states. There are a few countries, however, that are faced with political crises in the SADC region, especially during elections. The DRC and Zimbabwe are two such countries. Zimbabwe's election crisis and violence have become a sore thumb to the SADC. This started when more than 30 thousand Ndebeles were killed during the 1980s Gukurahundi massacres perpetrated by the ruling party government in its bid to create a one-party state. When peace eventually prevailed through the 1987 Unity Accord between ZANU (PF) and PF-ZAPU, the country's stability lasted for 13 years when the MDC was formed in 1999.

Thereafter, Zimbabwe became embroiled in election violence in every election held until the SADC decided to intervene in 2008. That is, from February 2000 onwards, Zimbabweans have been subjected to various forms of election intimidation, harassment and violence by war veterans and ZANU (PF) sympathisers. Violence escalated in the run up to, during and after the June 2000 parliamentary elections.

Most of the violence was directed at the opposition MDC supporters. The MDC supporters claim that elections are supposed to be free, fair and peaceful for all Zimbabweans, but violence is used against them each time the country holds a plebiscite. Violence against the electorate continues unabated in Zimbabwe every time there are elections. According to Zimbabwe's Constitution section 95(b), the president's term lasts for five years, and he/she is chosen by the people in an election. The country's parliament is bicameral, consisting of the House of Assembly and the Senate.

Despite the establishment of the government of national unity through the signing of the Global Political Agreement in 2008, the situation remained volatile as political reforms were not implemented. ZANU (PF) continued to unleash political violence to its opponents with impunity. According to Kettaneh (2002), since independence in 1980, Zimbabwe has been ruled by ZANU (PF). It consolidated its political dominance in the country after its merger with PF-ZAPU led by the late Joshua Nkomo in 1987 (after the Gukurahundi massacres).

During the February 2000 referendum, ZANU (PF) tasted its first defeat in any poll when it failed to get the majority support for its constitutional amendments. The amendments included, *inter alia*, the increment of the presidential powers, the granting of immunity from prosecution to government officials, and the right to expropriate commercial farms without compensation. The opposition to ZANU-PF's constitutional amendments was spearheaded by the MDC in cohort with white commercial farmers. This became the catalyst for the chronic electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

1.3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Since Zimbabwe attained independence in 1980, it has had several elections, most of which were violence laden. During the country's election related violence, nobody is spared. That is, civilians suspected to be sympathetic to the opposition MDC are killed, maimed, tortured and intimidated by the police and army. The SADC, AU and the international community have instituted several diplomatic measures to try to restore peace, stability and the rule of law, but to no avail. Given the above, the study's problem is the lack of in-depth studies on the continued electoral crisis in Zimbabwe and why this is the case.

1.4. AIM OF THE STUDY

This study's aim was to investigate why Zimbabwe persistently experience electoral violence despite the regional, continental, and international intervention measures meant to prevent that.

1.5. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study's objectives are;

- To identify factors that fuel electoral crisis in Zimbabwe during elections.
- To find out the effectiveness of the SADC, AU and the UN's strategies in trying to help prevent Zimbabwe's electoral crises.
- To examine the impact of electoral violence in Zimbabwe's social, political and economic stability.

1.6. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study answered the following main research question.

- Why does Zimbabwe persistently experience electoral violence despite the regional, continental, and international intervention measures meant to prevent that?

To fully answer its main question, this study answered these subsidiary questions.

- Which factors fuel electoral violence in Zimbabwe during elections?
- How effective is the SADC, AU and the UN's strategies in trying to help prevent Zimbabwe's electoral crises?

1.7. RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Since the MDC's formation in 1999, the Zimbabwe elections took a turn for the worst. That is, from 2000 onwards, Zimbabweans have experienced election violence each time their country holds elections. Such violence, in most cases, is perpetuated by those meant to protect civilians, the police and army. The study's importance lies in that it investigates and analyses the electoral crises in Zimbabwe from 2000 to 2018. It is also important in that it explores the SADC, AU and the UN's reactions and actions in dealing with Zimbabwe's election crises. Also, this study is important as it reveals the impact of Zimbabwe's electoral crises on its social, political, and economic stability.

1.8. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study is limited due to the lack of financial resources to travel to Zimbabwe for field work, and hence its reliance on immigrants who live in Thohoyandou and other communities in South Africa. It also relied on students who study at the University of Venda. Also, the study relied on this university's lecturers.

1.9. STUDY AREA

The study area is the whole of Zimbabwe. That is, participants from different parts of Zimbabwe who resident in South Africa were interviewed for their views and experiences regarding the country's electoral violence, intimidation, murder and the general mayhem that happen during that country's elections.

1.10. DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Electoral violence: According to Sisk (2009), electoral violence are acts of coercion, intimidation, or bodily injury performed to influence a political process or that develop in the context of electoral competition. Bardal (2016) sees electoral violence as the use of emotional, social, or economic force, coercion or pressure, as well as physical and sexual harm to control and/or repress an individual or group's right to participate in political processes and institutions. This can happen in public or private, including in the family, the general community, online, and through the media. Electoral violence could be government sponsored or tolerated.

Coup de' tat: The removal and seizure of a government and its powers. Powell (2011) stated that a coup de' tat usually involves a political faction, the military, or a dictator seizing power in an illegal and unconstitutional manner. A coup is considered successful if the army seizes control and maintains that for at least seven days.

Democracy: Although most people are familiar with the term "democracy," it is still a notion that is misunderstood and overused when dictators, single-party regimes, and military coup leaders alike claim the mantle of democracy to gain popular support.

Economic Sanctions: Economic sanctions, according to Lin (2016), are commercial and financial penalties imposed by one or more countries on a self-governance state, group, or individuals.

1.11. PAGE LAYOUT

Chapter one introduces this study and provides its background. This includes the study's aim and objectives, problem statement, significant of the study, and its limitations.

In Chapter two, literature is reviewed. Literature review is done to identify existing gaps in knowledge concerning the phenomenon under study. Key concepts are also explained here.

The next Chapter illustrates this study's research design and methodology. The study's population, its sample and the sampling technique, data collection and analysis methods are also provided. The ethics that were undertaken to preserve this study's integrity are also outlined.

The fourth Chapter presents, analyses, discusses and interprets data collected from the study's participants. The data is integrated with that collected from secondary sources.

Chapter five concludes this study and provides its recommendations.

1.12. CONCLUSION

Zimbabwe's electoral crises need serious interventions by the international community such as the SADC, AU, UN, and the EU if they are to be resolved. The trajectory is that since 2000, the ruling ZANU (PF) and its government have violated and continue to violate human rights every time there are elections in Zimbabwe. Thus, the UN, EU, SADC and the AU should act decisively against the ZANU-PF led government if they are to bring law and order in that country, particularly during elections. It is high time the country realised free and fair elections. Social, political and economic stability could only be restored if ZANU-PF's government is made to face consequences of its human rights violations and its disregard for the rule of law.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews literature on what scholars say about violence during elections, particularly those held in Zimbabwe. The chapter develops the study's topic as it examines the views of those who wrote about the issues of electoral violence in the SADC region and in Africa as whole. The first section provides this study's theoretical foundation in order to have a better understanding of the issues that underpin Zimbabwe's electoral violence. Concerns over Zimbabwe's electoral violence and the SADC, AU, and the UN's responses to the country's electoral violence, and Zimbabwe Electoral Commission's (ZEC) role are dealt with through this study's theoretical foundation.

To better understand this study, this Chapter explores the factors that leads to election violence in the world in general and Zimbabwe in particular. However, before reviewing literature in detail, it is necessary to first discuss theories that underpin this research. Theories aid us in making sense of the world around us, thus helping us understand difficult phenomena through simplifying versions of events. The Defective Democracy Theory was utilised in analysing Zimbabwe's elections crises and violence from 2000 to 2018.

2.2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theory is described as a set of interconnected structures, meanings, and guidelines that give a rational understanding of phenomena through the explanation or prediction of relationships between aspects. There are different perspectives that explains the purpose and use of theories. A precept, according to Ary, Jacobs, and Razavieh (1990), has five purposes in research. The first is to assist in condensing fresh information and discoveries into concise statements. Second, theories aid in the organisation or preparation of a contemporary body of perception within a field of study. Third, theories aid in the clarification and attribution of conclusive abilities to empirical results that are distant before setup. The fourth idea states that theories can connect old and new study

findings and reveal definitive evidence. The fifth and final role of the percept is that it assists researchers to gain a tentative understanding of the links between variables or events within certain contexts. For instance, a researcher can utilise the concept of learning to explain interactions between dependent and independent variables.

Theories help researchers explain relationships between and among variables under investigation. For example, ideas in security literature can be classified based on definitions or approach to safety lifestyles used. The ideas employed in investigations aid in the identification of the most magnificent facts collection devices and the most appropriate information collection tactics. As a result, theories are utilised to explain the findings generated from the files, allowing for a second theoretical foundation to be applied to empirical data. These factors ensure that empirical findings derived from the disciplinary data are relevant, rational, and conceptually valid for Zimbabwe's election violence peculiarities.

2.2.1. Defining theoretical framework

A theoretical framework can be defined as the utility of a concept interior investigation based on the term 'theory.' A theoretical framework, according to Camp (2001), is a set of theoretical assumptions that explain the link between a set of events. Warmbrod (2009) defined a theoretical framework as a systematic account ordering of concepts about the phenomena under investigation or a systematic account of the members of the household among a collection of variables. In a more abstract sense, Creswell (2007) defined theoretical framework as the assessment of discipline-based literature relevant to a theme and the identification of an overarching thought that explains the primary assumption or proposition.

Grant and Osanloo (2014) explained theoretical framework as a research blueprint or guidance. It is a framework based on an existing theory in a field of research that is related to and/or reflects the study's hypothesis (Grant & Osanloo, 2014). It is a blueprint that is frequently taken by researchers to build their own houses or research inquiries and it also serves as the research's foundation.

The theoretical framework is like a map or a travel itinerary (Sinclair, 2007; Fulton & Krainovich-Miller, 2010). That is, when traveling to a specific location, the map directs an individual. Similarly, the theoretical framework directs the researcher to stay within the bounds of the

approved theories in order to make his/her final scientific and academic contribution. Brondizio, Leemans, and Solecki (2004) stated that a theoretical framework is a specific theory or theories concerning aspects of human activity that is beneficial in the analysis of occurrences. As a result, it is crucial to understand the theoretical framework's significance in this study.

2.2.3. Theoretical framework's significance

Grant and Osanloo (2014) asserted that a theoretical framework aids a research project in various ways. It provides the framework for demonstrating how a researcher defines his/her research in terms of philosophy, epistemology, technique, and analysis. Ravitch and Carl (2016) agreed that the theoretical framework serves as a guide for researchers to situate and contextualise formal theories in their research. Doing so places their research in a scientific and academic context. Furthermore, the theoretical framework serves as the research's focal point as it is linked to the research problem.

Lester (2005) noted that the theoretical framework directs the kind of data that should be collected for certain studies. It directs the researcher's research design and data analysis strategies. Akintoye (2015) added that the theoretical framework aids the researcher in determining the best research approach, analytical tools, and procedures for his/her research inquiry. The theoretical framework improves the relevance and generalisability of study findings. Imenda (2014) stated that a study without a theoretical framework lacks proper direction in obtaining acceptable literature and scholarly debates concerning its findings.

Grant and Osanloo (2004) said that the theoretical framework provides a shared worldview or lenses through which other researchers in that field of study can think about the problem and analyse evidence. The theoretical framework, therefore, should guide and resonate with every phase of the research process, including problem description, literature review, methodology, presentation and discussion of findings, and conclusions derived. Eisenhart (2007) noted that the theoretical framework aids the researcher in evaluating other theories that may challenge his/her point of view, thus enhancing the study's strengths.

Theoretical framework (Simon & Goes, 2011; Maxwell, 2004) deepens the substance of investigation. As a result, a study proposal that requires findings must explicitly demonstrate the

theoretical framework on which the proposed research is based. It persuades funding agencies that the research project is worthwhile. Akintoye (2015) added that the proper and presence of a theoretical framework convinces researchers in the field and readers that the study is not dependent on the researcher's personal inclinations but rather is solidly rooted in an established theory selected through trustworthy investigations. But, before I attempt to explain flawed democracy, it is necessary to define democracy and provide a list of the criteria that must be met in a democratic state in order to determine whether or not the state meets those criteria.

2.3. DEFINING DEMOCRACY

The term democracy, is a misunderstood and misapplied notion. In this case, dictators, single-party regimes, and military coup leaders alike use the mantle of democracy to gain popular support. Despite all this, democratic governance continues to expand and flourish throughout the world, owing to the democratic notion force. Democracy, from the Greek term ‘demos’, which means ‘people’, is described as “the government in which people have absolute power”. Democracy can be exercised directly by the people in some cases. That is, in big societies, it is done through elected representatives. Democracy is government of the people, by the people, and for the people, as President Abraham Lincoln famously put (Nwogu, 2015).

Acemoglu (2006) reasoned that the terms "liberty" and "democracy" are frequently used interchangeably but they are not synonymous. He claimed that while democracy is a set of ideas and concepts concerning liberty, it is also a set of practices and processes that have been shaped through a long and often arduous history. Democracy is the formalisation of liberty. In the end, people living in democratic societies must serve as the ultimate guardians of their own freedoms, forging their own paths towards the ideals enshrined in the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights' preamble. That is, “Recognition of the inherent dignity and equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of world freedom, justice, and peace”.

Dimond (2004) asserted that there are several essential democratic traits that a given democracy should possess. The following are some of them; democracy is more than a set of specific political institutions; it is founded on a well-understood set of principles, attitudes, and practices, all of which can take various shapes and expressions across cultures and societies. Fundamental ideals, not standard procedures, underpin democracies; democracy is a form of governance in which all

adult people, directly or through freely chosen representatives, exercise authority and civic responsibility; democracy is based on the concepts of majority rule and individual liberty, it protects citizens from all-powerful central governments by decentralising government to regional and local levels, recognising that all levels of government must be as open and responsive to citizens as feasible; democracies recognise that one of their primary responsibilities is to safeguard fundamental human rights such as freedom of expression and religion, the right to equal protection under the law, and the ability to organise and participate fully in society's political, economic, and cultural life; democracies hold free and fair elections on a regular basis for persons of voting age.

In a democracy, citizens have both the right and the obligation to participate in the political system that safeguards their rights and freedoms; and tolerance, cooperation, and compromise are core virtues in democratic societies. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, intolerance is a type of violence in and of itself, and a barrier to the development of a truly democratic spirit (Diamond, 2004).

2.3.1. Defective Democracy

Defective democracies as pointed out by Merkel *et al.* (2019), is a notion introduced by political scientists Wolfgang Merkel, Hans-Jürgen Puhle, and Aurel Croissant at the dawn of the twenty-first century to blur the lines between totalitarian, authoritarian, and democratic political regimes. It is based on the embedded democracy notion. They said that there are four types of flawed democracy, and that how each country gets to that stage varies. One common subject is the nation's geographic location, which includes the consequences of other nations' influence in the region. The path of modernisation, level of modernisation, economic trends, social capital, civil society, political institutions, and education are all factors that contribute to faulty democracies.

Defective democracy is defined by Goeth (2005) as regimes in transition that have not yet achieved the consolidation of a liberal democracy in the sense of the required criteria for embedded democracy but are no longer considered autocratic regimes for the reason that they have established an electoral regime that essentially functions along democratic lines (free and fair elections). This suggests that in general, election results are recognised. In contrast to the functioning electoral regime, which is at the heart of democracy, the other criteria and partial regimes are frequently found to be violated or reduced in such a way that the violations and reductions become identifiable 'defects' in specific areas (Goeth, 2005). These disrupt the

functional logic of the liberal democratic system and the balance between various factors and partial regimes of embeddedness designed to achieve it.

Goeth (2005) said that a defective democracy is not only a decreased or low-intensity democracy but also one that is inconsistent. The issue is that contradictions do not always engender enough antagonism and dynamics to cause the system to move ahead in pursuit of a lost equilibrium, whether that be a return to authoritarianism or development toward a more liberal democracy. On the contrary, the flaws may get entrenched and democracy may continue to exist as a faulty democracy for a longer period of time. As a result, faulty democracy is more than merely a stage on the way to liberal democratic consolidation or authoritarianism. It is a democratic grey zone that has the potential to last and be relatively stable

2.4. TYPES OF DEFECTIVE DEMOCRACIES

There are types of defective democracies given that various governments try to fit in within the democratic system. As a result, such democracies are named according to the principles of the democracy they practice. The following types of defective democracy apply here.

2.4.1. Exclusive democracy

Exclusive democracies are defective because they do not grant suffrage to all adult citizens, resulting in unfair elections and a lack of true people's sovereignty. For example, the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, which was introduced in response to the women's suffrage movement and secured that all US citizens, regardless of gender, have the right to vote, was a significant step forward in American democracy. The amendment's passage assured that the United States would no longer be a monopoly democracy.

2.4.2 Domain democracy

Markel (2019) explained that the domain democracy occurs when military, businesspeople, landowners, local militias, or multinational corporations acquire control of political domains and remove veto power from democratically elected authorities. For example, in 2017, the Zimbabwean military seized control of the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation, critical portions

of the city of Harare, and placed the late Zimbabwean President Mugabe under house arrest after a military coup resulted in a domain democracy. In this case, the coup succeeded, and Mnangagwa took over as Zimbabwe's 3rd President after Mugabe was forced to resign.

2.4.3. Illiberal democracy

Mattijs (2018) postulated that when elected officials are no longer held to constitutional principles as a result of the judiciary's deterioration of power, the country becomes an illiberal democracy in which the rule of law is harmed or flawed and constitutional norms have little or no binding effect on elected officials and their actions. Individual civic rights are either partially or completely revoked. The most common type of flawed democracy is illiberal democracy. He also mentioned that in 2017, a contentious election for state governors took place in Venezuela.

Despite having an approval rating of 17 percent to 22 percent, Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and his United Socialist Party dominated the election, gaining 17 of 23 states and 54 percent of the vote. Members of the ruling party took advantage of state resources to aid their campaigns, giving them an advantage over their opponents. Under normal circumstances, using state funds for campaigns is unlawful but the Venezuelan court system had degenerated to the point that it only worked to assist the ruling party rather than true justice. Venezuela is a faulty democracy largely due to this.

2.4.4. Delegative democracy

The Executive branch is supreme in delegative democracies and the legislature and courts have limited influence over the Executive. Constitutional principles are rarely adhered to, and the necessary checks and balances of power in healthy democracies are weakened. When a country has only one ruling party, it is known as a delegate democracy. A good example is Mexico before 1997. Since the Mexican Revolution, Mexico's dominant party, the Institutional Revolutionary Party, has ruled without opposition. Mexico was a delegate democracy during the PRI's political supremacy, with the executive branch ruling supreme and the Congress effectively rubber-stamping decisions.

2.4.5. Anocratic regime

Matthew (2010) sees anocratic regimes as dictatorships with a democratic legislature. They have a mix of democratic and autocratic characteristics, which might lead to an increase in internal strife. These governments can persist if the ruling class refrains from committing grave human rights violations and from stealing or canceling elections. The ruling party ensures that human rights violations are not widely publicised, as this would enrage the people they govern.

Based on the categories of flawed democracy stated above, "Anocratic regime" was utilised as an analytical tool in this study since it refers to the abuse of human rights by a country's ruling party. Anocracy as explained by Jeniffer and James (2008) is a type of government that is informally characterised as half democracy and part dictatorship, or as a system that combines democratic and autocratic traits. Another definition of anocracy is that it is a system that allows some forms of engagement through opposition group activities but has not fully developed mechanisms for redressing grievances. Anocracies differ from autocracies and democracies in their ability to sustain authority, political dynamics, and policy objectives. But, these regimes have democratic structures that allow for nominal competition.

Jeniffer *et al.* (2010) stated that such regimes are particularly vulnerable to armed conflict and unexpected or negative leadership changes. The Center for Systemic Peace's operational definition of anocracy is widely used and disseminated through the polity data series. To compare and contrast whether Zimbabwe is a free democratic state, it is necessary to discuss the democratic principles that a democratic state is expected to follow at all times.

2.5. Rules for democracy

The following rules are used to define the regime start dates (Barbara *et al.*, 2014). If any of the following occurs over a period of years, and the same core rules and leadership group continue in successive years, the period is classified as autocratic. That is, undemocratic measures were used by the executive to gain power. 'Undemocratic' refers to any method other than direct, reasonably fair, competitive elections in which at least 10% of the population (40% of adult males) were eligible to vote; or indirect election by a body in which at least 60% of the members were elected

in direct, reasonably fair, competitive elections; or constitutional succession to a democratically elected executive. The start date refers to when the executive first assumed authority.

- A.** The government came to power through democratic means (as previously indicated) but modified the legal or informal rules afterward, limiting competition in later elections. The start date is when a rule change or action (such as the arrest of opposition lawmakers) mark the transition from democracy to autocracy.

- B.** Elections were held to determine the government, but the military blocked one or more parties from contesting or dictating policy in key areas despite the fact that large numbers of citizens were anticipated to vote for them. The commencement date is when these rules go into force, which is usually the first election in which popular parties are barred from running.

- C.** Barbara *et al.* (2014) explained that in order to discontinue an anacrotic regime, the following criteria must be met:
 - (i)** A competitive election for the executive, or the body that chooses the executive, takes place and is won by someone other than the incumbent or someone aligned with the incumbent; and the person or party chosen is allowed to assume office. The election is the finish date but it is only counted if the chosen candidate or party is permitted to assume power.
 - (ii)** The government is deposed through a coup, popular revolt, rebellion, civil war, invasion, or other forceful means, and replaced by a new regime (defined as a government with different norms for selecting leaders and policies). The end date is the date on which the outgoing regime leader is ousted, dies, resigns, flees, or is arrested, or when an insurgency takes control of the city.
 - (iii)** The governing group significantly alters the basic rules for selecting leaders and policies so that the identification of the group from which leaders can be selected or the group from which major policies can be selected shifts. The regulation change's end date is the end date.

2.6. Human rights violation

Human rights violations, which a norm in Zimbabwe, are addressed by anocratic regimes, particularly during elections. Opposition supporters, it is claimed, are the ones who suffer the most during elections. In Zimbabwe, opposition supporters are kidnapped, tortured, threatened, and assassinated in an attempt to rig the polls. Zimbabwe comes into the category of anocracies due to several of its authoritarian behaviours. It is also listed as one among the world's most egregious violators of human rights. Torture, police violence, threats, discrimination, unfair trials, and limited freedom of expression are among the breaches.

Steven (1999) illustrated that transitioning regimes have a high rate of human rights violations. When it comes to Zimbabwe's situation, human rights violations are particularly common during elections when the ruling party uses violence to sway the vote. Joseph *et al.* (2016) said that the instability of anocratic regimes leads to much more human rights breaches than in democratic regimes. Maplecroft (2014) pointed out that in respect of the Human Rights Risk Atlas, eight of the top ten worst violators of human rights are anocracies, with Zimbabwe one of them. Every existing anocracy is classified as "at risk" or "very at risk" of human rights violations.

The strong link between anocratic regimes and human rights violations indicates a country's nonlinear transition from autocracy to democracy. Joseph *et al.* (2016) revealed that if a certain level of full democracy is reached, human rights breaches drop dramatically. Human rights abuses are likely to remain the same or even worsen as countries transition from an autocratic to an anocratic system (Helen, 1995). Zimbabwe now experiences civil liberty violations such as the violations of freedom of expression, associational and organisational rights, the rule of law, and individual rights (Freedom House, 2014).

2.7. Violence

Violence is more common in an anocratic system than in a democratic regime. In Zimbabwe, residents are subjected to such violence during elections that some flee to neighbouring countries such as South Africa, Botswana, and Namibia to avoid bloodshed. Gehem *et al.* (2014) said anocracies are 10 times more likely than democracies to have intrastate conflict, while autocracies are twice as likely. The hypothesis of "More Murder in the Middle (MMM)" is one explanation

for the rise in violence and conflict within anocracies. With reference to the defective democracy theory, the unstable characteristics of anocratic regimes such as the presence of divided elites, inequality, and violent challengers who threaten the legitimacy of the current social order, lead to far more political repression or state terror than democratic or authoritarian regimes. As a result, there are a lot of "life-integrity breaches" such as state-sponsored genocide, extrajudicial executions, and torture.

State life-integrity violations can be classified as acts of state terror (Steven, 1999). Terrorist attacks by both government and non-government groups are more common in transitioning anocratic states than in democratic or authoritarian regimes. Abadie (2004) a Harvard Public Policy professor, claimed that an authoritarian regime's tight control is likely to deter terrorist activity in the country. Anocracies, on the other hand, are more exposed and vulnerable to terrorist assaults without the stability of a defined authoritarian control or a stable democracy (Abadie, 2004).

Transitions from an authoritarian state to a democracy have been followed with transitory surges in terrorism in Iraq, and previously in Spain and Russia. Gibney (2012) alluded to the fact that political killings and atrocities such as executions may be prevalent here. It is acceptable to detain people indefinitely for political reasons, with or without trial. When civil and political rights breaches have spread to wide groups of the population a state is classified as an anocratic. Murders, kidnappings, and torture become common. At this level, horror impacts those who are interested in politics or ideas, notwithstanding its universality.

2.8. ZANU-PF violating human rights

Monty (2014) noted that Zimbabwe was classified as an open anocracy when Mugabe was elected president in 1980. He also said that by 1987, the country had almost completely converted to an authoritarian regime, making it a closed anocracy. Zimbabwe became an open anocracy in early 2000, after spending more than a decade on the verge of becoming an authoritarian state or a closed anocracy. Sibanda (1997) proclaimed that Zimbabwe has progressed toward becoming a more democratic system in recent years but election conflicts and human rights violations persist, leaving the country an anocratic state. Sibanda (1997) added that while Zimbabwe was a closed anocracy in the late 1990s, grave human rights violations occurred. The companies' failure to listen

to their employees' requests and labour strikes were prevalent, and real wages decreased by 60% between 1992 and 1997. The Zimbabwean government deemed labour strikes in the late 1990s to be illegal, and blame was placed on the poor working-class. Health services deteriorated and housing projects remained stagnant while labour restrictions continued to harm workers.

Norman *et al.* (2014) stated that since former President Mugabe took office in 1980, he employed a variety of techniques to stay in power, which resulted in severe election confrontations. Norman and Maria (2011) also claimed that the electoral board indicated that Tsvangirai, the opposing party's presidential candidate, received more votes than Mugabe in the March 2008 presidential election. However, because Tsvangirai earned just 48% of the vote and not an absolute majority, a runoff election was scheduled.

As a result, Mugabe utilised coercion, including assassination threats to convince Tsvangirai to withdraw from the election runoff in 2008. Norman *et al.* (2014) pointed out that the US-led United Nations Security Council's decision to impose sanctions on Mugabe failed to engage him and Tsvangirai in discussions regarding power sharing. Norman and Maria (2014) believed that power sharing coalition was formed in September 2008 after an opposing party candidate, Lovemore Moyo, was elected Speaker of the Legislature. Tsvangirai was chosen Prime Minister. Mugabe on the other hand, won his seventh consecutive presidential term in 2013, and his election was widely seen as manipulated in Mugabe's favour. But, after each election in Zimbabwe, particularly after the MDC's formation to participate in those elections, ZANU-PF was accused of human rights violations or election manipulations.

2.9. Breadth and complexity

While the first three qualities represent anocratic regimes' instabilities, another element is their broad descriptiveness. Regan and Bell (2010) explained anocracy as a regime with a combination of institutional traits that either constrains or advances the democratic process, encapsulating a complicated category embracing numerous institutional configurations. Although anocracies have some civil society and political engagement capabilities, their autocratic and democratic counterparts have much more or less. While scholars can easily distinguish between democratic and autocratic regimes based on their characteristics, anocracies serve as a broader "catchall" term

for all other regimes. Despite its breadth and complexity, the convention continues to be employed because of its relevance to civil unrests.

2.10. ZANU-PF's strategies to ensure its political dominance in Zimbabwe

In recent years, ZANU-PF's strategies have been clearly aimed at gaining control of all aspects of society in order to ensure its political dominance. Except in appearance, the separation of powers between the Executive, Parliament, and the Judiciary was effectively abolished. The party also expanded its grip over the civil realm, which now includes non-state media, trade unions, human rights and development organisations, business, and agriculture. ZANU-PF also has control over traditional Chiefs. They bought Chiefs, and where that did not work, they brought in War Veterans (who were bought with high pensions a few years back), and in general, they had over 25 years to establish a completely closed system of patronage, thus establishing a powerful military-party-state complex (Tony, 2011).

The state's continuous support of individual Chiefs (including crucial food aid provided by international donors) is contingent on the Chiefs' political loyalty, and the loyalty of all those under their jurisdiction. In these places, the notorious youth brigades, whose enrolment is now believed to be compulsory for all school leavers and a prerequisite of admission to postsecondary education, are stationed (but also in townships). They are responsible for ensuring that all villagers attend ZANU-PF meetings, receive ZANU-PF cards, do not listen to or read any independent or 'anti-government' media, and that any who do not comply face violence. These examples also serve to warn others about the consequences of deviating from the party line. Operating under such circumstances is extraordinarily tough, made much more difficult by its location in the international arena, where Zimbabwe's ruling party has successfully manipulated public opinion, particularly in Africa, against Western governments (happily supported by the stupidities and undiplomatic behaviour, especially that of Britain, the former coloniser).

2.11. Coup d'état in Zimbabwe, 2017

Cook (2017) stated that members of the Zimbabwe Defense Forces (ZDF) seized control of the state-owned ZBC and other major political and military facilities between November 14 and 15,

in what some observers saw as a coup d'état. The goal and course of their action are unknown, but it appears to have been prompted by a succession dispute inside the ruling ZANU-PF.

2.11.1. Specific triggers of Coup in Zimbabwe

President Mugabe's November 6 firing of one of Zimbabwe's two vice presidents, Mnangagwa, and a purge of Mnangagwa's supporters (New York Times, 2017), were the precise causes. These steps came after signals that Mugabe, 93, intended to appoint his politically ambitious wife, Grace Mugabe, as Vice President. This would have put her in a strong position to succeed him as president, putting her major competitor, Mnangagwa, an ex-intelligence head and Defense Minister, on the back burner.

The situation in Zimbabwe is still fluid, and there is no way of knowing what would happen if the military intervenes. The ZDF's actions have the ability to bring about a political transition, reversing a years-long trend of undemocratic governance, human rights violations, and a critically sick economy. On the other hand, it has the potential to exacerbate security and economic issues. It remains to be seen how the US and other external players would influence the outcome. Regional actors, the military, Mugabe, and others were involved in discussions, although the nature and intentions of those discussions were unknown.

The military's actions, in David's (2017) views were preceded by an unambiguous warning from ZDF commander Constantino Chiwenga on November 13. He urged a halt to the purging within the party and indicated that the military would not hesitate to intervene in "matters of preserving our revolution." The Mugabe administration retaliated by calling Chiwenga's statement "treasonous," and the military intervened the next day. The CCN (2017) noted that a military spokesman said the ZDF was acting to "pacify a degenerating political, social, and economic situation...that if not addressed may result in violent confrontation" in a live TV statement at daybreak on 15 November 2017.

The military spokesman insisted that the military was not taking over the administration and predicted a "return to normalcy" once "our mission" was completed. He stated that the ZDF was "targeting criminals in the vicinity of" President Mugabe "who commit crimes that inflict social and economic pain...in order to bring them to justice." Other Zimbabwean security services were also instructed not to resist the military's operations, according to the statement. "Criminals" was

a reference to Grace Mugabe's allies, some of whom ended up in detention. While the president and his family's safety was assured in the statement, the president was apparently under house arrest. The whereabouts of his wife were unknown.

2.11.2. Mnangagwa's removal from cabinet

Joson (2017) stated that Mnangagwa's departure was a startling turnaround for a long-serving regime insider, but it followed a long-standing pattern in which Mugabe, as head of ZANU-PF and the executive branch, oversaw elites' promotion to and demotion from key party and state positions. Demotion targets have included people who appeared to question Mugabe's leadership or to publicly urge a post-Mugabe transition. Mnangagwa was appointed vice president in 2014 when his predecessor, opposition figure and ex-ZANU-PF adherent Joice Mujuru, was deposed. The Guardian's (2017) investigation revealed that Mnangagwa's departure was foreshadowed by Grace Mugabe's increasingly personal political attacks on him. She also claimed that Mnangagwa's associates plotted a coup, and refuted accusations that Mnangagwa was the target of a poisoned scheme utilising her firm's ice cream. He was accused of "disloyalty, contempt, deceitfulness, and unreliability" in an official statement announcing his removal.

On October 10 2017, the president, who had declared his desire to fire Mnangagwa just days before, revoked Mnangagwa's post as Justice Minister. He also removed several other senior ministers from power, including former Finance Minister Patrick Chinamasa, who became the head of a newly constituted cyber security ministry. Mnangagwa was also removed from ZANU-PF (New York Times, 2017). After receiving death threats, he went to South Africa on November 8. Following these occurrences, a significant number of veterans publicly denounced President Mugabe. Meanwhile, Mnangagwa vowed to take on Robert Mugabe's leadership. Mnangagwa's removal sparked considerable political debate as it looked to foreshadow Grace Mugabe's likely ascension to the ZANU-PF co-vice presidency position, and eventually to the national vice presidency at a late 2017 party congress.

Grace Mugabe could have temporarily succeeded him if he had resigned or died while in government, and subsequently consolidate power and become president thereafter. It would have also signaled a generational shift in power, from a ZANU-PF dominated by independence war veterans and a wing of the party centred on Mnangagwa and allies in the security services, some

of whom opposed any president without independence war credentials, to a generation of politicians born after 1980. Grace Mugabe was among the members of the group known as "The Generation 40." Despite the support of many in this group, David (2017) claims that gauging her relative support inside ZANU-PF more widely in the absence of her spouse was difficult.

The ZDF intervention changed Zimbabwe's political landscape. It remains to be seen whether the military would protect its interests and those of the historically hardline allied ZANU-PF wing or whether it will facilitate a governance agenda centred on "investment, development, and prosperity" as its intervention statement suggested. Despite the fact that no one was killed or seriously injured, the Zimbabwe military managed to remove Mugabe's administration.

2.12. Conceptualisation

Conflict: There is a link between violence and conflict (Fernandes, 1998). Conflict brings up images of tension, disturbance, and devastation, and the possibility of anything from an unpleasant scenario to a life-threatening crisis. Conflict should be avoided or suppressed from the onset. However, there is another side to the conflict, that is, it brings an unjust situation to the surface or into the public eye, stimulating creative solutions, and challenging obsolete concepts and patterns of thought. Conflict can drive innovation and development leading to a higher synthesis that goes beyond opposing viewpoints or perspectives. Conflict cannot be abolished in and of itself but methods for dealing with it that release its creative potential while limiting its negative manifestations must be established (Schermerhor, 2002).

Election violence: Bekoe (2012) see election violence as "distinguished by its timing, perpetrators and victims, intentions, and methods" as a sub-category of political violence. It is defined as "any random or organised act or threat to intimidate, physically harm, blackmail, or abuse a political stakeholder in order to determine, delay, or otherwise influence an electoral process" (Fischer 2002: 3). "Acts or threats of cynicism" (Laakso 2007: 227); (Sisk 2008: 5). Electoral violence can take place before, during, or after elections, and often involves the use of coercion. It can be directed against people or property and includes acts such as the assassination of candidates and their supporters, fights between rival groups, riots, threats, intimidation, and coercion of opponents, voters, and electoral officials, property destruction, forcible displacement, and unlawful detentions (Laakso, 2007).

Alston (2010) highlighted that some electoral violence such as killings in the context of riots or protests are not motivated by the desire to sway an election. While some protests are meant to influence or modify political outcomes, others are inspired by outrage, wrath, or disappointment with a result and are not always intended to do so. This is especially true in the case of protest-related killings. Private citizen killings in the midst of protests may be best explained by complicated dynamics of crowd behaviour or mob violence, for example. More importantly, many riot-related fatalities are done by security forces in the course of attempting to (legitimately or otherwise) pacify or end a riot. There are numerous different forms of security force executions (for example, intentional targeting of perceived regime adversaries, detected by their participation at a protest, or the overkill).

2.13. CAUSES OF ELECTION VIOLENCE

Before going into detail about the crises and violence that occurred in Zimbabwe from 2000 to 2013, it's important to first look at the causes of violence in Zimbabwe during elections (either before or after elections). Inattention to land rights; violence instigation by political actors and perpetration by the politically connected gangs; the use of violence by the state; institutional failures; and political allegiances based on ethnic divisions; the trajectory of democratic transition; the depth of social cleavages; and economic stress are some of the factors that contribute to electoral violence (Okpotor, 2015).

These factors contribute to electoral violence in a variety of ways and these can be divided into two categories. First, structural issues such as informal patronage systems, bad governance, exclusionary politics, and the socio-economic risks of losing political power in government where practically all power is concentrated in the centre, which are all present in new and emerging democracies. Second, elements connected to the electoral process and the political contest itself such as failed or faulty elections, election fraud, and weak or manipulated institutions and electoral regulations (Adolfo *et al.*, 2012). Zimbabwe's 2008-2013 elections are illustrative of how electoral processes were rigged to favour President Mugabe's ruling ZANU-PF over the main opposition MDC led by Tsvangirai.

However, the origins of electoral violence in Zimbabwe can be traced back to the Gurukanhundi massacres of the 1980s (a series of massacres of Ndebele civilians carried out by the Zimbabwe

National Army from early 1983 to late 1987), which occurred shortly after Zimbabwe gained independence in 1980. The ruling party deployed soldiers to brutalise and torture over 30 000 Ndebeles in Zimbabwe. The goal was to suppress ZAPU supporters, particularly its leader Joshua Nkomo so that Mugabe could turn Zimbabwe into a one-party state under ZANU-PF (Peter, 2002). It is critical to identify key figures that participate in elections and their responsibilities during those elections. The following are significant role players in the election process (IDEA Handbook, 2006). Internal and external observers, donor community and election support agencies, Electoral Management Body, Political Organisations, Government, Security Agents, Media, Voters, and Civil Society Organisations.

2.13.1. Electoral management body

Election Management Body (EMB) is the body responsible for electoral management (IDEA Handbook, 2006). An independent body (White, 2005) is one that is independent of government, whose members' tenures are governed by legislation provisions within legislation, ensure that they are appropriately qualified and do not serve at the pleasure of the executive, and can be removed only on objective grounds relating to job performance; one that is sufficiently funded by parliament to enable it to perform its functions; and one that has control over its functions.

EMBs are organisations whose primary mission is to manipulate elections. The National Electoral Commission, Independent Electoral Commission, Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC), and Institute of Electoral Management are the EMB organisations' names in other countries. The EMBs should not be biased or linked with any political organisation due to perceived biasness. EMBs work to influence elections at all levels of government to ensure that they are free, fair, and credible.

They declare election results as soon as possible, promote facts about the electoral process, register voters and gather voter rolls, register political parties, liaise with political parties, provide good electoral technology, overview electoral legislation, have interaction in electoral research, and promote a free and fair election process. In this regard, the electoral body's independence is critical to any election's credibility. Thus, electoral administration bodies should run elections without interference. The presumption is that the electoral bodies decide how to conduct elections in a fair and just manner, and should not be tampered with (Norman, 2010).

EMBs are established as separate entities to oversee electoral processes. In a democratic dispensation, they are designed as systems for resolving disputes. Their ability to perform effectively is governed by legal frameworks they use. Legal frameworks are regularly reviewed to update them. EMB personnel are well-informed and educated about the role that electoral laws play in practice and they ensure that a sufficient legal framework is in place to make election management easier. Zimbabwe's EMB is ZEC. The ability of an EMB to handle a variety of relationships with different stakeholders is critical to its electoral reforms success. It is critical to effectively manage key stakeholder relationships in order to generate confidence by allowing them to contribute input into the legislative framework that governs elections. EMBs work on electoral law reform while understanding that legal reform is the legislature's responsibility.

2.13.2. Political organisations

A political organisation is a geared-up group of people with at least substantially equivalent political goals, ideologies, and viewpoints (Pippa, 2004). It seeks political strength and uses political power to have its candidates elected to public offices. In a sustainable and well-functioning democracy, political events have a tendency to be deeply and permanently entangled in society's specific substructures (Lopez-Pintor, 2000). The election management process is heavily influenced by political parties. The political parties' responsibilities are crucial since they are the ones who play the game.

The following are political organisations that contest in Zimbabwe elections (but there are only two major political parties, that is, MDC, main opposition, and ZANU-PF, ruling party); Mthwakazi Republic Party; Matabeleland People's Congress; Labour, Economist and Afrikan Democrats- (LEAD); Zimbabwe Partnership for Prosperity (Z.I.P.P), African People's Congress, Zimbabwe First Party, Zimbabwe African People's Union, International Socialist Organisation, National Alliance for Good Governance, Patriotic Union of Matabeleland, United Parties, United People's Party, Zimbabwe African National Union – Ndonga, Zimbabwe African People's Union – Federal Party, Youth Zimbabwe Freedom Party, Rise up Zimbabwe Freedom Party, Zimbabwe Youth in Alliance, Liberal Democrats, Zimbabwe National Democratic Party, Freedom Justice Coalition Zimbabwe Party, Movement for People First, and Democratic Assembly for Restoration and Empowerment and Road to Freedom Progress and Success (DARFPS).

Candidates to vote for are available under representative democracy. Political events are crucial in uniting interests, disseminating political alternatives and candidates, and establishing contact between people and elected officials. Political parties are said to play a significant role in marketing for political independence. Political events embellish insurance policies and manifestos, which serve as the politicians' blueprints or social contracts. Politicians become committed to their programmes of action after being elected to power. Political events serve as platforms for political mobilisation, recruitment, and voter education, and providing voters with options on how to exercise political power (Molomo, 2005).

Political parties play a crucial role in elections since the latter is not possible without the former. The elections' smoothness is determined by political events. Political actions, like any other unique organisation, are guided by the usable human resource. As a result, the individuals' behaviours or the events followers are influenced by those in charge of the events' leadership system.

Political parties are regarded as institutionalised mediators between civil society and those who decide and implement decisions (Norman, 2010). Consequently, they are able to advocate their members' needs in government. The events serve a variety of responsibilities and purposes for the electorate. Political parties and citizens need some rights and responsibilities guaranteed or controlled by the constitution or law in order to divide the laid down obligations and roles.

Norman (2010) stated that these includes freedom to organise and assembly, freedom of speech, freedom to stand for election, mechanism of popularity, provision of an honest and peaceable completion, inclusion in electoral processes and contacts with EMBs, enjoying discipline and freedom from discrimination, media access and truthful reporting, and transparent and accountable political finance. In Zimbabwe, however, opposition parties are suppressed from campaigning, especially in rural areas. For example, in 2008 the News Day reported that the MDC campaign was sabotaged by ZANU-PF youth militias.

Norman (2010) added that external variables such as election systems, political culture, legal regulations, and other factors influence political parties' internal functioning. Internal political party processes such as the party leaders' personalities and personnel, ideological underpinnings, party history, and internal political culture impact internal party function. Political events are critical in driving voters to polls since they are the most important goal in political campaigns.

They help explain why it is important for people to vote for specific organisations, the voting process, the confidentiality of the ballot paper, and the frequently occurring security election. It is one of the political parties' favourite pastimes to encourage their followers to vote in large numbers. However, the effectiveness of political events to influence voter education is contingent on the availability of human and financial resources. The UN's Report (2005) indicated that voter education should be done with the assistance of non-partisan organisations. Political events are focused on executing applications that appeal to largest voter numbers. They might even be selective, focusing on constituencies most likely to be supportive.

2.13.3. Media

In general terms 'media' refers to a variety of communication functions. For example, television, radio, newspapers, and social media. The phrase can also be used to refer to a group of news or information reporting organisations. The term media is frequently used as a collective noun to refer to a variety of information storage choices. The following is a list of Media Houses that are active in Zimbabwe, *inter alia*; Zimbabwe Daily News, News Day, The Guardian, Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZCB), The Chronicle, The Herald, The Financial Gazette, and Zimbabwe Independent. Media plays an important role in ensuring that democracy is observed in Zimbabwe. Media's 'watchdog' role during elections is frequently discussed by providing unfettered scrutiny and discussion of governments' successes and failures. Media can inform the public about how officiously their representatives have carried out their duties and assist in holding them to account. Media is key to facilitating broad public engagement in elections, not only through reporting on government performance but also in a variety of other ways.

Media's role in enlightenment can also be viewed from two perspectives; one is the function that is specified by legislation, and the other is the function based on genuine practical experience (Norman, 2010).

Drawing from these two roles, one can state that media is a critical component for transferring knowledge from one source to the other for purposes of illuminating and informing the community. Norman (2010) argued that media plays a significant role in African democracy because nearly all Africans and people all over the world get information from media rather than from special people or other sources.

Media influence how individuals perceive the world and what they regard to be important. Both voters and politicians must pay attention to media. In our political system, media are responsible for a number of critical parts of the democratic process. The news is scrutinised by media. Media are a link between government and people, and assist in determining which issues should be tackled first, and keep people engaged in society and politics.

Generally, media are supposed to fulfill the following duties;

- (a) To distribute information to the public so that it has full access to current intelligence, assuming that the public has a desire to know. The recording of news is perhaps the most important media's duty in politics and electoral administration in general. The vast majority of people have a tendency to place their trust in media to provide them with knowledge. Democracy necessitates residents' knowledge in order for them to make informed voting decisions (Norman, 2010).
- (b) To establish and clarify societal aims and ideals that everyone should strive for in order to improve the common good. On occasion, media acts as public representatives by holding government leaders accountable on behalf of the people. Critics say media is ill-equipped to perform this duty since it no longer face the same level of accountability as politicians. Furthermore, serving as a public consultant should jeopardise media's objectivity, as the act of representing people may lead journalists to take a stand on an issue (IESA, 2008).
- (c) To establish contact between regional leaders and people. It is a method through which people can gain access to government. By providing a line of verbal communication between governments and people, media serve as the common-provider (IESA, 2008).
- (d) To collectively assist people through the commercialisation of important cultural values, conduct and, behavioural patterns, cultural heritage transmission, and mobilising people for regularly occurring events.

- (e) To serve as a forum for the exchange of ideas and criticisms. Furthermore, media serves as a public forum for arguments between political leaders. Opposing candidates argue with every exclusive on television channels during campaigns. Many people learn a great deal about the candidate and his/her issues by watching advertisements and debates. In years between elections, however, media permits elected officials to justify their actions through news stories and interviews.
- (f) To educate people about African society, culture, and politics.
- (g) To perform developmental engineering, academic and empowerment functions, as well as advertising, ideology, and propaganda. Media is also thought to promote development by instilling knowledge to enable locals to engage in productive activities (EISA, 2008).

2.13.4. Civil society

Civil society is made up of two components, namely; civic society establishments and civil organisations. The former refers to societal institutions dedicated to promoting democracy, the rule of law, transparency, and accountability. Civic efforts, as well as government responsiveness and accountability, are aided by civil society applications. These roles let people all around the world explain and propose improvements, encourage citizen engagement and specific governance, communicate more effectively with national and local governments, and contribute to the long-term viability of democratic corporation practices. As a result, EMBs should communicate with local civil society organisations that serve as watchdogs and discussion partners with national governments. Not only can civil society help monitor elections but it can also help monitor and report on election spending and the voting and counting processes. This is more so in fledgling democracies where civil society organisations are key in accountability.

Civil society organisations can also play an important role in domestic oversight and lobbying, and in encouraging marginalised and minority groups to participate in politics. As a result, EMBs should be instructed to engage in communication with civil society organisations and assist in boosting voter knowledge in terms of legitimacy and transparency. EMBs should also think about

putting in place a framework that governs people's participation in electoral processes such as domestic election surveillance and voter education. The degree to which citizens can engage in a country's political process, as well as civil and political liberties is frequently used to assess a country's democratic condition. The ability to cast an informed vote on an understandable ballot paper that provides a reasonable option between a number of political candidates and political parties is unquestionably beneficial to democracy.

Due to their proximity to citizens, civil society is regarded the most successful component during election operations since they conduct door-to-door campaigns, facilitate public meetings, distribute pamphlets, and attend community events. In addition, EMBs gain advantages through civil society organisations. These include a better understanding of the culture, language, and local conditions; can maintain perseverance in communities before, during, and after an election; provide coverage of polling sites and thus comprehensive reporting of an election; after the election, they can verify the integrity and influence public opinion in their judgment about the election's freeness and fairness; and they contribute thoughts on electoral matters that may not be necessary (IDEA Handbook, 2006).

2.13.5. Government

Government refers to the group that exercises energy in a group. In democratic elections, the government is important in ensuring that election processes happen (Norman, 2003). The government is one of the three state establishments. The courts and the legislature are two more.

2.13.6. Legislature

EMBs require access to the legislature in order to provide advice on electoral changes to ensure that their views are taken into account when formulating electoral criterion frameworks and allocating electoral resources, and to get feedback on their overall performance. The legislature is the body in charge of approving the government's budget and scrutinising all public accounts, including those of EMBs. In many countries, the EMB is obligated to publish election and manual reports to the legislature, either by law or by convention. Maintaining accurate family members with the legislature allows an EMB to submit its finding criteria and reviews knowing that these issues would be addressed.

2.13.7. Judicial bodies

The judiciary elements might interact with the EMB's actions. In order to investigate any electoral offenses, EMBs would need to collaborate with security and prosecuting agencies (ISEA, 2005). Election managers understand the importance of providing excellent service to voters. They also understand the preparation of elections from voter registration to polling day, protection of the polling site, distance of polling stations from a voter's residence, mid-set of election administrations and politicians, and the climax to determine the voter's point of view on elections.

Evrensel (2010) claimed that all eligible voters, regardless of gender, colour, socioeconomic level, or political affiliation should participate in elections. However, because it is the responsibility of voters to register, EMBs and authorities are responsible for encouraging voter engagement and spearheading voter education. Davids (2016) illustrated that regardless of how vigilant an EMB is in preserving the correctness of a permanent voters' list, the overall accuracy of the information deteriorates with time. This necessitates the ongoing monitoring of population and land use statistics.

2.13.8. Security Agencies

Security forces offer election security to safeguard voters' safety, voting materials, and polling personnel. It also prevents any possible disorder. Voters' trust in elections, on the other hand, stems from a mix of mechanisms and procedures that allow individuals to vote anonymously and without fear of retaliation. Security agents should address the following; the physical security of premises and electoral material (primary and secondary); voters, candidates, party workers/officials, election officials, and the general public's personal security; election information computer systems and software must be secure (Tip, 2000).

Arrangements for security must be considered at all stages of the election, including during the election and afterwards. Depending on the situation, security arrangements might fluctuate. The involvement of security forces (army, police, and intelligence) in safeguarding the security of the electoral process involves vote confidentiality, polling station and ballot box protection, and the safe transfer of ballot boxes. In an election, all accredited security personnel are critical and must have faith and confidence of all electoral players. For democracy to be maintained, the forces

support the electoral authority in ensuring that electoral processes work smoothly without the possibility of violence or conflict.

2.13.9. Electoral dispute resolutions bodies

Maphephe (2012) revealed that the EMB might be required to handle an electoral dispute resolution and might have the authority to address issues such as challenges to the EMB decisions, disputes between the EMB and other electoral stakeholders, the legality of the content material of EMB regulations, or challenges to election results or acceptance of election penalties by electoral stakeholders. Judicial, quasi-judicial, or informal conciliation bodies may also be included. Their options can impact what the EMB does and how the public perceives it. EMBs' expertise and cooperation are necessary in any examination of election disputes conducted by these authorities. It will be difficult to keep a precise relationship if the EMB blocks a dispute resolution body's admission to relevant electoral substances or sites, campaigns to limit the powers of such bodies, or presents evidence in disputes that is not expert (Lopez- Pintor, 2000).

2.13.10. Internal and external observers

Pemmo (2003) noted that election observers refer to individuals and institutions who do not participate in an election but gather information or do fact-finding in order to make an informed judgment regarding the electoral process's credibility, validity, and acceptability. Maintaining electoral openness and accountability is a fundamental pillar of the country's democratic principles and processes, and internal observers can play an important role in this process. These businesses, which frequently represent a broad coalition of civil society organisations, can fight to promote and safeguard democracy in their individual foreign locations both before and after the election.

Election observation is critical to the improvement of the democratic electoral process. It is a high-quality instrument for identifying flaws in the voting process, preventing fraud, and increasing voter confidence in the electoral process. In developing democracies, the presence of domestic and international election observers lends credibility and legitimacy to the election process being observed. In developing democracies, the presence of internal and external observers lends credibility and legitimacy to the process being observed, as well as deterring overt acts of election fraud, particularly during polling.

Election observation is one of the strategies that ensure election transparency. Election observers are a group dedicated to promoting democracy, political rights, good governance, and a sense of trust in the electoral process as a whole. They are neutral observers who analyse the election process and its results. Their primary responsibility is to deliver a fair and objective review of an election.

Election observers assist in deterring or exposing violence, intimidation, cheating, and/or election results manipulation. The importance of election observation is reflected in the electoral legislation. The UN, EU, AU, SADC, Commonwealth Observer Group, and Zimbabwe Election Support Network are among the internal and external election monitors in Zimbabwe.

Electoral observers are defined as individuals representing foreign countries or international organisations, and foreign prominent figures. These must have applied to the national election commission for accreditation as observers and been authorised by the commission, individuals representing local organisations and famous persons from the host country who have previously applied to the local commission for accreditation as observers. They should have been authorised by the commission, individuals who represent bodies that have functions similar to those of the commission and who have been invited to watch any election by the commission. The Minister responsible for foreign affairs and international cooperation invites individuals representing foreign countries or international organisations, and foreign famous personalities to observe any election, and individuals representing local organisations and prominent individuals (Human Rights Bulletin, 2011).

2.14. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MDC IN 1999

Bond *et al.* (2002) asserted that the MDC was founded in 1999 under Morgan Tsvangirai's leadership and began contesting elections for the first time in 2000. The MDC's formation and its subsequent participation in Zimbabwe's elections put ZANU (PF) under pressure. That is, prior to its formation, the threat statistics, intimidation, and deaths of innocent people were not as high as they were between 2000 and 2018. Raftopoulos *et al.* (2002) alluded to the fact that the US, the UN, and other international organisations had no choice but to impose sanctions on Zimbabwe due to its violations of democratic standards during elections. The imposition of sanctions on Zimbabwe demonstrates that the country does not adhere to democratic ideals, and that human

rights are abused, particularly during elections. Yet, Mugabe argued that Zimbabwe was a democratic state.

Since Zimbabwe's 1980 independence, 1999 is the year that provided major challenges to the ruling ZANU-PF. Galbin (2014) indicated that the MDC's founding in 1999 changed Zimbabwe's political scene. The MDC launched a strong challenge to the ruling ZANU-PF, and participated in, and made the June 2000 parliamentary elections the most tightly contested since the country's independence from Britain in 1980. Although Zimbabwe has never been a one-party state, ZANU-PF dominated the country's political space and governance until after the June 2000 elections. The Daily News (2002) observed that ZANU-PF suffered its first defeat in the country's history in a constitutional referendum in February 2000, in which the government received 45 percent of the vote to the opposition's 55 percent.

2.14.1. Violence to targeted groups

In order to rig Zimbabwe's parliamentary elections in 2000, the government formed militias to deal with opposition supporters. Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum (2001) pointed out that the government's violence includes killings, torture, physical assault, threats of violence, and property destruction. It was carried out by war veterans (militias directed by a tiny group of persons who fought in the liberation war but mostly made up of unemployed ZANU (PF) followers who were too young to fight in the war) and the state security agencies, and ZANU (PF) sympathisers. MDC leaders, officials, and supporters were the main targets. A number of MDC officials were assassinated. Many people were hurt or their properties destroyed for supporting MDC. Large gangs of armed militias prowled the countryside, disrupting people's lives, kidnapping and torturing MDC supporters, and targeting teachers, physicians, nurses, and other professionals accused of influencing people to support MDC. As retaliation for the large pro-MDC urban vote in the June 2000 elections, the army and police attacked urban areas.

Businesses and foreign aid organisations were also targeted (Jorgensen & Philips, 2002). Under the guise of settling labour problems, "war veterans" barged into their offices and used violence and threats to extract significant sums of money. Before intervening to stop the invasions, the government permitted them to continue for several months. War veterans also threatened to storm foreign embassies if they were found to be backing the MDC. Initially, the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs declined to safeguard the embassies but later reversed its decision. Some MDC supporters violently retaliated against ZANU (PF) supporters but few of these incidents occurred without provocation. The majority of MDC supporters' violence were largely defensive or in retribution for violence directed at them.

2.14.2. Violence associated with electoral challenges, by-elections and mayoral elections

The MDC challenged the 2000 election results on grounds that they were not free and fair because opposition supporters, particularly MDC ones, were subjected to violence. MDC officials claimed that they were denied the opportunity to campaign freely due to violence against their members, officials and supporters (Gray, 2009). Since June 2000, war veterans used violence to frighten voters in by- and mayoral elections (Nossek, 2007). In response to election issues, the late Mugabe issued restrictions prohibiting judges from rejecting election results in contested constituencies. These restrictions were declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court because they infringed on fundamental constitutional rights. In the constituency challenges, war veterans and security agency officials attacked witnesses in an attempt to frighten or punish them for testifying. Judges were allegedly intimidated by war veterans who tried to persuade them not to rule in MDC's favour.

2.14.3. Campaign against independent institutions

ZANU-PF supporters were accused of attacking and threatening journalists and bombing the Daily News' printing press in an attempt to control and stifle media. NGO operations were also limited in several rural areas. War veterans and several government ministers were accused of orchestrating a campaign against the Supreme Court and High Court judges who they accused of being hostile to ZANU-PF and this forced the early retirement of the then Chief Justice.

2.14.4. Role of government, war veterans, and security agencies

Mugabe was accused of supporting and condoning political violence perpetrated by veterans of Zimbabwe's 1970s civil war. Several prominent ZANU-PF leaders were accused of organising and participating in violence. War veterans, commanded by Dr. Chenjerai Hunzvi (until his death in June 2001) and Joseph Chinotimba, gained significant authority because they were seen as Mugabe and his ZANU-PF's loyal supporters. War veterans swore to prevent MDC from winning

Zimbabwe's elections. Biti (2008) claimed that war veterans were responsible for occupying farms, raiding businesses, threatening embassies, and terrorising ZANU-PF opponents.

Biti (2008) added that they were recruited to be part of a task force designed to deal with opposition sympathisers. Those who had previously served in the task force were promoted and assigned to rural police stations. Some task force personnel were also involved in attacks in metropolitan areas (Biti, 2008). Top-ranking officers in Zimbabwe's National Army declared their support for ZANU-PF. Soldiers and the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO) were accused of attacking ZANU-PF opponents and MDC officials, and invading farmland.

2.14.5. The impact of media in Zimbabwe elections

Zimbabwe's public media do not broadcast or publish everything that occurs in the country during elections. The government is accused of dictating which news should be televised or published to that extent. Independent or private editors and journalists have been charged with criminal defamation and international journalists have been declared *persona non grata* in Zimbabwe (Nossek, 2007). In some urban locations, war veterans placed restrictions on the distribution of independent newspapers. As a result, media were not permitted to print anything that would harm ZANU-PF campaigns.

2.15. Zimbabwe 2002 elections

Due to opposition complaints and disputes, the 2000 elections in Zimbabwe were deemed not free and fair by the international observer missions. As a result, different organisations such as the UN and AU sought to pay close attention to the 2002 elections in order to see for themselves how the elections were conducted. The presidential elections in Zimbabwe were held on the 9th and 11th of March 2002 (Raftopoulos, 2002). Akpabio (2011) observed that Mugabe's administration put in place a range of political and legislative initiatives and countrywide violent machinery in preparation for his presidential campaigns. The use of violence as a campaign technique persisted, with suspected opposition supporters slain and subjected to intimidation and torture, and sexual torture became prominent (Akpabio, 2002).

In addition, the ZANU-PF dictatorial tendencies led to a series of alterations to the electoral procedure, which made MDC's campaign candidate (Tsvangirai) find it harder to campaign. In January 2002, the government introduced the General Laws (Electoral Amendment) Act. This Act, passed by defying standing parliamentary orders, sought to achieve the following goals; to allow only government employees to serve as election monitors, effectively excluding civic groups from the process and limiting their role to that of election observers, along with a few foreign invitees; to prohibit NGOs from providing civic education, and to place such activities entirely under the control of government-appointed civic education officers.

Given the likelihood of irregularities in voting processes, the authorities also ensured that only election observers sympathetic to the regime were permitted into the country (Afrikainstitutet, 2002). As a result, the EU's attempts to send a separate observer team were thwarted, and the Head of the EU election observer mission, Pierre Schori, who had arrived in Zimbabwe without the government's permission, was deported within a week of his arrival. As a result, under the rules of the Cotonou Agreement, the EU imposed 'targeted sanctions' against chosen members of the ZANU-PF leadership. The United States followed suit, having approved the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act in December 2001. But the elections went ahead despite the EU and the US government's refusal to recognise them. In Mugabe's opinion, the situation only confirmed his anti-imperialist stance.

2.15.1. Denial for right to choose

Efforts to exclude the urban electorate were at their peak in the run-up to the 2002 presidential election. The administration purposefully erected legal, physical, and administrative barriers in order to frustrate the urban electorate. A modification in citizenship legislation excluded huge segments of voters (Khampe, 2004). The amendment aimed at residents who were not of Zimbabwean ancestry and/or who held dual citizenship. The law obliged such individuals to abandon their foreign citizenship within a certain time frame. This was clearly directed at a group of black immigrants and white voters whom the president had referred to as "totem less."

The first citizenship standards appeared to be a simple and sensible necessity. According to the Registrar-General's interpretation, everyone with a foreign citizenship had to abandon it. Due to the announcement date, completing the process before the conclusion of the voter registration

season would be administratively impossible. Foreign embassies stated unequivocally that they would be unable to complete the documentation within the allotted time. As a result, tens of thousands of city dwellers were left out of the voter register.

Then there were residential requirements, which required anyone wishing to register to vote to possess property or provide proof of residency. Commentators interpreted this as a move against the so-called "born frees" (young people born after 1980) the majority of whom were members of opposition parties and did not own land. These needed to have supporting evidence that they were definitely city dwellers.

The reduction of polling booths was one of the physical constraints. There was a 40% reduction in the number of polling locations in Harare alone (Daily News 29 March 2002). The Harare elections became administratively complex to bolster what appeared to be a huge electoral inconvenience. The president had ordered that elections be a three-part process, with inhabitants voting for mayor, councillor, and president. The voting period officially ended due to the complexity of the voting process but there were still large queues of voters at all polling places in Harare. This was unsurprising given that one voter took up to ten minutes to complete the voting process.

The High Court ruled that the voting days in Harare be extended by one day in response to an urgent plea by the opposition. The authorities disobeyed the injunction the next day, opening polling sites late and closing them early. Khamphe (2004) claimed that as a result of the legal, physical, and administrative hurdles, more than a quarter of a million registered voters in Harare were systematically excluded. Though the combined numerical effect of the legal, physical, and administrative measures to restrict the vote to the urban voter was difficult to estimate, it can be claimed that the cumulative effect was strong enough to constitute an assault on electoral democracy.

2.15.2. The verdict: free and fair?

Khamphe (2004) said that the EU and the US government stated that Zimbabwe's pre-election conditions ruled out the likelihood of a free and fair election, supporting what had been claimed in the last election. This was expressed after other influential voices such as civic organisations concurred with this assessment following the election. In addition to the MDC, which stated that

the elections "did not reflect the actual desire of the people," all the country's major civic coalitions stated that the elections were not free and fair.

ZESN stated that elections were "in no manner fundamentally free and fair," and that they broke the SADC Parliamentary Norms and Standards in the following ways; voter registration was discriminatory and opaque, voter education was disrupted, and the ESC did not have enough time to conduct voter education after the legislation pertaining to its role was drafted; the ESC did not have enough time to train its 22,000 monitors, all of whom were civil servants, particularly the army and police; and it was inappropriate to include civil servants in the electoral process. This responsibility should have been left to civil groups, and there were worrisome incidents of violence even on Election Day, with MDC and ZESN polling agents in particular being harassed and stopped from performing their duties. What occurred during the 2002 elections demonstrated that elections are never free and fair because opposition parties have problems. ZESN also stated that elections were not free and fair due to various incidents that occurred during voting days.

2.15.3. The aftermath

Although major civic groups discussed holding a mass protest in the case of rigged election in the months leading up to voting, there was no specific planning for such an event. Despite the fact that a conference of all stakeholders called by the ZCTU on February 16 2002 determined to embark on "indefinite mass action" in the case of a stolen election, preparations for such an action remained modest. Raftopolous (2002) observed that a meeting of civic leaders and a senior member of the MDC to discuss the practicalities of such an action was conducted on March 15 2002 to discuss electoral irregularities. The discussions began with reciprocal complaints about the government's persistent inaction about widespread protests. Individuals and groups vied for the title of "more revolutionary than you" but few concrete ideas for a mass response against a state that had beefed up its coercive arsenal during the previous two years were proposed.

Raftopolous (2002) added that the conference's talk of mass action remained at the level of a political catchphrase rather than a long-planned action. On the basis of Mugabe's illegitimacy and the need for a new constitution before a rerun of the presidential election, the conference agreed that the labour movement bears a significant amount of responsibility to lead such an action. As a

result, the ruling party made sure that opposition supporters were oppressed by inciting violence against them (Raftopolous, 2002).

The March 2002 presidential election was preceded by months of intense violence and intimidation against MDC supporters, with more than 50 people, mostly opposition supporters killed (Raftopolous, 2002). Mugabe was declared the winner by a 56 percent majority to Tsvangirai's 42 percent (Raftopolous, 2002). While the majority of international observers criticised the election as fundamentally flawed, the pre-election climate was neither free nor fair, and the poll itself was marked by massive fraud and rigging, regional views were split (Raftopolous, 2002). The MDC filed a petition challenging Mugabe's victory shortly after the election, alleging deficiencies in electoral rules, electoral irregularities, and pre-election violence as reasons. The case is yet to be decided even in 2021.

2.15.4. AU and EU's reactions towards Zimbabwe's 2002 elections

Following the 2002 elections, the US, EU, and other European countries put travel restrictions and an arms embargo on prominent Zimbabwean politicians. Several ruling party figures' financial assets overseas were frozen by the US and the EU (Marakine, 2011). After an election observer team determined the election to be neither free nor fair, the Commonwealth suspended Zimbabwe from its council meetings for a year. The three-country committee charged Zimbabwe and voted to keep the suspension in place until the next Commonwealth conference in December 2003.

Despite South Africa's strenuous agitation, Zimbabwe was not invited to the meeting and the Commonwealth chose to keep the suspension in place. Mugabe removed Zimbabwe from the Commonwealth immediately after that. The 2002 presidential election and the political climate remained tense and intensely separated. Violence worsened in the run up to rural council elections in September 2002. Parliamentary by-elections in Kuwadzana, Highfield, Zengeza, and Lupane in 2003 were marred by widespread intimidation and beatings. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2012) noted that in March 2003, MDC leaders Tsvangirai, Welshman Ncube, and Renson Gasela went on trial for treason. Charges against Ncube and Gasela were subsequently dropped and in October 2004 Tsvangirai was found not guilty. In August 2005, the government dropped a second charge of treason against Tsvangirai.

2.16. ESTABLISHMENT OF ZIMBABWE ELECTORAL COMMISSION

Zimbabwe's government implemented a democratic, non-racist election system based on universal adult voting after the country gained independence in 1980. Before ZEC's foundation, a new electoral administration system was developed, consisting of the Delimitation Commission responsible for the delimitation of electoral districts, and the Electoral Supervisory Commission (ESC), which ran elections from after 1980 to 2004. Makoni (2017) acknowledged that the Registrar-General was in charge of election management at this point, which was overseen by the ESC. The Registrar-General registered voters, prepared voter rolls, oversaw the voting process including vote counting and collation, and announced election results. The Registrar-General received logistical assistance from the Election Directorate to manage electoral process.

2.16.1. The re-structuring of the electoral body

Given that they knew they would capture the electoral body that would handle elections, ZANU-PF authorised the rearrangement of electoral bodies in order to dictate and control the election process. In 2004, the government restructured the voting management system and established the ZEC, a new electoral organisation. The Electoral Supervisory Commission, political parties, and civil society organisations proposed this restructuring. The electoral body was to consider the SADC Heads of State and Governments' 2004 agreed Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections.

Vollan (2013) postulated that ZEC was established as an independent body in accordance with the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections. The principles are to the effect that elections should be run by an independent management body rather than a government department such as the Registrar-General's office as the latter was accused of rigging elections. The Electoral Supervisory Commission was abolished in 2005 by Constitutional Amendment No. 17. The Registrar-General ceased to be in charge of elections after ZEC's establishment. Vollan (2013) claimed that the title of Registrar-General of Elections was changed to Registrar-General of Voters to reflect the new system. The Registrar-General of Voters' role was reduced to registering voters under ZEC's supervision. ZEC became in charge of compiling voter rolls and distributing copies to individuals who requested for them.

2.16.2. Zimbabwe electoral commission members

ZEC was established under Zimbabwe's Constitution, Chapter 12, and Section 238. There are nine Commissioners, each of whom is elected for a six-year term. A full-time Chairperson and Deputy-Chairperson are appointed to the board. Women must make up four of the eight Commissioners, excluding the Chairperson. After consulting with the Judicial Service Commission and the Parliamentary Committee on Standing Rules and Orders, the President appoints the Chairperson. The President appoints the remaining eight members from a list of not less than twelve names submitted by the Parliamentary Committee on Standing Rules and Orders. The Chairperson must be a judge or former judge of the Supreme Court or the High Court, or a person competent for appointment as such.

The Parliamentary Committee on Standing Rules and Orders first called for applications for the eight Commissioners who would be appointed under the new system. Following that, candidates were narrowed down. A panel of Parliamentarians publicly interviewed shortlisted candidates. Commissioners were appointed for their honesty, experience, and ability in the administration of activities in the public or private sector (Zimbabwe's Constitution, 2004). ZEC members that are active included the following: Chairperson Justice Priscilla Chigumba (Mrs), Deputy Chairperson Mr. Emmanuel Magade, Mrs Joyce L. Kazembe (Commissioner), Mr Daniel J. Chigaru (Commissioner), Dr. Qhubani Moyo (Commissioner), Ms Sibongile Ndlovu (Commissioner), Dr. Ngoni Kundidzora (Commissioner), Mrs Faith Sebata (Commissioner), and Ms Netsai Mushonga (Commissioner).

2.16.3. New institutional and legal framework: Zimbabwe electoral commission

The constitution helped established the ZEC as the country's electoral administration authority and directed the re-alignment of laws, particularly electoral statutes, to the constitution. ZEC reforms were critical because its proximity to government bred mistrust and a smoldering election controversy. It is worth noting that the electoral management body has been entrusted to people with security background, including serving military personnel. Colonel Sobuza Gula Ndebele chaired the Electoral Supervisory Commission (ESC) in 2002, while General Douglas Nyikayaramba was its Chief Executive Officer.

Political activities persist at ZEC and their persistence cast doubt on its election management neutrality among opposing political parties and civic society. In addition to the new commission, the statutes helped create Electoral Courts to quickly resolve electoral issues. The legal past elections' processes have been long and difficult, making it hard to get matters settled quickly, with some issues dating back to 2002 elections still unresolved. There has been some criticism of the new framework. Opposition political groups held demonstrations in support of the National Electoral Overhaul Agenda (NERA), which aimed to reform the country's electoral system.

2.16.4. New Architecture: the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission

There has been a significant shift away from the previous system, which was centred on the Registrar General, Elections, and Delimitation Commissions. The voter registration processes (i) voter education, (ii) voter roll compilation, and (iii) actual election management were all transferred to a single institution ZEC.

2.17. 2005 ELECTIONS

On the 31st of March 2005, Zimbabwe held legislative elections to elect members of the House of Assembly, with ZANU (PF) emerging victorious (Mail & Guardian, 2005). It is asserted that the elections were not free and fair since the main opposition party alleged that ZANU (PF) militias chased away its polling station agents and opposition supporters (Mail & Guardian). As a consequence, allegations of widespread intimidation, tampering with the electoral roll, and vast numbers of people unable to vote set the ground for a vehement argument about the results. It is important to remember that ZANU-PF employs a variety of tactics to rig elections in order to remain in power. A number of MDC observers were denied admission to polling sites. Ruling party supporters were alleged to have blocked roads to polling stations.

2.18. 2008 ELECTIONS

In comparison to other years between 2000 and 2018, the 2008 elections were the most contentious because they were marred by the most violent violence ever. Mugabe had the backing of several African heads of state and was popular within ZANU-PF despite Zimbabwe's political and

economic difficulties. Ploch (2008) acknowledged that the party endorsed Mugabe as their presidential candidate for the 2008 elections in December 2007. But, as the country's downward spiral continued in the months leading to the elections, support for Mugabe appeared to wane. Former finance minister and ZANU-PF stalwart Simba Makoni announced his intentions to run against Mugabe for president, while the MDC, with Tsvangirai as its presidential candidate once again, saw its popularity rise across the country, even in areas where ZANU-PF was traditionally strong. Morris and Bellamy (2008) illustrated that as the elections approached, both opposition candidates and their supporters were harassed and attacked by the police and ZANU-PF partisans. Chris (2008) acknowledged that the presidential, parliamentary, and local elections were held on March 29 2008, and preliminary results indicated the MDC's Tsvangirai would win. However, as days passed with only a slow, partial release of parliamentary results (and no presidential results), many feared that Mugabe and ZANU-PF would rig the elections in their favour.

2.18.1 ZANU-PF accused of rigging elections

The MDC released its account of the presidential election results on April 2, indicating that Tsvangirai had captured slightly more than half of the votes. The MDC's claims were dismissed by ZANU-PF, and the country continued to wait for official results, which indicated that Tsvangirai's MDC faction had won the most seats in the House of Assembly. After many days, the Senate results were disclosed, revealing a split between the MDC and ZANU-PF, with the latter winning a slightly greater proportion of the vote. Chris (2008) pointed out that the official presidential election results were not disclosed until May 2, when it was reported that Tsvangirai had received more votes (47.9%) than Mugabe (43.2%), but that because Tsvangirai did not receive the majority of the votes, a runoff election was to be held.

The official results were released on May 2 2008, and the ruling party was considered to have lost its majority in the National Assembly. David (2008) asserted that the opposition leader gained more votes than Mugabe but fell short of the 50% threshold required to avoid a rerun. Tsvangirai withdrew from the campaign just days before the runoff on June 27 2008 claiming widespread political violence and the lack of circumstances for a free and fair election. Mugabe was declared the winner in the runoff, despite the fact that numerous observer missions believed the election did not reflect the people's choice.

2.18.2. Terror against opposition supporters

Following two rounds of presidential elections in March and June 2008, Zimbabwe descended into a state of deadly political turmoil. In the run-up to the election, it was claimed that the late Mugabe conducted a terror campaign against the opposition MDC and its supporters. Moyo (2008) noted that state-sponsored rape, torture, and forced disappearances culminated in significant human rights violations. Despite winning the June election, Mugabe proceeded to carry out harsh attacks on his political opponents (Mail & Guardian, 2009). The UN and the AU failed to take effective measures to address the problem. Human Rights Watch and the International Crisis Group, for example, were quick to denounce the government's persecution and violations of human rights. MDC supporters were harassed and victimised through violent attacks in the weeks leading up to the runoff election, which the MDC alleged were sponsored by the ZANU-PF led government. The government, in turn, claimed that the MDC was to blame for the violence (Dzirutwe, 2008).

Dzirutwe (2008) added that several government actions, including the detention of Mutambara, Tsvangirai, and other MDC officials and supporters, and several diplomats from the United Kingdom and the United States who were investigating reports of pre-election violence, the suspension of all humanitarian aid operations in the country, and statements from Mugabe implying that he would not cede power, contributed to an increasingly tense climate. Jonathan and Daniel (2008) opined that the 2008 Zimbabwean presidential election saw the second round of voting between Mugabe and Tsvangirai after the first round failed to yield a 50 percent majority for either candidate. Violence against and intimidation of voters and party officials disrupted the election process, effectively resulting in a one-candidate election.

As political violence, intimidation, and vitriol intensified, Tsvangirai announced his withdrawal from the race on June 22, claiming the impossibility of a free and fair election in the country's current political atmosphere. Despite claims from independent observers that the election was neither free nor fair, the poll was held, and Mugabe was declared the winner. In other words, Tsvangirai's withdrawal from the polls was not voluntary. He wanted to do right and protect his followers from ZANU-PF's sponsored brutality and torture.

2.18.3. 2008 elections observers

Guma (2008) reiterated that ZESN, a domestic observer group made up of 38 non-governmental organisations, noted that the ruling party redesigned constituencies to assure its continued control. ZESN claimed in its pre-election assessment that there were insufficient polling stations earmarked for metropolitan regions, where the opposition was thought to have the most support. The investigation by ZESN also claimed that like in previous elections, the ruling party abused state resources for political gain. Despite amendments to two laws, the Public Order and Security Act (POSA) and the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA), advocacy groups claim that the police selectively interpreted laws, severely limiting the MDC's ability to campaign.

2.18.4. Power sharing between ZANU-PF and MDC

The election results drew widespread international condemnation, particularly from some African governments that had previously backed Mugabe. There were calls for the MDC and ZANU-PF to form a power-sharing government. To that end, the SADC-led talks between ZANU-PF and the two MDC factions were held. Although the parties were able to agree on the talks' parameters and scope through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), an agreement on the new power-sharing government did not move as quickly as expected. Meanwhile, Mugabe stated that parliament would meet on August 26 2008. The MDC and others objected, claiming that making this declaration before reaching a power-sharing agreement was in violation of the MOU conditions.

Despite this, parliament was called to order by Mugabe. The speaker of the House of Assembly, however, was elected from Tsvangirai's MDC faction, the first time an opposition party member held that portfolio since the country's independence in 1980. The goal was to fool people into thinking they would work together. The Mail & Guardian (2012) claimed that the SADC-led negotiations for a power-sharing government continued, and on September 15 2008, Mugabe, Mutambara, and Tsvangirai signed the Global Political Deal, a comprehensive power-sharing agreement (GPA). Mugabe would remain president but would hand over some power to Tsvangirai, who became the prime minister, and Mutambara who served as the deputy prime minister. Initial joy was rapidly replaced by disappointment months later after it became evident that Mugabe and Tsvangirai could not agree on how to put the agreement into action. The two disagreed over how to divide the new government's key ministries between ZANU-PF and MDC.

The Mail & Guardian (2012) further noted that stalled talks and repeated attempts by the SADC to restart them remained despite the country's worsening economic and humanitarian difficulties. Official estimates put inflation at that time to over 200 million percent (unofficial estimates were much higher) and acute food shortages persisted. The country's municipal and health services rapidly deteriorated due to lack of finances and resources resulting in catastrophic cholera pandemics.

Hundreds of MDC supporters, human rights activists, and journalists vanished (Rapheal, 2016). MDC claimed that they were kidnapped by ZANU-PF and government-allied forces. International support for the power-sharing government began to dwindle, with some critics asking for Mugabe to resign. He fiercely resisted, and later indicated his intention to create a government on his own if Tsvangirai and the MDC refused to cooperate. Despite his reservations, Tsvangirai opted to join Mugabe in a new administration in late January 2009, owing to pressure from SADC.

The Mail & Guardian (2012) revealed that Zimbabwe's legislature ratified the necessary constitutional modification on February 5 2009, altering the executive branch's structure and allowing for the creation of prime minister and deputy prime minister positions. Tsvangirai was sworn in as prime minister on February 11 2009, and Thokozani Khupe, a member of Tsvangirai's MDC party, and Mutambara were sworn in as deputy prime ministers. Despite the signing of the GPA, which established a unity government, the situation remained at knife edge because political reforms were not implemented and ZANU-PF continued to engage in political violence.

2.19. ZIMBABWE 2013 ELECTIONS

On the 31st of July 2013, Zimbabwe held both presidential and parliamentary elections, in which numerous political organisations such as the MDC, ZAPU, and others competed. This was the first election under the new constitution, which was adopted by a referendum in March 2013 and signed into law on May 22 by Mugabe. Raftopoulos (2013) reasoned that on May 31, the Supreme Court ordered that Mugabe set a date as soon as practicable, and that presidential and legislative elections be held by July 31. The judgement came after Jealousy Mawarire had petitioned the court, requesting that the country's president announce a date for elections before the seventh parliament's term ended on June 29 2013. The winner of the presidential election would have a five-year term under the new constitution.

2.19.1. ZANU-PF insisted for an early elections date

The election date for the 2013 elections became a contentious topic in Zimbabwe since ZANU-PF insisted on an early election date, although the MDC and other opposition parties sought a few months to prepare, contrary to Zimbabwe's constitution. The new Constitution states in Article 158: Timing of elections,

1. A general election must be held so that polling takes place not more than:
 - (a) Thirty days before the expiry of the five-year period specified in Section 143.
 - (b) Where Parliament has passed resolutions to dissolve in terms of Section 143 (2), ninety days after the passing of the last such resolution, or
 - (c) Where Parliament is dissolved in terms of Section 109(4) or (5) following a vote of no confidence, ninety days after the dissolution.

2.19.2. The electoral act

Vollan (2014) reiterated that the Electoral Act was last amended on June 12 2013, by Statutory Instrument N. 85, which was issued by Presidential rules rather than by revisions approved by Parliament. Section 2 of the Presidential Powers (Temporary Measures) Act [Chapter 10:20] empowers the President to issue whatever regulations he deems necessary if the situation affects Zimbabwe's general public interest, cannot be adequately addressed under any other law, and cannot wait for passage through Parliament due to its urgency. Due to the house that was still in session and might have passed the amendments, the exercise of such powers drew criticism from attorneys and the opposition parties.

In terms of the Act, revisions were primarily made to make required adjustments to include parts of the Constitution's new features such as the proportional electoral system at various levels of government. Those amendments were not controversial from a political standpoint. Even though revisions to the election legislation included contentious aspects such as the presence of police in voting sites, the demonstrations were minor and did not jeopardise the opposition's participation in polls. Decisions made by the president under the Presidential Powers (Temporary Measures) Act expire after 180 days, or 10 December 2013 in the case of the Electoral Act.

On the 3rd of January 2014, the government published a measure that was introduced in parliament. The law is identical to Statutory Instrument 85 of June 12 2013, with the exception that special voting for security employees on duty on Election Day is eliminated, and such personnel are instead given the option of voting by mail. The special voting is discussed in Section 8.10. The establishment of ZEC prior to 2005 elections had full effect for the 2005 elections but ZEC was constitutionalised with the responsibility to prepare for, conduct, and supervise elections and referendums at all levels with effect from September 2005. The commission was not given responsibility for voter registration but was expected to supervise the Registrar General, who was in charge of that aspect.

Even though the 2013 Constitution shifted voter registration to ZEC, the Registrar General was nonetheless responsible for conducting registration under ZEC's auspices for the first elections in 2013 (Ncube, 2013). In practice, ZEC had minimal influence over voter registration. ZEC's makeup was inclusive in the sense that it comprised members who were trusted by major parties. When its previous Chairperson resigned in February, Justice Rita Makarau was appointed as the replacement. Leaders of three major political parties backed her. In March 2013, ZEC held a constitutional referendum, followed by elections on July 31. Even though the minister in charge of elections (the Minister of Justice) exercised his influence in several areas, there was little doubt that ZEC took full control of the electoral operations for the first time, save for voter registration.

2.19.3. ZANU-PF panels the 2013 elections

ZANU-PF has great experience in election management and manipulation (Moore, 2014). Prior to 2004, election management was delegated to four authorities (the Electoral Supervisory Commission, the Registrar-General, the Election Directorate, and the Delimitation Commission) with overlapping functions. However, the government's near misses in both the 2000 National Assembly and 2002 Presidential elections pushed it to alter electoral institutions in order to hold 'credible but severely manipulated parliamentary elections in 2005. Moore (2004) added that Mugabe proposed election reforms at the beginning of parliament in July 2004 and later embraced SADC electoral standards.

2.19.4. Government restricted its reforms

Southall (2016) reiterated that when the government limited public debate by political parties, ZEC was appointed as the sole electoral administration authority, with the Registrar General in charge of electoral registration, ostensibly under ZEC's oversight. Meanwhile, Mugabe selected Justice George Chiweshe, a High Court judge, as ZEC's chair. The judiciary was also filled up with ZANU-PF sympathisers at the time. Furthermore, the electoral reforms act allowed state personnel (including those in the armed forces, police, and prisons) to be seconded to the Commission during elections (Southall, 2006).

2.19.5. ZEC and Registrar General responsible for elections

Ncube (2013) reiterated that ZEC and the RG were the two entities responsible for conducting the 2013 harmonised elections. He argued that while both were ostensibly independent, they were both highly suspect of rigging the elections. Tobaiwa Mudede, the then Registrar General, had been in charge since 1980 and had been accused by human rights groups of manipulating the electoral register to keep ZANU-PF in power.

Ncube (2013) stressed that Justice Rita Makarau was in charge of ZEC. She was appointed in early 2013 and was a well-known lawyer and judge. Despite this, she rose quickly through the ranks (from law lecturer at the University of Zimbabwe to Judge President) during a period when ZANU-PF was undermining the judiciary's independence and pushing its preferred appointees to the court. Both ZEC and the Registrar General administered the 2013 harmonised elections, and both were nominally independent but heavily suspected of cheating the votes. Joyce Kazembe, who had been in charge of ZEC for several years before, deputized Makarau. She was a well-known ZANU-PF member.

Although Tsvangirai spoke in favour of Makarau's appointment, many in his party deemed his support inexplicable and accused him of being railroaded by Mugabe (Ncube, 2013). Despite Makarau's nominal elevation above Kazembe, ZEC was in actuality inextricably linked to ZANU-PF interests. The brief published by the Zimbabwe Democracy Institute (2012) insinuated that all but two of the eight Commissioners had previously worked for ZANU-PF in previously discredited electoral institutions, and numerous employees in the body's secretariat had close ties to the

security forces. The *de facto* control of the voters' roll by the RG and ZEC was crucial to ZANU-PF's win in 2013.

In this regard, it is obvious that the dictatorship systematically altered the electoral landscape to its favour since the 2000 referendum electoral shock. For example, the ZANU-PF government skewed the electoral constituency delimitations to its benefit. Before the 2008 elections, when constituencies were expanded from 110 to 210, ZANU-PF friendly areas were disproportionately favoured in the allocation of additional constituencies. This imbalance was exacerbated by the manipulation of polling station numbers, which were increased in rural areas (where voter preferences are more easily influenced, not least by municipal authority) while being reduced in metropolitan areas (which were likely to lean towards the opposition). Second, the Mugabe regime disenfranchised groups of voters who were thought to be MDC supporters.

One of such moves was the adoption of the Citizenship of Zimbabwe Amendment Act of 2001, which repealed dual citizenship and forced millions of naturalised Zimbabweans to reapply for citizenship or risk losing it. White (many of whom had held onto their British passports) families of migrants from Malawi, Mozambique, and Zambia, many of whom had lived in Zimbabwe for years, were the most affected. In 2002, the government limited postal voting to only three groups of professionals namely; the defense forces, police, and prison services, and election officials who would not be able to vote in their home constituencies on Election Day. Zimbabwean government officials who would be out of the country on Election Day and their spouses were also allowed to do postal voting.

Marima (2013) argued that the failure of the Diaspora Vote Action Group's legal challenge to this restriction meant that 3.5 million exiled Zimbabweans, most of whom were thought to be MDC supporters, were effectively barred from voting. Further restrictions were imposed in 2005 in order to oppress people, resulting in the disenfranchisement of thousands of people in urban areas, while those in rural areas (ZANU-PF's strongholds, particularly in the eastern half of the country) only needed their village Chief or farm employer to vouch for them. In short, the 2013 election events were nothing out of the ordinary. Rather, it was a more aggressive and systematic use of dubious procedures that had been devised in the past to distort the vote.

2.19.6. Political violence and intimidation

When compared to other elections held after 2000, the 2013 elections' political violence was significantly reduced in the run-up to the plebiscite. All observer missions concluded that the campaign and elections were held peacefully (Mukori, 2014). The GPA established a Joint Monitoring and Implementation Committee (JOMIC) as a tool for reconciliation and creating an environment conducive for future peaceful elections. The JOMIC built capacity in all provinces prior to the elections, and the three major parties worked together in joint teams to resolve political tensions and prevent violence. This is likely to have contributed to the elections' tranquil atmosphere. Below is a more detailed description of the situation as it prevailed in the run up to the 2013 harmonised elections.

ZESN's 31 July 2013 report read: "Political tolerance also remained poor, with polarisation characterising the milieu, while the state media often exaggerated this intolerance". Intimidation, which was purportedly largely perpetrated by ZANU-PF supporters, attracted a lot of attention from the media but little was done to stop that. The country's political scene was marred by dread, with citizens associating elections with violence to the point where many people became hesitant to vote. People in urban areas were scared to voice their concerns or to mingle with 'bad' components (ZESN, 2013). People were forced to attend ZANU-PF meetings and buy party cards as a condition to receive food, loans, and other requirements.

The situation was quite safe for some non-governmental organisations and community-based groups working on soft issues. Those working in the fields of health and education were able to continue their operations with little difficulty. The situation was very different for individuals engaged in the fields of political education and civil rights. These organisations had difficulties, particularly because they were occasionally denied police permission to organise workshops and seminars. Several of these organisations' employees and volunteers were arrested. Harassment of civil society activists continued in the run-up to the elections, and it persisted even in the aftermath. A lot of these arrests were based on allegations that organisations were conducting voter education without ZEC's permission or oversight.

2.20. ZIMBABWE 2018 ELECTIONS

On July 30, 2018 Zimbabwe held both presidential and legislative elections. It was the first election since independence in which former President Mugabe was not ZANU-PF's candidate. It was held eight months after the 2017 *coup d'état*. Mugwari (2019) stated that Zimbabwe held general elections on July 30, 2018 to elect the president and members of both chambers of parliament. ZANU-PF contested the elections with majorities in both the National Assembly and the Senate (Mugwari, 2019). The main opposition party (MDC-T) and other parties formed an alliance and contested under the banner MDC Alliance. This coalition included the MDC-T and six other small parties. The Alliance's goal was to topple ZANU-PF. ZANU-PF won control of both houses of Zimbabwe's 9th Parliament, albeit with small majority in both. In both houses, the MDC Alliance won seats, roughly matching ZANU-PF's losses.

Emmerson Mnangagwa, who became the country's President following the 2017 coup, campaigned for reelection as ZANU-PF candidate in the presidential election. In February 2018, Tsvangirai, the MDC-T leader who was set to run against him died. Nelson Chamisa succeeded him as the MDC Alliance candidate. The Human Rights Watch (2018) indicated that Mnangagwa received 50.8 percent of the vote against Chamisa's 44.3 percent, giving him the necessary majority to avoid a rerun. Mnangagwa won six of the country's 10 provinces, while Chamisa took four, including Harare and Bulawayo, the country's two major urban provinces.

2.20.1. Crisis after elections

The MDC held protests just days after the elections (Human Rights Watch, 2018) because they were dissatisfied with the results. The army was accused of shooting demonstrators and bystanders, killing six people. According to opposition leaders and human rights organisations, many opposition sympathisers were jailed in the days that followed. Bratton and Masungure (2018) acknowledged that Mnangagwa's inauguration planned to take place on August 10 2018, was postponed after Chamisa filed a court challenge to the election results. On August 24 2018, the Zimbabwean Supreme Court denied Chamisa's challenge and pronounced Mnangagwa the winner of the presidential elections in a unanimous decision (Bratton & Masungure, 2018). The two further claimed that Chamisa refused both a recount and access to the voting boxes, as observed

by Chief Justice Luke Malaba. The inauguration and official swearing-in of Mnangagwa took place on August 26. The Mail & Guardian (2018) noted that two Washington-based organisations, the American International Republican Institute (IRI) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI), both of which participated in Zimbabwe's International Election Observation Mission (ZIEOM) expressed doubts that the poll had a standard acceptability value. In this respect, the US administration decided not to waive sanctions against Zimbabwe until President Mnangagwa's government showed signs of "changing its ways," (Manisha Singh, the US Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs).

2.21. CONCLUSION

Based on events and conditions that occurred since the Republic of Zimbabwe gained independence from Britain in 1980, one could conclude that ZANU-PF's attempts to maintain power through rigging elections and inciting violence during elections have worked. Looking back at what happened from 1983 to 1987, one would say that the ZANU-PF government demonstrated that it sought to govern Zimbabwe forever. That is, the main secret behind the Gukurahundi massacres then was to establish a one-party state, with ZANU-PF the only party, and Mugabe its life president. When ZANU-PF achieved its one party state dream in 1987 after signing the Unity Accord with its main rival ZAPU, political stability was restored in Zimbabwe.

This lasted for about 13 years before MDC was founded in 1999. MDC's coming into the picture scared ZANU-PF as it realised that the majority of Zimbabweans were fed-up of its governance, economic mismanagement, and general misrule of the country. In an attempt to retain power in the face of the MDC's massive popularity, Mugabe and ZANU-PF began to exert pressure on opposition supporters. Elections were rigged, while opposition supporters were harassed, tortured, kidnapped, beaten, arrested and jailed without trial, and banned from holding rallies of any form. After elections, opposition parties filed lawsuits and complaints alleging that elections were not free and fair but to no avail. Since 2000, there have been disagreements and complaints that elections were not free and fair. The next Chapter details this study's methodology

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

Investing in social issues necessitates a methodical approach to generating verifiable scientific knowledge (Thakur, 1993). After reviewing literature on issues pertinent to this study, chapter three details this study's research methodology, its research design, justifies the social constructivism as the epistemology paradigm that informs this study, and discusses this study's population, its sample and the sampling techniques. In this chapter a researcher defined a research technique and then provides methodologies in social science research before making a compelling argument for choosing this study's methodological approach. It then details the methods utilised for data gathering and analysis, including strategies used in their selection. Also explained here is the rationale for employing the case study design. Finally, the Chapter discusses the difficulties encountered during the research process. Ethical considerations are provided in the context of how these were observed during the research. The next section defines research methodology.

3.2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is a set of systematic approaches utilised in research (Igwenagu, 2016). It is a guide to research and how it is carried out. The research methodology details and analyses methods to be used and sheds light on their limitations and resources required in their use, clarify their assumptions and implications, and link their potentialities to the liminal zone at the edge of knowledge. The procedures or strategies used to find, select, process, and analyse information about a topic are referred to as research methodology. The study's research methodology allows the reader to critically examine the study's overall validity and dependability. Two major questions are addressed in the methodology section, that is; how was the information gathered or generated, and what method was used to examine it?

Methodology is a systematic theoretical investigation of the methods used in the field of research (Igwenagu, 2016). It entails the theoretical examination of the body of methods and principles related to a field of study. Methodology usually includes aspects such as paradigm, theoretical

model, stages, and quantitative and qualitative methodologies (Irny *et al.*, 2005). A methodology is not the same as a method or technique because it does not seek to deliver solutions. Instead, it provides the theoretical foundation for determining which method, set of procedures, or best practices can be used to solve a specific problem such as calculating a specific outcome.

Igwenagu (2016) added that the research process arose from man's desire to be in tune with his surroundings and to comprehend nature. Man uses skills of experience and reasoning available to him (Irny *et al.*, 2005) to do this. Beyond his immediate circle, man draws on his experience and authoritative sources. But because experience and authority are rich and substantial sources of hypothesis, which are primarily based on common sense knowledge and chance happenings, making inferences on events can be unjustified. Thus, forming research hypotheses based on experience and authority is deemed unscientific. Scientific reasoning, which can be inductive, deductive, or both, is the foundation of research. Research is the most appropriate technique of uncovering the truth, especially in scientific sciences because it combines both experience and logic (Irny *et al.*, 2005).

It is important for researchers to understand the significance of learning about qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques. This is so because each type of record set is relevant in attempting to solve research challenges the study aims to address. Depending on the type of study, researchers can choose one of numerous study designs such as observational studies or surveys. This researcher followed the qualitative research methodology. That is, as data were collected, specific data sets were purposefully chosen.

Qualitative research is based on interpretation or critical social sciences (Barbie *et al.*, 2001) because its inductive approach stresses building insights and generalisations from data acquired. It is concerned about issues of richness, texture, and feeling of raw data. Quantitative research, on the other hand, deals with the concerns of design, measurement, and sampling since its deductive approach prioritises meticulous planning prior to data collection and analysis (Barbie *et al.*, 2001). In addition, qualitative research is conducted in natural settings and provides an interpretative perspective of the phenomena or occurrence. Quantitative search, on the other hand, uses carefully controlled conditions and samples. It explains issues and provides predictions about what might happen. Qualitative data often delivers better insights than quantitative data since quantitative researchers tend to overlook materials that are not easily quantifiable (Barbie *et al.*, 2001). Thus,

the qualitative research approach is suited to studies of attitudes and behaviours best understood in their natural setting as opposed to the rather artificial settings of experiments and questionnaires (Babbie *et al.*, 2001).

This methodology helped use the case study to learn about design. A case investigation is an imperial inquiry that analyses a phenomenon inside its real-life environment, particularly when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the setting are not obvious (Yin, 2002). As the purpose is to figure out how context influences behaviour or approaches, the phenomenon is no longer separated from its surroundings. Furthermore, a case discovers the ideal answers to queries that necessitate specific understandings of a phenomenon as a result of abundant information obtained in context. A case study uncovers what no longer suggests any archive gathering system, both qualitative and quantitative (Yin, 2002).

3.3. RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is the technique for gathering, evaluating, interpreting, and reporting data in a research study (Creswell *et al.*, 2007). It refers to the process of linking conceptual research with relevant (and feasible) empirical study. Grey (2014) opined that research design determines how the required data is acquired, the methods to be utilised to collect and evaluate data, and how these are used to answer research questions. Babbie *et al.* (2001) see it as a look up plan, a blueprint or plan for how a researcher collects and analyses data needed to systematically answer research questions. It is a method or design that is used to come up with answers to problems researchers have learned about and want to solve.

A research design can also refer to a specific plan, method, or course that should be followed in order to gather data necessary to understand a topic being studied (Clark *et al.*, 2013). Yin (2002) said that it is a study sketch that contains all details that must be kept in mind in order to link the lookup query to statistics series and facts analysis, as well as to meet one's objectives. Maree (2015) pointed out that a study design includes important participant selections, statistical gathering procedures, and data analysis. Interviews, observations, and questionnaires are used in case studies (Fink, 2006). Fink (2006) said that researchers should utilise surveys since it is more cost-effective and is thought to be more purposeful because it standardises metrics and can cover a large sample. However, this method is thought to be expensive and time-consuming.

This study used the case study research design to collect in-depth data on the poorly known phenomena such as the features of electoral stakeholders used in Zimbabwe's election tactics. Leedy *et al.* (2015) noted that a case study contains flaws such as subjectivity because it is based on private data interception and assumptions. It has also been criticised for relying on a single case, which makes it incapable of conveying a generalising conclusion to distinguish between contexts. Furthermore, some people dispute the expense of a single event's location and point out that cross-checking information is difficult for researchers. Others express reservations about the possibility of selective reporting and the dangers of distorting information, and the fact that generalising financing from a case study is not always possible (Leedy *et al.*, 2015).

This is because a case study allows a researcher to focus on a unit analysis or case and use a variety of methods, approaches, and sources to thoroughly and in-depth investigate a phenomenon through contact with participants at their respective sites across time (Maree, 2015). Given the groundbreaking nature of this research in Zimbabwe, the case study design seemed the best fit for gaining new insights (Barbie, 2001) to elucidate the phenomenon studied (Willing, 2008). This was an objective study in which the role of electoral stakeholders in Zimbabwe's electoral processes was examined using that country as the case. Using the case study design does not preclude the use of descriptions (Aspeling, 2006).

Using the explanatory case study, this researcher was able to identify potential events and behavioural patterns that influenced electoral stakeholders' roles in Zimbabwe's elections. A case study is when a researcher concentrates just on one incident, allowing for a more in-depth knowledge of that phenomenon. This researcher was able to acquire a better understanding of electoral violence and the UN, AU, SADC, EU, and ZEC's roles in Zimbabwe's electoral processes.

Another benefit of employing the case study design was that it allowed this researcher to use a variety of data collection methods such as observations, interviews, and secondary source surveys, *inter alia* (Thomas, 2011; Creswell, 2014). Interview schedules had open-ended questions. The amount of data acquired was huge and varied, allowing this researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of how electoral violence occurs in Zimbabwe. Swanborn (2010) reasoned that elections are a process or continuous 360-degree cycle that includes pre-, during, and post-election phases in each democratic setup. The advantage of adopting the case study, on the other hand, is

that it allowed this researcher to track the phenomenon through time and track changes. The case study provided for the tracing of how the UN, AU, EU, SADC, and ZEC conducted themselves before, during and after elections, and what criteria they considered for them to say the elections were free, fair and peaceful or not, and how different these were.

Finally, the case study allowed for the utilisation of all relevant data that could be obtained for this study. The fact that only data relevant to specific techniques and concepts were gathered also saved a lot of time. Yin (2002) expressed concern about the lack of quality in case study research, claiming that this is due to the fact that case studies do not allow for rigorous investigation of phenomena and provide little basis for scientific generalisation of their findings. Furthermore, reasons against case studies include the fact that they take a long time to complete and result in huge illegible data.

3.4. POPULATION AND SAMPLING

Newman (2011) defined population as the abstract concept of a big group of numerous cases from which a researcher selects a sample and to which sample results are applied. Sampling's basic goal is to ensure that results are representative. That is, the sample should be constructed to mirror the population's demographics (from which it is drawn). This study's population were all Zimbabweans living in Thohoyandou, Makhado, and Musina that included academics and students from the University of Venda. Individuals, groups, organisations, and the conditions to which they were subjected to make up this study's population.

3.4.1. Target population

The study's target group were Zimbabweans who migrated to South Africa as a result of their country's political and economic upheaval. As a research tool, an interview schedule was used. The use of an interview schedule was justified since it allowed this researcher to visit where the prospective participants lived and interview the victims of election violence. The study targeted Zimbabweans who live in South Africa because of their country's political and economic turmoil. Creswell (2013) gave two essential considerations a researcher must make before embarking on a study; who will be included in the study and how many participants will be included. Given the

aim in obtaining volumes of data, the focus was on who should be included in the study rather than the quality of the respondents.

3.42. Sampling procedure

In social research, there are two major sample selection procedures. These are random and non-random sampling techniques. Sekaran and Bougie (2013) explained that the researcher selects a sample from a population to meet the repetitiveness and normal distribution conditions of its own reputation metrics. To pick a sample from the population, this researcher used a stratified sampling approach. The respondents' locations were used as a factor for stratifying the population. Sekaran and Bougie (2013) pointed the following procedures that should be used to pick the sample; define the population, determine the sample frame, determine the sample design, determine the appropriate sample size, and executive the sampling process.

This study purposeful sampled its population. Purposive sampling is undertaken with a specific aim in mind, and it is common for specific preset groups to be targeted in advance (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). This study also used the snowball sampling technique described as meant for the population of interest that cannot be recognised except through someone who knows that a certain person has the required experience or qualities to be included. Snowball sampling was used here because of the researcher's social networks. In the case of Musina, Thohoyandou, and the University of Venda, this researcher was supported in obtaining participants who could help answer the research questions. He requested to have interviews with his prospective participants. Given the researcher's reliance on snowball sampling, several participants volunteered to assist him to contact potential interviewees ahead of time. The motivation for conducting transnational interviews stemmed from the realisation that a significant number of Zimbabweans, whether from civil society or ordinary citizens, currently reside in South Africa as a result of either voluntary or forced migration.

After data collection, this researcher realised that data converged and provided the same outcomes. In fact, a number of activists fled Zimbabwe government's crackdown on dissent and now campaign from beyond the country's borders. Transnational civil society organisation chapters based in Zimbabwe are now found in countries such as the United Kingdom and South Africa. The appendix contains a list and profile of those who took part in this study. **Table 3.1** shows this

study's sample and its size. It shows the area and the number of participants interviewed therein. The sum of all interviewees is this study's sample size.

Table 3. 1 Sample size

| Area | Number of interviewees | Date of interview |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Musina | 6 | 12-29 July 2021 |
| University of Venda | 5 | 10-27 August 2021 |
| Thohoyandou | 3 | 7-16 September 2021 |
| Makhado | 2 | 2-7 October 2021 |
| Total | 16 | |

3.5. DATA COLLECTION METHODS

For data gathering, this study used face-to-face semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis. Using an interview schedule, this researcher interviewed Zimbabweans to gather primary data about the phenomenon investigated. The respondents were asked to provide information about electoral activities in which electoral stakeholders were involved, variables that lead to electoral violence, and barriers that prevent citizens from participating in elections. To obtain additional data, the researcher surveyed secondary sources such as books, journal articles, newspapers, theses and dissertations.

When data were collected, this researcher concluded that the said procedures were appropriate for data sequence because triangulation increases data quality by filling in gaps that would have been missed had he not undertaken secondary source survey. Leedy *et al.* (2015) pointed out that using a qualitative approach to obtain similar facts or triangulation is highly noteworthy because it helps authenticate data gathered from a wide range of sources. These two strategies have been commended for expanding the possibility of explaining and holding near a social issue in its intricacy.

Due to the fact that interviews were one of the methods of primary data collection here, fieldwork took place over a four-month period. Interviews were chosen as the ideal data collecting method

because they allowed for the collection of rich first-hand information from those associated with Zimbabwe's election processes from 2000 to 2018. Despite the fact that interviews formed the study's backbone, various secondary sources were used to supplement them. Newspaper stories, television interview transcripts, periodicals, peer-reviewed journal articles, bulletins from civil society organisations, and artistic visual representations of political resistance were all utilised. As a result, two pilot interviews were done before the first scheduled interview in Musina. This increased the quality of interview questions as well as the manner in which the interviews were performed. Given the fluidity of interpretations that occasionally appeared during field work, the process of refining the interview technique became an ongoing activity.

Five interviews took place at the University of Venda, three interviews were conducted in Thohoyandou, and six interviews were done in Musina where the majority of Zimbabweans reside. In addition, two more in-depth interviews were performed in Makhado, bringing the total number of interviews held in both locations to sixteen. A total of sixteen interviews were recorded with a voice recording mp3 player, each lasting about thirty minutes on average.

3.5.1. Data capturing

To protect the accuracy of data collected for this study, audio recordings and note-taking were done. Individual interviews were audio-recorded because audio-recording allows one to focus and be fully engaged in interview-conversations without common interruptions as opposed to writing notes while interviewing. It also enabled this researcher to pay close attention to what was being said and to seek for clarity on unclear issues. The audio-recording process was given extra attention and care, especially during face-to-face interviews to prevent disrupting or distracting the participants. Participants were comfortable during the interviews as they felt that recording the interviews posed no danger of their words being misunderstood or misinterpreted (Kelly, 2006). Before each interview, the audio recorder batteries were tested in accordance with Tharenou *et al.*'s (2007) instructions. The voice recording gadget was periodically monitored during interviews to ensure that it was recording properly without interrupting the recording process or the interviewees' attention. Information gathered during interviews was transcribed. Each interview was coded in lieu of the participants' real identity for easy referencing and anonymity.

During interviews a systematic observation of the interviewees' nonverbal communication, actions, behaviour, body language, and gestures noted down. Memory lapses, misunderstandings, and arguments about the interpretation of specific occurrences and phenomena were also documented. Field (2008) noted that this is essential for describing facts, venues, and occurrences that could provide further information and meaning concerning the electoral violence. Participants' names and contact information were also written down in field notes for possible follow-up.

3.5.2. Face-to-face interviews

The interviews were semi-structured one-on-one interviews with participants who were asked to answer questions about the phenomenon being investigated. Face-to-face interviews were conducted as part of the investigation of the topic. Bless *et al.* (2006) indicated that semi-structured interviews are used to persuade humans to be excessively detailed about themselves. The researcher employed the semi-structured interviews, which allowed participants to respond in their own words, providing examples in the process. Surveillance anxieties were reduced as well.

As a result, two pilot interviews were done before the first scheduled interview in Musina. This increased the quality of interview questions as well as the manner in which the interviews were performed. Given the fluidity of interpretations that occasionally appeared during field work, the process of refining the interview technique became an ongoing activity.

Five interviews took place at the University of Venda, three interviews were conducted in Thohoyandou, and six interviews were done in Musina where the majority of Zimbabweans reside. In addition, two more in-depth interviews were performed in Makhado, bringing the total number of interviews held in both locations to sixteen. A total of sixteen interviews were recorded with a voice recording mp3 player, each lasting about thirty minutes on average. However, during interviews there were some challenges that researcher encountered. Two participants were not trusting the researcher because they thought maybe the researcher was sent by the government of Zimbabwe to spy them. Three participants didn't want to participate because they were complaining about the time that thirty minutes is too long for the interview and they have other important businesses to attend. But eleven participants didn't complain about time and they were trusting the researcher and it made the interview to be conducted very well.

During interviews, questions such as how do you define electoral violence?; what are the significance of electoral violence?; did you witnessed electoral violence?; what are causes of electoral violence in Zimbabwe?, which elections did Zimbabwe has violence?; who are the perpetrators of electoral violence?; do NGO bodies' successful actions to address electoral violence?; and what are the consequences of Zimbabwe's electoral violence?

Each interview was preceded by a detailed explanation of the study's purpose, the significance of participation in the study, and how the data collected would be used. Permission to record the conversations was obtained by emphasising the goal of the recording as allowing this researcher to accurately transcribe the information acquired. Interview questions were written in English. Interviewing is one of the most prevalent methods for collecting non-numerical or textual data (Maundeni, 2000) because it is a one-on-one scenario, making it more customised and confidential. This allowed participants to voice their thoughts, feelings, and experiences about the turmoil that erupted in Zimbabwe during elections.

3.6. STUDY AREA

The research focused on the persistence of electoral violence in Zimbabwe from 2000 to 2018. Zimbabwe is a southern African country located to the southern portion of Africa. Harare is its capital city while Bulawayo is its commercial capital. Before its independence in 1980, Zimbabwe was a British colony. Following independence in 1980, the country adopted a democratic system of electing state leadership, with all its people eligible to participate, provided they were permanent residents. In other words, all Zimbabweans who were legally recognised had the right to vote and participate in Zimbabwe's politics. Zimbabwe is a landlocked republic in southern Africa, sandwiched between the Zambezi River to the north and the Limpopo River to the south. It is bordered on the south by South Africa, to the west and southwest by Botswana, to the northwest by Zambia, and to the east and northeast by Mozambique. Although it does not share a boundary with Namibia, the Zambezi River separates the two countries by less than 200 meters. Zimbabwe has around 13 million people, has 16 official languages, the widely spoken being English, Shona, and Ndebele.

3.6.1. Zimbabwe's brief historical background

Present-day Zimbabwe has been the site of various organised nations and kingdoms, as well as a key migration and commercial route since the 11th century. The current region was first delineated in the 1890s by Cecil John Rhodes' British South Africa Company, and it became the self-governing British colony of Southern Rhodesia in 1923. The conservative white minority government of Rhodesia unilaterally declared independence (UDI) in 1965. The state was isolated internationally and fought a 15-year guerrilla war against black nationalist movements, which ended in a peace deal in April 1980 that secured universal enfranchisement and *de jure* sovereignty. After that, Zimbabwe rejoined the Commonwealth of Nations, which it had left in the UDI aftermath. It is a member of the AU, UN, SADC, and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA).

Mugabe became its Prime Minister in 1980 following the end of white minority rule when his ZANU-PF party won the first democratic elections. He became the country's executive President in 1987 when the country abandoned the prime minister system. The state security system ruled the country under Mugabe's authoritarian administration and was responsible for numerous human rights violations. Mugabe maintained the Cold War era revolutionary socialist rhetoric, criticising Western capitalist countries for Zimbabwe's economic troubles. Contemporary African political figures were hesitant to criticise Mugabe because of his anti-imperialist credentials, despite Archbishop Desmond Tutu's description of him as "a cartoon picture of a typical African dictator."

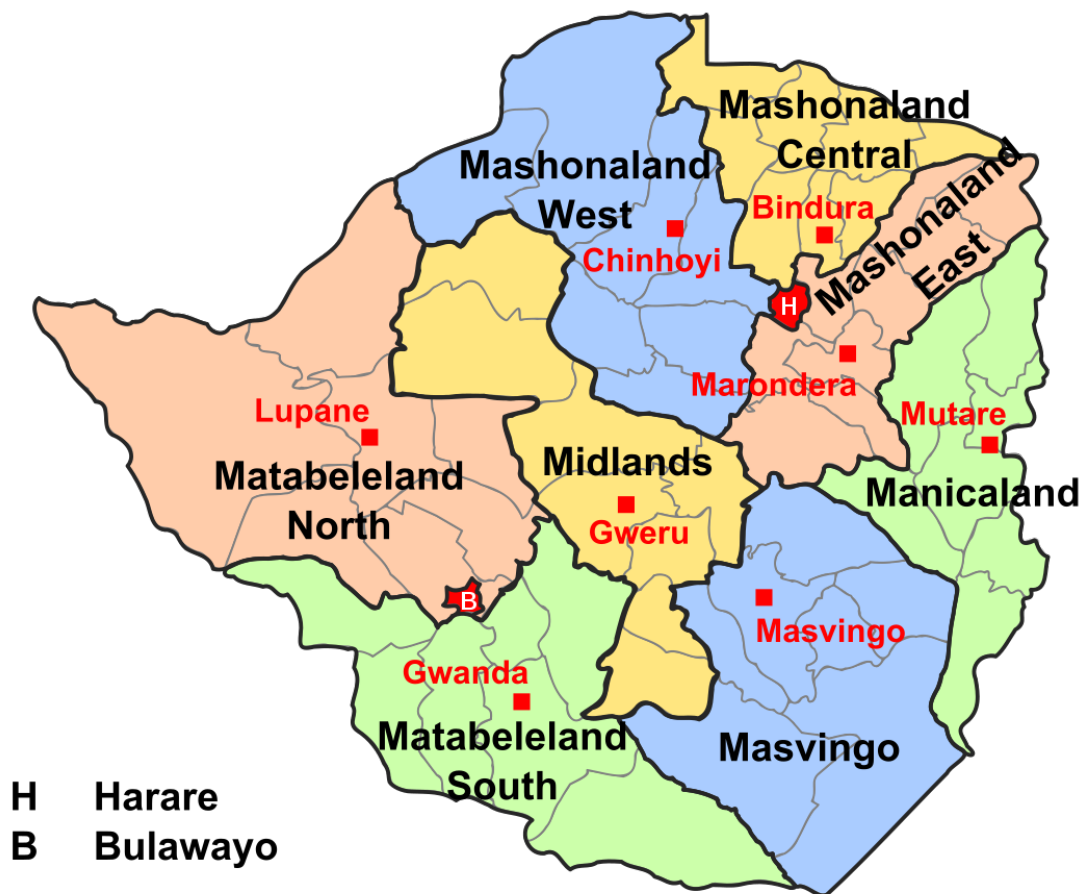


Figure 1: Zimbabwean Map.

Source: <https://www.mapsland.com/africa/zimbabwe>.

3.7. DATA ANALYSIS

Creswell (2004) pointed out that thematic analysis is a popular method for analysing qualitative data in many disciplines and fields, and it may be used in a variety of ways, with a variety of datasets, to answer a variety of research questions. It is one of a group of techniques aimed at detecting recurring patterns in datasets. Thematic analysis can be considered as a catch-all phrase for a variety of ways to evaluating qualitative data that all have the same goal of uncovering themes in the data. Therefore, this study used thematic analysis since the study used interviews as the primary data method of gathering. Creswell (2004) added that while different versions of thematic

analysis share certain theoretical flexibility, they can differ dramatically in terms of underlying philosophy and techniques for generating themes. The theme approach was adopted since this study used interviews as the primary method of data gathering and surveyed secondary sources.

3.8. DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Delimitations are features that limit the scope of a study and describe its borders such as, *inter alia*, sample size, geographical location or setting, and population traits (Creswell, 2004). The researcher might opt to collect data using certain study instruments and procedures but not others. For practical reasons such as the lack of time or financial resources to conduct a more thorough study, these delimitations might be imposed. The study's delimitation section should explain why certain options were taken while others were not, and how this might affect the research's outcome. Delimitations are boundaries writers voluntarily impose for themselves (Dimitrios *et al.*, 2018).

We are concerned with the definitions researchers choose to designate as boundaries or limits of their work in order to keep the study's aims and objectives from becoming unattainable. It may be claimed that delimitations are under the researcher's authority in this regard. Delimitations are thus primarily concerned with the theoretical backdrop, objectives, research questions, variables under analysis, and study sample. Alternatives to these, as well as reasons for rejecting them such as the sample technique chosen from among many options, should be explained properly so that the reader is completely informed.

This researcher used this study's aim to determine why Zimbabwe persistently experience electoral violence despite regional, sub-regional, and international interventions. But the study does not cover elections from during the British colonial rule because at that time the country did not experience elections crises compared to those experienced from 2000 to 2018. Additionally, the electoral violence the country experienced from 1980 to 1999 is less than from 2000 to 2018. The researcher did not interview ZANU-PF officials since there is a strong likelihood that they would provide biased information because they are the ones accused of electoral violence, especially if the results are not in their favour. As a result, people who were targeted were those who had been victims of election violence in Zimbabwe.

3.9. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Creswell (2018) explained that qualitative inquiry entails gathering information from and about people, and ethical issues are likely to arise during the close interaction between the researcher and participants, which, if not handled carefully, can jeopardise the research's validity, reliability, quality, and trustworthiness. In this respect, this study was conceived and carried out in accordance with ethical core principles. The primary principle was to get the participants' informed permission. Consent is defined as persons agreeing to participate in a study (Thomas, 2011). The goal and relevance of the study, as well as how the information collected would be utilised, were disclosed to participants before they were asked to participate. It was also made apparent to them that their participation in the study was voluntary, and that there was no risk of harm as specified by the University of Venda's ethical clearance letter.

The informants were given the right to leave the study at any time without being chastised, which was the second ethical guideline. Those who agreed to take part in the study had the option of withdrawing at any time during the process. Finally, participants were kept safe from injury. Given that the research topic was political and that politics is a sensitive issue in Zimbabwe, it was critical for the researcher to maintain confidentiality to ensure that the participants were safeguarded against any psychological, emotional, or any other harm (Creswell, 2004). For example, each participant was encouraged to be free not to respond to questions they did not feel comfortable in answering at the start of the interview.

Given the country of study's recent political shifts, caution was exercised in addressing questions that might elicit displays of rage or irritation, or evoke debilitating recollections of misery, pains, and emotions. The right to privacy, anonymity, and secrecy were the fourth principles observed. Data acquired were treated with integrity and confidentiality and were used for scholarly purposes. This was stressed prior to each interview to ensure that participants did not feel that their privacy was invaded. Participants were given complete autonomy over where and when they were to be interviewed.

During data analysis and report writing, the participants' contributions were kept anonymous. Participants' contact information was saved in case they needed to be contacted again. Throughout the research, it was critical for this researcher to build trust with participants since this allowed

them to reveal relevant information when answering questions. This was true for Zimbabweans who are afraid of victimisation if they openly debate in politics. Preliminary field visits were made to create confidence amongst participants before field work began. During fieldwork, a significant amount of time was spent with participants in order to capture information that might have been overlooked.

3.10. MEASURES TO ENSURE TRUSTWORTHINESS

Within the naturalistic research arena, trustworthiness is generally regarded as the counterpart of reliability and validity (Lincoln & Guba 2011). The terms reliability and validity are used to assess the research's quality and to describe the accuracy with which a method, methodology, or test measure something. The constancy of a metric is what reliability is all about. The results are dependable if they can be consistently attained by employing the same methods at the same temperature every time. The accuracy of a measurement is referred to as validity. When a researcher generates results that correlate to real traits, characteristics, and fluctuations in the physical or social reality, it is said to have high validity. Lincoln and Guba (2011) suggested that particularly in qualitative research, it is critical to consider trustworthiness while designing the research design, arranging the techniques, and writing the results.

3.11. CONCLUSION

This Chapter described this study's epistemology paradigm, its research approach and design, and the research methodology used herein in order to answer the research questions. The demand for data gathering, capturing, and data analysing methods were outlined. In this Chapter, it was mentioned that interviews were utilised to obtain data used to respond to this study's objectives. The selection criteria used to determine who participated in the study were also discussed. This Chapter also discussed issues that arose during the research and concluded with a summary of the moral factors that were taken into account to ensure the research's integrity and quality.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the study findings as reported by the research participants. It examines probable connections between the study's findings and literature reviewed. All interview questions were answered by the participants. Since the researcher could not speak the participants' languages, English was used as the language of communication during interviews as both the researcher and his participants were fluent in it. The researcher used thematic data analysis to examine the participants' responses. As pointed out in this study's populations sample section, sixteen people took part in the study. The researcher also utilised secondary source materials to either back up or refute the participants' claims. Data collected is presented and discussed below.

4.2. ZIMBABWE: 2000 - 2018 ELECTORAL VIOLENCE SUMMARY

Following MDC's foundation in 1999 and its ability to contest the 2000 elections for the first time, political violence characterised Zimbabwe's elections there-from. It was primarily perpetrated by state agents, allies, and the ruling party. Election related violence in Zimbabwe have resulted in that country's dramatic deterioration of its human rights record. Following ZANU-PF's failure in the February 2000 referendum intended to modify the country's constitution, violence escalated.

The regime used official funding and agents to pursue parochial interests in order to stifle and remove opposition sympathisers. Murder, torture, intimidation, unfair arrests, and attacks against opposition supporters, human rights defenders, and independent media escalated as a result of state-sponsored violence. During the 2000 presidential and legislative elections in Zimbabwe, ZANU-PF supporters labeled MDC members as "enemies of state." Influenced by white commercial farmers' backing to challenge ZANU-PF, MDC supporters were regarded as traitors and sellouts. The ruling party gained momentum during the referendum by damaging the image of the MDC. By adopting the rule of law, MDC gave the impression of being liberal. It vowed to respect human rights and to assist in reforming of the ruling party's hurried land reform agenda.

These pledges irritated the ruling party, prompting it to persecute the opposition by branding them traitors, imperialists, and neo-colonialists serving Western interests. ZANU-PF promoted this agenda in order to keep power and weaken white commercial farmers. They essentially used violence and disorder to attack MDC supporters. Many election incidents occurred around the mid-2000s.

During the 2002 presidential elections, there were 988 documented incidences of electoral violence, with 35 deaths (Human Right Watch Report, 2002). Furthermore, pro-government individuals, war veterans, youth militias, governing party activists, and security officers were identified as the ones instigating electoral violence against opposition supporters in over 80% of the instances (Human Rights Watch Report, 2002). Similarly, during the 2005 elections, human rights monitors recorded 986 acts of violence and human rights violations, and one death (Masunngure, 2009). The majority of these incidents were blamed on the ruling party's supporters and state security agents. The MDC supporters were the majority victims.

MDC was the most popular opposition party in Zimbabwe and the ruling party faced political humiliation since 1980 when it was accused of committing genocide against the Ndebeles (Gukurahundi massacres) (Makumbe, 2003). Electoral violence defined the centre between supporting the ballot and favouring the bullet on the 28th of March 2008 and the 27th of June 2008. "Zimbabweans have no choice but to vote for the ruling party (ZANU-PF) if they do not want to experience bloodshed and murder," said former resident minister Ray Kaukonde, who was also the ZANU-PF provincial chairperson for Mashonaland East Province. Mashonaland East and West, which did not witness the 1980s Gukurahundi slaughter, had to bear the brunt of violence in 2008. As a result, Kaukonde's statement demonstrates that human rights were violated through intimidation and death threats. People were beaten up, threatened, tortured, raped, and executed by governing party militias in collusion with state security agents. Unwittingly, the war veterans promised to back Mugabe in his bid to win the presidential run-off election.

Civic and non-governmental organisations were not spared in the next wave of violence. These groups were accused of distributing Western misinformation in order to sway the election's outcome. As a result, the government decided to terminate and suspend their operations. Aid was likewise restricted in its distribution. The government decided that aid would be overseen and distributed through the ministry of public service and social welfare. The minister would evaluate

and authorise the Aid groups' actions. The suspension of aid had a significant impact on individuals' lives in rural areas who rely on food help. Perceived opposition supporters were the ones who suffered the most.

During election campaigns, over 100 families were forced to leave their homes in fear for their lives. Families were split up and relocated. Those injured as a result of electoral violence were treated in various hospitals across the country. Human rights organisations said that some victims were prevented from getting assistance, particularly MDC supporters because they were the ones targeted by ZANU-PF. At least ten thousand children were displaced as a result of violence (United Nations Children's Education Fund, 2008)

Over twenty-five thousand people were affected by the violence, and Aid groups provided immediate assistance. The attacks were primarily intended to scare and prevent MDC supporters from voting in the run-off election set for June 27, 2008. Election violence victims were rendered defenseless, and many were left without food, housing or medical attention. During the elections, human rights groups registered a total of 8, 558 incidences of human rights abuses (Human Rights Watch Report, 2008). Assassinations, wrongful arrests, harassment, assault, torture, and property theft were among the atrocities committed by ZANU-PF sympathisers and supporters. The Human Rights NGO Forum reported that rural areas experienced significant levels of violence, with youth militias and war veterans targeting specific people and their families. The majority of women were tortured and raped by young militias.

The 2008 election violence was a recurring phenomenon, with a long history of human rights violations. The MDC won the first round of elections, which perplexed ZANU-PF. The ruling party was forced to abandon democracy and the rule of law. As a form of retaliation for the election loss, they employed violence against opposition supporters. Zimbabwe was officially engulfed in violence in 2013. The polarisation of the election environment was no longer shocking as the 2013 election campaigns began. Nobody dared question the establishment.

Zimbabwe is considered an authoritarian country. The 2008 presidential election between ZANU-PF's Mugabe and MDC's Tsavangirai was marred by severe violence directed at MDC members and supporters. These included violent killings, terrorism, and gender-based violence, among others. Tsavangirai eventually withdrew from the 2008 elections as a result of the escalating violence. Following the runoff, Mugabe signed into a temporary power-sharing deal with the

SADC and the AU under the GPA. The agreement's goal was to lay out a road map for free and fair elections by enacting legal and electoral changes. Despite opposition protests that the GPA-mandated electoral and democratic changes had not been completed, Mugabe scheduled elections for July 31, 2013. Mugabe gained 61 percent of the vote in the 2013 elections and was re-elected for a third term.

Mugabe removed his vice-president, Mnangagwa in early November 2018. Due to that ZANU-PF factional fighting erupted, with fears that his decision would pave the way for Grace Mugabe to succeed him as president. ZANU-PF eventually issued an ultimatum to Mugabe, stating that if he refused to step down, he would face impeachment, and Mugabe opted to comply. The military organised a coup and forced Mugabe to quit on November 21 2017, after 37 years in power. Mnangagwa was appointed as the interim government leader after Mugabe's resignation. Soon after, in early December, he appointed his government. The upcoming elections were scheduled for July 30th 2018. The above allows this study to examine the narratives that underpin Zimbabwe's electoral violence dynamics. What were the underlying causes, and how did the Zimbabweans deal with those problems? The participants' responses and their probable interpretation of the dynamic are discussed next.

4.3 THEME 1: UNDERSTANDING OF ELECTORAL VIOLENCE

All participants were asked to define electoral violence. However, all participants defined electoral violence in their understanding of the concept. It is, nevertheless, important to look at how different scholars define electoral violence.

Based on Bardal (2016); UNDP (2009); Alston (2010); UN (1948), there are similarities to what the researcher found in this study as participants 1, 2, 3,4 and 5's responses indicate.

Participant 1 said,

“Political instability that engulfs a nation before, during, and in the case of Zimbabwe, even after elections is referred to as electoral violence. It contains atrocities such as torture, intimidation, rape, and murder, all carried out in order to increase voter turnout. It is the most effective and affective technique for persuading people to vote for ZANU-PF”.

Respondent 3's view is that,

“It occurs when people are harassed, tormented, intimidated, beaten up, raped, and murdered. In some cases, their homes and properties are burned or damaged shortly before and during election time in order to instill fear and frustrate them to vote for ZANU-PF”.

The results are in line with the UNDP’s (2009) definition that electoral violence is a type of political violence that is frequently used to affect an electoral outcome and, as a result, the distribution of political power. Furthermore, electoral violence can take the form of physical violence, extortion, or intimidation. These acts of violence can occur at any time during the electoral cycle, but they also demonstrate that the political system has failed to create a balance between competing political interests in general. Bardal (2016) added that electoral violence is a subset of political violence aimed at preventing individuals from participating in political processes. The results suggest that electoral violence is well understood in Zimbabwe given its prevalence each time the country holds polls.

Participant 4 provided a different response to those given above. In her response, the said participant gave the following idea on electoral violence.

Participant 4 said,

“Electoral violence occurs as the use of violence against someone due to their political disagreements or to compel them to vote for a certain party”.

The result is consistent with Fisher (2015) who emphasised that elections in Africa have developed a reputation for violence, citing recent incidents of election-related killings and instability as well as conflicts in the run-up to Zimbabwe’s presidential elections. This show that ZANU-PF does not tolerate those who oppose its rule and grip on power, notwithstanding its economic failures and general fundamental political weaknesses. This means that Zimbabwe’s electorate is not given any choice when it comes to voting for those to rule over them (Goldsmith, 2015). One would add that given participant 4’s response, it is clear that Zimbabweans pay through their lives or limb each time they vote for opposition parties.

In her response, Participant 2 stated that,

“Electoral violence is an act committed against another person with the goal of causing bodily, mental, or spiritual harm. The goal is to take away a person's ability to vote for a preferred party”.

The result dovetails with Biti (2008); Fischer (2002) who acknowledged that electoral violence has been described as the use of force to try to influence the results of an election. This means that such behaviour is regarded as a deviant or unconventional form of political participation in Zimbabwe where people are forced by certain political parties to vote for them. Similarly, Ben (2015) argued that voter information can enhance election violence in underdeveloped nations because politicians face less institutional limits on their campaign techniques. This is to say that when incumbent governing parties realise that they face stiff competition from popular opposition parties, they resort to intimidation and other unorthodox means to win. This results in disputed elections and protracted legal wrangles (Fischer, 2002).

For Participant 5,

“One dominating party's contesting groups use their clout to intimidate, threaten, and harass voters to the point where they are unable to choose their leaders independently. The ruling party can have monopoly control over state apparatus such as the army and police force, which the totalitarian ruling party uses or sends to crush opposition groups. Electoral violence sometimes includes vicious attacks and kidnappings against members of the public who support the opposition”.

For Participant 7,

“Electoral violence is defined as a subtype of "political violence" defined as "the use of emotional, social, or economic force, coercion or pressure, and physical and sexual harm, to control and/or oppress an individual or group's right to participate in political processes and institutions”.

For participant 8,

“Electoral violence are acts threats of coercion, intimidation, or bodily injury performed to affect an electoral process or that emerge in the context of political competition. It can happen in public or in private, at home, in the community, online, or through the media, and it can be perpetrated or tolerated by the government”.

The results are consistent with Daniel (2008) who observed that in certain instances, particularly in countries whose governments tend to embrace dictatorial tendencies, the harassment, intimidation, murder and coercion of voters is rife. One is made to understand that once a ruling party stares defeat on its face, it resorts to all forms of dirty tricks to cow voters into voting for it regardless of its obvious political and economic shortcomings. To such governments, political and state control is paramount to how the electorate feel about them. Thus, in respect of the participants' views on electoral violence, suffices it to point out that they indeed witnessed electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

4.3.1. Witnessed electoral violence

When asked if they had ever experienced or observed electoral violence in Zimbabwe between 2000 and 2008, the participants affirmed that. Some said they observed electoral violence, while others were its victims together with their friends and family members. Electoral violence in Zimbabwe has been reported in various regions across the country, most notably in rural areas, while some incidents occurred in metropolitan areas. The participants' responses are given below.

Participant 3 who was an integral part of the 2018 electoral protests, said,

“Three years ago, in August 2018, there was a major incident in which peaceful protestors were shot and murdered. My 48-year-old brother was among the six people killed in Harare when troops opened fire on opposition supporters who were peacefully protesting against the stolen elections”.

Participant 6 had this to say,

“In my village, those who dressed in the MDC regalia were not given an opportunity to vote by ZANU-PF youth militias”.

Participant 8 added thus,

“I saw a married couple from the Uzumba-Maramba-Pfungwe District being abused and degraded by ZANU-PF youth militia. A high school teacher and his wife were forced to have sexual intercourse in public because they backed MDC”.

Participant 11 said,

“In 2018, people in rural areas were compelled to vote for ZANU-PF. Police threatened everyone suspected of voting for the opposition”.

The results concur with Mavhinga’s (2018) observation in his article titled; ***Still no Justice for Zimbabwe’s 2018 Pos-Electoral Violence***. He stated that police used tear gas and live ammunition on peaceful protestors, resulting in the deaths of six persons and the injuries to others. Photographs in **Figure 4.1** shows soldiers shooting and beating MDC’s peaceful demonstrators in Harare on the 2nd of August 2018 after protesters accused ZANU-PF of rigging elections.



Figure 4. 1: Zimbabwean soldiers shooting and beating up protesters following the 2018 elections.

Source: <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/08/16/africa/zimbabwe-opposition-protest-banned-intl/html>



Figure 4. 2: Soldiers beating up protesters in Harare.

Sources: <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/08/16/africa/zimbabwe-opposition-protest-banned-intl/index.html>

Participant 16 explained that,

“In Mutoko, Mashonaland East where I come from, on the night of April 10, 2008, ZANU-PF supporters brutally beat up three women suspected of voting for MDC while the entire village was watching”.

Participant 9 pointed out that,

“In 2008, after the loss of ZANU-PF in the first round of the elections, ZANU-PF supporters unleashing soldiers and police in rural areas to brutalise opposition supporters. They called this Operation “Makavhotera papi? (Who did you vote for?)”.

Respondent 10 alluded to the fact that,

“We were harassed and traumatised by violent attacks sponsored by ZANU-PF in the weeks running up to the runoff election, and the government claimed MDC was to blame for that violence”.

Participant 12 revealed that,

“ZANU-PF supporters in Vhombozi village, Mudzi, Mashonaland East, went on a witch-hunt for anyone accused of voting for MDC in order to punish them. An elderly man was attacked in his home on the night of April 11th by a group of suspected ZANU-PF supporters because he was said to have voted for MDC in the 2008 first round of elections”.

The results are in line with Chari (2008) who stated that ZANU-PF reacted rapidly to losing its legislative majority for the first time in decades by deploying military, police, war veterans, and ZANU-PF youth militias on an operation dubbed “*Makavhotera papi*”. The said operation was meant to punish those who voted for the MDC candidates. The idea was to instill fear and despondence among voters going into the presidential run-off. One would understand ZANU-PF’s intentions as those that sought to have it remain in power despite the obvious signs that it had lost its popularity among voters (Fischer, 2002). The results suggest that ZANU-PF lost the 2008 presidential elections to MDC and it was now desperate to claw its way back to the corridors of power by either hook or crook. Torturing people for voting for MDC was tantamount to forcing them to vote for those they did not have faith in (Chari, 2008). People were brutalised, dehumanised and battered into submission as **Fig 4.3** shows. **Fig 4.3** shows images of battered and brutalised individuals during operation “*Makavhotera papi*”



Figure 4. 3: *A suspected MDC supporter, a victim of ZANU-PF’s brutality.*

Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/gallery/2008/may/01/zimbabwe.zimbabwean>



Figure 4. 4: Arrested individuals suspected of being MDC supporters being beaten up.

Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/gallery/2008/may/01/zimbabwe.zimbabwean>

4.3.2. Electoral violence perpetrators

In a bid to identify the institutions that perpetrated violence against ordinary Zimbabweans, the researcher asked participants to recall who they thought was behind their misery. Most of the responses identified ZANU-PF as the main instigator of electoral violence in Zimbabwe given the army and the police's role in the mayhem. Participants provided similar views here, and only a few responses are given as testament to the accusations labelled against ZANU-PF.

Participant 13 explained that,

“The perpetrators were mostly members of ZANU-PF known as the "Green Bombers." They included state security agents such as the dread CIOs, soldiers, police officers, and veterans of war, and youth militias”.

Participant 14 added thus,

“Members of ZANU-PF militias who had been trained under the National Youth Service and subsequently employed as Ward Officers in constituencies around the nation carried out these atrocities

that were shown by international and independent media in Zimbabwe. Those young people were dispatched from bases set up in local schools and churches. War veterans and senior ZANU-PF officials were in charge and controlled those bases”.

Participant 16 elaborated thus,

“I believe that electoral violence was planned and supported at the highest levels of the state led by the Joint Operations Command (JOC), the main organ for state security coordination, comprised of major military commanders and Ministers of State Security and Defense”.

The results correspond with Raleigh *et al.*'s (2018) observations that members of ZANU-PF militias who had been trained through the National Youth Service and then hired as Ward Officers in constituencies around the country perpetrated most of the violence that occurred in Zimbabwe. Those young people were dispatched from bases set up in local schools and churches to unleash violence against those seen as ZANU-PF's enemies. These were ably supported by War Veterans, prominent ZANU-PF officials (MPs or Rural District Councilors), and military officers from the Zimbabwe National Army who controlled the bases (Raleigh *et al.*, 2018). The police assisted the bases with material and logistical support, and working to ensure that ZANU-PF criminals were not prosecuted for the violence by refusing to record cases or charge them (Chari, 2008). The resources to sustain the violence were mobilised by allowing ZANU-PF leadership access to local farms, mineral resources, and community enterprises, and the government-authorized pay to Ward Officers (UNDP, 2009). In hundreds of those base camps set up around the provinces throughout the country as centres of localised operations, ZANU-PF officials and war veterans beat up and tortured suspected MDC activists and supporters mercilessly. Daily "re-education" meetings were held where ZANU-PF followers, government officials, war veterans, and state security agents beat and abused local inhabitants in order to force them to repudiate the MDC and swear loyalty to ZANU-PF (UNDP, 2009). In Mashonaland East and Harare, for example, there were waves of abductions and disappearances of known MDC members by alleged state agents, ZANU-PF sympathisers, and war veterans (Chari, 2008). The police did nothing to protect vulnerable suspected MDC supporters in all this. The results suggest that ZANU-PF was largely responsible for electoral violence, intimidation and abductions.

4.3.3. Causes of electoral violence

Participants were asked to state their views about the causes of electoral violence in Zimbabwe. Generally, their responses touched on the factors as causing electoral violence in Zimbabwe. However, there are those who provided different views to those of other participants. To avoid repetition of same issues, participants 7, 10 and 12 were picked to exemplify the participants' thoughts on what causes electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

Participant 7 explained that,

“To win elections, ZANU-PF resorts to violence and manipulation. That is, they do so because the majority of top security officers and ZANU-PF officials were afraid of losing their jobs if they lost elections to MDC, and hence they did not hesitate to use violence to force us to vote for them during elections. In short, fear of losing jobs and the benefits that come to top government officials cause electoral violence in Zimbabwe”.

Respondent 10 reasoned that,

“The reason for electoral violence in Zimbabwe is that people are tired of ZANU-PF governance. Since Zimbabwe attained its independence in 1980, people have endured unemployment and poverty under ZANU-PF government. Zimbabweans are disillusioned and frustrated as a result of this. I feel that unemployment and poverty are also major factors in Zimbabwe's electoral violence”.

Respondent 12 believed that,

“The current government's corruption, embezzlement, and mismanagement are the main contributors to election violence because the ruling party is afraid that if they lose power, the majority of government leaders would be jailed for criminal activities they have done since 1980. In this case, to coerce people by any means possible to vote for ZANU-PF is the only way out of their supposed predicament”.

The results are consistent with Morris and Bellamy's (2008) position that ZANU-PF big-wigs' fear to lose lucrative opportunities to loot state resources and the country's natural resources such as diamonds, gold, land and timber, *inter alia*, is part of the reason why they use every resource at their disposal to cling onto power. The Mail & Guardian (2009) added that corruption, stealing, mismanagement of the country's economy and the looting of state resources are some of the factors that lead to electoral violence given that those responsible for all these vices are afraid of going to

jail once they lose power. ZANU-PF and its sympathisers are afraid of losing their grip on power given all the atrocities they have committed against Zimbabweans, beginning with the early 1980s Gukurahundi massacres of the defenseless Ndebeles in Matabeleland and the Midlands regions.

Furthermore, Ploch (2008) admitted that ZANU-PF and its leadership are largely responsible for the messy situation the country finds itself in every time elections are held. That is, ZANU-PF's obsession with winning elections at any cost is behind all election related violence and the displacement of most opposition supporters (Dzirutwe, 2008). The issue is that the ZANU-PF government and its people do not accept defeat and they go to the extent of delaying announcing results in constituencies where their candidates are losing. A case in point is the 2008 presidential elections where the results were not announced when it was clear and obvious to all that Mugabe had lost to Tsvangirai (Dzirutwe, 2008). In other words, rigging of elections is another factor that causes electoral violence as people who engage in demonstrations to voice their displeasure and anger over such issues are brutally beaten up and arrested by the state security apparatus. Similarly, Chris (2008) pointed out that ZANU-PF rigs elections at will in Zimbabwe and nothing has been done by SADC to bring Harare into order given the embarrassment that goes with election manipulation. The results suggest that ZANU-PF and its government are largely responsible for Zimbabwe's electoral violence before, during and after the country holds elections.

4.3.4 Years of electoral violence in Zimbabwe

Participants witnessed Zimbabwe's electoral violence each time the country held elections. But the majority of them were in Zimbabwe during the 2008 elections where violence levels broke the 2000 violence record set during the chaotic land grab that characterised the run-up to the 2000 elections. ZANU-PF, it should be remembered, was smarting from its February 2000 Referendum loss to the MDC inspired and white commercial farmers backed 'NO Vote' to change the country's constitution so that white owned farms could be given to ZANU-PF supporters and backers. Thus, the 2008 election violence was intense in magnitude, very catastrophic in nature, and highly dangerous in intensity (Chris, 2008). No wonder it was one of the most violent and contentious in recent memory. Other participants did not witness the 2013 violent events because they had already fled to neighbouring South Africa. Their fleeing from Zimbabwe was to avoid electoral violence as occurred in 2008. To them, it was a figurative case of once-beaten-twice-shy. Following

Mugabe's removal from office in the 2017 *coup de tat*, the majority of Zimbabweans returned home, expecting a significant change in the country's political environment. They expected free and fair elections now that Mugabe was no longer in charge as he was accused of being the mastermind of Zimbabwe's electoral violence. Those who witnessed what happened therein provided the following responses.

Participant 11 said,

"I witnessed electoral violence in 2005".

Participant 7 confirmed that,

"I witnessed electoral violence in 2000 and 2008".

Participant 4 agreed thus,

"I witnessed electoral violence in 2013".

Respondent 14 and 16 provided the following,

"We witnessed electoral violence in 2018".

The results reflect Raftopolous' (2002) observations that Zimbabwe's electoral violence is an on-going exercise that would only stop with the removal of ZANU-PF from power. In other words, it is a fact that since from 2000, Zimbabweans have suffered from persistent and consistent violence unleashed to those perceived to be anti-ZANU-PF by the ruling party and its followers. One can point out that Zimbabweans have never witnessed any peaceful election since the day ZANU-PF lost the 2000 Referendum to the MDC led opposition to the constitutional amendments that sought to make Mugabe an untouchable president. That is, as long as violence is done by the ruling party in collusion with the country's security forces, chances are nil that it would stop if the perpetrators do not get their way with the electorate (Raftopolous, 2002). The results suggest that Zimbabwe is a country in turmoil, a country embroiled in violent clashes once ZANU-PF senses that it has lost elections to the opposition party.

4.3.5. Media influencing electoral violence in Zimbabwe

Media has a tremendous impact on politics as it can make or break political figures. Voters require knowledge in order to make informed judgments on who to vote for. It is the journalists' responsibility to provide correct and adequate information to the public about political parties, what they stand for, and how they go about their manifesto. Such information should be accurate and non-biased because media influences how we understand and observe political parties and their leadership. Information provided by media influences voter decisions. As a result, media are crucial in disseminating electoral information and covering electoral related campaign processes. During election periods in Zimbabwe, media particularly state media, are often accused of inducing electoral violence. Media play an essential part in articulating positive and negative tendencies between supporters of opposing parties. That is, media propaganda may support what people believe to be true. For example, media may portray a war scenario as an intimidation tactic to persuade voters to choose one party over another. In this context, participants were asked to share their thoughts and experiences on media problems in Zimbabwe that incite electoral violence. Participants provided similar responses to this inquiry.

However, before delving into the participants' opinions on issues of media fermenting violence in Zimbabwe during elections, it is critical to comprehend media's role during elections. Tawana (2018) claimed that media serve as a channel of communication and are the democratic process's lifeblood. He added that media play at least six important functions in democratisation, including information, analysis, watchdog, open venue for debate and discussion, social representation, and entertainment. The vital functions that media play, on the other hand, should be free of all-powerful forces and vested interests such as ownership, government, and political party control policy and regulation funding and financing. Apart from the aforementioned characteristics, the media must be ethical and professional, and should be aware of the public's interests.

The media has a variety of functions. The most evident media role is that we all rely on it for information. Dugger (2021) stated that the media report news and information to the public. because people are important in any political process, and hence should be informed in order to make informed political decisions. This is the most important duty of media in a democracy. As a result, when educating the public on government activities and political events, media must be

detailed and objective. In this respect, elections present a unique challenge to media. In order to adequately educate people, media must remain unbiased and objective, and hence fair media coverage. The participants gave their responses about how they see media in Zimbabwe given endless violence that dog that country's elections every time they are held.

Participant 3 acknowledged that,

“In most cases, privately owned media is anti-ruling party and government, whereas state owned media is pro ruling party and government. During elections, therefore, state-owned media outlets disseminate anti-opposition propaganda. MDC, for example, has been labeled as agents of British imperialists who aim to take over the government and hand it over to the British”.

Participant 6 asserted that,

“Media reports released by privately owned media expose the government and ruin the governing party's name, whereas publicly owned media speaks well of the government and the ruling party”.

Participant 7 admitted that,

“It constantly causes tensions and strife among political groups. In this way, media encourages electoral violence by serving as a tool for both peace and propaganda”.

Participant 9 added that,

“In my experience, both the state-owned and privately-owned press were selective in their attribution of electoral violence. The opposition's infractions were blamed on ZANU-PF and state security services by the private press, which remained mute on ZANU- PF's. In this way, it affected the dispute between ZANU-PF and opposition members, which resulted in election violence”.

Participant 14 elaborated thus,

“In Zimbabwe, people are frequently fooled and brainwashed by untruths broadcast by state media. For example, the state-controlled media described Mugabe as calling Tsvangirai a stooge and a puppet of the US and the UK. This demeaned the MDC leader, and Mugabe's speech led to violence and dissatisfaction that erupted during elections. He did not respect any vote, Mugabe was quoted in the British media as saying, because the gun is mightier than the pen. Zimbabwe was won through the barrel of the gun”.

The results are consistent with Dugger (2021) who asserted that the depiction of electoral violence resulted in two distinct interpretations of reality, with the state-controlled press blaming the opposition MDC and the privately owned press blaming ZANU-PF for the country's electoral related violence. For example, the state-controlled media released numerous reports blaming MDC for most of the election violence. The state-controlled media, for example, portrayed MDC supporters as 'thugs' (The Herald 19 June 2000). This suggests that the MDC was violent, murderous, criminal, and destructive, and hence unfit to be elected. The blame game between the private and public press resulted in election violence among supporters of various political organisations. Tawana (2018) reiterated that media is the most cruel entity during elections as it blatantly take sides, lies to the general public, appeases political leaders, manufacture falsehoods to divert attention from real and pressing issues, and mislead the public for their self-aggrandisement. It is important, therefore, for the public and party supporters to take whatever they read from media with a pinch of salt given the above. The results suggest that media is heavily involved in fermenting electoral violence in Zimbabwe given its biased and inflammatory reporting.

4.4 THEME 2: INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

The second theme deals with issues such as the involvement of intergovernmental organisations in Zimbabwe's elections and how the IGO bodies influence elections. The participants were interviewed on such issues and their responses are presented under each theme.

4.4.1 Inter-governmental organisation bodies and how they address electoral violence in Zimbabwe

Intergovernmental organisations such as the UN, EU, SADC, and the AU are critical in addressing and resolving Zimbabwe's political issues and ending bloodshed during elections. Participants were asked to share their thoughts and experiences on the IGOs' effectiveness in addressing electoral violence in Zimbabwe. Most participants agreed that IGOs always take adequate measures to address and resolve electoral violence in Zimbabwe. But there are those who argued that IGOs' contributions are insufficient to alleviate Zimbabwe's electoral crises.

Participants agreed that intervention strategies and condemnations by IGO authorities and other international leaders made ZANU-PF to worry and be afraid of sanctions being extended. Some speculated that the international leaders' silence encouraged ZANU-PF to continue its electoral violence with impunity.

For example, Participant 6 stated that,

“Former South African President Thabo Mbeki refused to recognise the gravity of the problem. Mbeki, for example, failed to denounce or call for an end to violence during a visit to Harare on May 2013 despite receiving a preliminary report on violence from a group of South African former army generals he had sent to assess the situation”.

Participant 5 responded thus,

“No, Zambia's president, Levy Mwanawasa, has been outspoken in his condemnation of the violence and criticism of Zimbabwe's political predicament”.

The results are in line with Marakine (2015) who noted that despite evidence showing ZANU-PF's responsibility in causing violence during elections, the AU and SADC have never condemned Mugabe for unleashing terror on his people. This is despite damning evidence to the fact that ZANU-PF government murders its citizens for exercising their constitutional right to choose who to lead them. Only a few presidents in the SADC have been brave enough to call Mugabe to order, and one of them is former Botswana President, Ian Khama (Marakine, (2015). The US, EU and other European leaders were also vocal about Mugabe's brutality against his people, particularly the US and British Embassies in Harare. The results suggest that African based IGOs are soft on ZANU-PF government while the Europe based ones and the US were vocal in calling Mugabe out for undemocratic ways in which he runs his country's elections. As a result, the EU, Britain and the US put targeted sanctions against ZANU-PF and top government officials, while SADC and the AU did not do anything to ensure that Mugabe was brought to order (Human Rights Bulletin, 2011). The results suggest that the IGOs are divided on regional lines in condemning or not condemning the Zimbabwean authorities on their part in causing violence during elections.

4.4.2 Do IGOs play enough role to prevent electoral violence in Zimbabwe

Interviewees were also asked about their thoughts on whether international organisations do enough to confront and try to prevent electoral violence in Zimbabwe. Participants had similar views regarding this idea. This is what the selected few said in response.

Participant 8 responded thus,

“No! A regional summit convened by SADC leaders on April 12 2009 to discuss the electoral violence in Zimbabwe resulted in little tangible action, demonstrating nothing that they are likewise concerned about the electoral violence in Zimbabwe”.

Participant 9 said,

“No! While SADC leaders expressed their worry about ZEC's delay in releasing presidential election results, they did little to confront the government's extensive abuses of international human rights”.

Participant 11 provided this response,

“No! The European Union, the US, and the UK continued to condemn the violence and maintain travel bans and asset freezes on senior government and ZANU-PF officials”.

Participant 13

“No! UN officials have continued to engage in the crisis by issuing a number of statements condemning violence and offering assistance to help resolve it”.

Participant 15

“No! During a meeting with MDC leader Tsvangirai on April 21 2008, the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon voiced deep worry about the post-election scenario and said he would talk with the African Union on how to proceed”.

The results are in line with Badza's (2008) observation that the US, along with the UK, has been at the forefront of putting pressure on the Zimbabwean government to reform. The United States Congress approved the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act (ZDERA) on the 4th

of December 2001, which formed the cornerstone of the US foreign policy towards Zimbabwe. This means that the US was concerned about Mugabe and his government's atrocities against his people, and hence drastic measures such as the targeted sanctions on those deemed responsible for the Zimbabweans' suffering (Badza, 2008). The US sanctioned Zimbabwe, making it illegal for US citizens to participate in any economic or financial transactions with Zimbabweans. The results suggest that the US was in the forefront in forcing the Zimbabwean authorities to observe the rule of law and facilitate free, fair and transparent elections.

4.5. THEME 3: ELECTORAL VIOLENCE AND ITS IMPACT IN ZIMBABWE

The third theme presents results on the impact of electoral violence in Zimbabwe. There are various ways violence impact ordinary citizens, particularly the poor and vulnerable. Participants gave their views in line with how and what they experienced during those elections. In this case, their responses are more of how violence impacted their lives and those of the loved ones.

4.5.1 The impact of electoral violence

This researcher requested participants to describe their experiences and knowledge of the effects of electoral violence in Zimbabwe in order to understand how electoral violence impact ordinary Zimbabweans. The participants raised social, economic, and political issues as being impacted by violence. Participants' responses were juxtaposed against data from secondary sources to authenticate claims and counter claims of the said impact. Bratton (2013) asserted that electoral violence has an impact on voter engagement. A cross-sectional survey found that many voters have been threatened with election violence at polls and are unlikely to vote in Zimbabwe's elections (Biti, 2008). Norris (2014) discovered the same conclusions as Bratton (2013), namely that electoral violence impact voter engagement. It may be argued that the incumbent used electoral violence to keep opposition supporters from voting for their preferred candidate.

Powell (2000) found that election violence impact people's willingness to not vote. In other words, where opposition supporters face electoral violence, they are more likely to abstain from voting. Norris (2014) discovered that when there is electoral honesty, that is, when votes are tallied properly, elections are free and fair, voters are given meaningful choices in elections, and

journalists are given fair coverage of elections, and voter turnout is higher. People are threatened and intimidated during polls in Zimbabwe. Consequently, they are unwilling to participate therein.

Participant 2 provided the following,

“In my view, electoral violence decreased the number of voters during elections in our country because people were afraid to go and vote due to the violence that took place then. People are afraid to get injured or killed during elections, and hence voter apathy”.

Participant 5 explained that,

“Electoral violence caused massive Zimbabwe migrations. The main reason why I left Zimbabwe is because I was afraid of electoral violence which always happened during elections”.

Participant 6 asserted that,

“Electoral violence affected our economy in that we are no longer trading with other counties as we are sanctioned because of violence during elections”.

The results dovetail with Chinongo’s (2010) study titled; *Zimbabwe Sanctions: An analysis of the “Lingo” Guiding the Perceptions of the Sanctioners and the Sanctionees*. That is, his results correspond with this study’s results. Chinongo (2010) stated that since 2000, the US has been a strong voice in denouncing Zimbabwe for allegedly violating human rights and the rule of law during elections. The US imposed targeted sanctions on Zimbabwe in 2002 and 2003, including financial and visa sanctions against certain persons, as well as a ban on the supply of defense goods and services. Despite strained political relations between Zimbabwe and the US, the US government continues to serve as Zimbabwe's major humanitarian aid source. The results suggest that the US is fighting a lone battle in trying to force the ZANU-PF government to embrace democratic practices during elections so that its citizens can choose who they want to govern them freely and fairly without any forms of intimidation from anyone.

Participants also provided the following responses in addition to what they were asked given that some mixed up their responses, yet provided facts that needed capturing and presenting herein. These are some of the instances where this happened.

Participant 8 emphasised that,

“Before I came here to South Africa, I was a journalist. I decided to run away from Zimbabwe due to death threats I always received concerning my line of reporting news. I think death threats and intimidations made people migrate from Zimbabwe to neighbouring countries”.

Participant 9 added that,

“The electoral violence in Zimbabwe affected our economy in the sense that many investors pulled out because of intimidation and the lack of property rights. During elections many investors would temporarily return to their countries of origins to avoid being part of electoral violence victims”.

Participant 11 agreed that,

“Electoral violence created huge tensions between members of ZANU-PF and the opposition supporters. Opposition party members were labeled criminals who deserved to be punished by ZANU-PF supporters”.

Participant 13 revealed that,

“The impact of electoral violence is death. This is what most media houses reported during elections. During elections, we experienced many people dying due to militias running amok, killing everyone suspected of supporting MDC”.

Participant 14 concluded thus,

“Abductions, torture and killings are what we do not usually experience in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe is one African country that always fight against crime. But during elections crime statistics increase due to electoral violence condoned by the ruling party government”.

Results are consistent with Chari (2008) who claimed that those who kill opposition supporters in the name of ZANU-PF are immune from prosecution given that since violence began in Zimbabwe, no one has been prosecuted for that. Violence has a huge and detrimental impact on election participation in general. Zimbabwean voters were unable to attend election campaign rallies due to fear of violence (Ben, 2015). Opposition parties were threatened with violence and this made people shy-away from voting. It can be stated that in the politics of political survival, violence is just one of many tools that can be used to compete (Booth, 2011). Violence, on the

other hand, is not always a sign of breakdown of the rule of law but a cheap way for the elite to protect their political interests. They do so by threatening voters to indicate their willingness to violate public norms as a form of leverage, and as an economic strategy to acquire new forms of 'discounted' rents (Barbara, 2014).

Political violence is utilised in Zimbabwe on a variety of scales, including at community, councils, mines, farms, province, party, and institutional levels. It is multidimensional and a tool used by a variety of parties, many of which strive for highly localised goals (Ben, 2015). The ruling party elites have permitted and profited from violence on numerous levels, that is, at local level, against farmers, miners, vendors, and opposition supporters, and at national level, against farmers, miners, vendors, and opposition supporters (Chari, 2008). Threats were used by the police to extract large mounts of money through roadblocks, while the municipal police used violence to control access to vending stands and taxi routes (Biti, 2008). On the other hand, the military utilised violence to restrict access to diamond fields and revenue from Marange diamonds fields in Manicaland (Akpabio, 2011).

4.6. THEME ANALYSIS

Data collected through interviews is presented and discussed in this chapter. The researcher also concentrated on emergent themes. Excluded here are gender perspectives on violence as well as age disparities in the participants' responses. There were at least seven major themes that arose. The themes are understanding of electoral violence; the significance of electoral violence; People who witnessed electoral violence; causes of electoral violence in Zimbabwe; elections that had violence; perpetrators of electoral violence; the NGO bodies' successful actions to address electoral violence and the consequences of Zimbabwe's electoral violence. However, suffices it to examine the narratives that underpin Zimbabwe's electoral violence dynamics. The demographic table below shows the number of interviewees according to age, gender, nationality, level of education and marital status.

Table 4. 1 Participants' demographic information.

| Participant | Gender | Age | Nationality | Level of Education | Marital status | Employment |
|-------------|--------|-----|-------------|--------------------|----------------|------------|
| 1 | Male | 33 | Zimbabwe | Master's | Married | No |
| 2 | Male | 28 | Zimbabwe | Honours | Single | No |
| 3 | Male | 26 | Zimbabwe | Degree | Single | No |
| 4 | Female | 30 | Zimbabwe | Honours | Single | No |
| 5 | Female | 39 | Zimbabwe | Matric | Married | No |
| 6 | Male | 46 | Zimbabwe | None-Matric | Married | Yes |
| 7 | Female | 41 | Zimbabwe | None-matric | Married | Yes |
| 8 | Female | 31 | Zimbabwe | Degree | Single | No |
| 9 | Female | 51 | Zimbabwe | None-Matric | Married | Yes |
| 10 | Female | 29 | Zimbabwe | Honours | Single | No |
| 11 | Male | 38 | Zimbabwe | PhD | Married | Yes |
| 12 | Female | 44 | Zimbabwe | None-Matric | Married | No |
| 13 | Male | 33 | Zimbabwe | PhD | Single | Yes |
| 14 | Male | 27 | Zimbabwe | Matric | Single | Yes |
| 15 | Male | 31 | Zimbabwe | Matric | Married | No |
| 16 | Female | 29 | Zimbabwe | None-Matric | Married | No |

Table 4. 2 Distribution of research questions by gender.

| Age | Frequency |
|-------|-----------|
| 18-29 | 5 |
| 30-39 | 7 |
| 40-49 | 3 |
| 50-59 | 1 |
| 60-69 | 0 |
| 70+ | 0 |
| Total | 30 |

Table 2 shows that participants between the ages of 18 and 29 were 5, participants between the ages of 30 and 39 were 7, participants between the ages of 40 and 49 were 3, participants between the ages of 50 and 59 was 1 participant between the ages of 60 and 69 was 0, and participants between the age of 70 and above was also 0. The researcher chose the above-mentioned age range because he believes that people aged 18 and above are competent and capable of voting and making their independent decisions. **Table 4.3** illustrates the distribution of research questions by gender.

Table 4. 3 Participants by gender.

| Gender | Frequency |
|--------|-----------|
| Male | 8 |
| Female | 8 |
| Total | 16 |

Table 4.3 shows the participants' gender distribution. Fifty percent of the research participants were females, and another fifty percent were males. These findings reveal a gender balance among the research participants. This provided a more diverse and different perspectives on Zimbabwe's electoral violence. The analysis and responses that follow expand on this assumption.

4.7. APPLICATION OF THE DEFECTIVE DEMOCRACY THEORY

The preceding conversation demonstrates the amount of lawlessness and confusion surrounding Zimbabwe's elections. One could conclude that no single hypothesis can adequately show the motivation for violence during Zimbabwean elections. However, the Defective Democracy Theory could be used to help explore and analyse Zimbabwe's electoral violence. The Defective Democracy Theory posits that in an illiberal democracy, elected officials no longer hold to constitutional principles due to the deteriorating judiciary powers. As a result, the nation becomes an illiberal democracy in which the rule of law is damaged or flawed, and constitutional norms have little or no binding effect on elected officials and their actions. Individual civic rights are either partially or completely revoked.

The Defective Democracy Theory's domain insinuates that democracy occurs when soldiers, business people, landowners, local militias, or multinational corporations seize political domains and veto authority from democratically elected authorities. What really happened in Zimbabwe in 2017 when a military coup resulted in a domain democracy is the *coup d'état*, in which the Zimbabwean military seized control of the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation, key areas of Harare city, and placed Zimbabwean President Mugabe under house arrest. The coup was successful, and after Mugabe's resignation, Mnangagwa peacefully became Zimbabwe's third President, unelected because the military held the presidency.

In this sense, this researcher recognises that the Defective Democracy idea has a lot of complexities. That is, since 1980 when Zimbabwe experienced the Gukurahundi massacres, elections in Zimbabwe have been marred by violence. As a result, one might argue that ZANU-PF has maintained power through brutality and political hegemony since then. Force has been utilised as a tool of political supremacy in order to ensure voter obedience. From 1980 to 2017, Mugabe and his political party maintained power through intimidation, kidnappings, beatings, and executions.

"We sacrificed for this country, and we will not give it up to anyone because of an X on ballot papers," Mugabe once vowed (Human Rights Watch Report, 2008). "We fought for this country, and there has been much bloodshed", he added (Human Rights Watch Report, 2008). ZANU-PF members expressed anti-opposition sentiments whenever they addressed media or any gathering. ZANU-PF showed its true colours during the 2008 elections, displaying their willingness to destroy the country in order to remain in power.

The use of war veterans, the army, CIO agents, and the police to confront voters during the 2008 elections as part of the "which party did you vote for campaign" reveals how obsessed with power ZANU-PF is. The state media backed ZANU-PF campaigns in the process deliberately failing to report on its brutality. This is not surprising given that government controls 90 percent of Zimbabwe's media. Consequently, Zimbabwe's media would always be biased towards ZANU-PF government, ensuring that its wrongdoings are not exposed. Privately owned media outlets, however, did not support ZANU-PF, thus exposed its misdeeds.

The use of hate speeches to publicly discredit opposition parties during the 2008 elections saw opposition parties being referred to as puppets, sell-outs, and traitors, and accused of undermining

the country's sovereignty. The state-owned media's hate speech campaigns focused on Tsvangirai and MDC in weeks leading up to the presidential run-off elections on 27th of June 2008. This was because the MDC was the main opposition party and it posed challenges to ZANU-PF candidate's re-election. In the face of such challenges, the latter resorted to openly threatening the electorate with war if they voted for Tsvangirai. By so doing ZANU-PF legitimised an illegal situation by fostering the belief that only unlawful frustration results in violent retaliation.

They saw MDC's triumph as illuminating meddling by the West in Zimbabwe's internal affairs. In order to counter the West's interference in Zimbabwe's internal affairs, ZANU-PF castigated and rubbished Tsvangirai as a traitor, Tony Blair's tea-boy, and the West's bootlicker. The idea was to irritate people and make them see Tsvangirai in bad light. Mugabe would scream such obscenities as "I came here to warn you about him, his imperial masters, and their friends, who we drove out of Zimbabwe through a protracted armed struggle but who now intended to return using one of us, Morgan Tsvangirai, as their running dog, chimbwasungata. If you vote for the MDC in the presidential run-off elections, you are almost certainly voting for the imperialists and so for war" (Manica Post, 2008).

Participant 2 claimed that just after the March 2008 Presidential elections, war veterans and ZANU-PF youth militias threatened him, vowing that if MDC won, they would take up arms to defend their country's sovereignty against imperialists. "You may recall what happened when the British believed their proxy had won the election. A gun cannot be reasoned with by a pen. We, as veterans, will never allow it to happen because we fought for the liberation of this land", elaborated Participant 2. These intoxicating threats exacerbated what Dollard *et al.* (2012) referred to as "a group identity problem" or "in group out-group attitude." Discrimination between in-groups and out-groups is a result of nepotism in favour of the in-group and a lack of equal bias in favour of the out-group (Brewer & Marilyn, 1999). Out-group derogations are the phenomenon in which members of an in-group see an out-group as a threat to its ambitions. Thus, MDC and Tsvangirai were discriminated against because they were seen as a stumbling block or a hindrance to an in-group ZANU-PF.

Dissonance existed within ZANU-PF. When an individual or a group should choose between two incomputable actions or beliefs, dissonance occurs. People's perceptions of their ideas and interests clashed with the realities they encountered during and after the harmonised elections and

presidential run-offs. Despite employing every available means to intimidate the electorate, ZANU-PF's win in the run-off elections failed to foster a positive mood throughout the party. Instead of adopting a conciliatory tone following the significant election victory, the ruling party explained and accepted its behaviour as normal. Dissonance within the ruling party's use of violence was sparked by the presidential runoff elections. In this regard, it is prudent to say that the study participants believe that election violence has become the norm in Zimbabwe. That is, electoral violence is a reoccurring issue, primarily perpetrated by state agents, war vets and youth militias. Women were raped as human rights violations escalated.

The data also show that those guilty of these acts of violence were between the ages of 18 and 40, considered as youth. Rape was perpetrated against women and young girls, while males were slaughtered, tortured, and kidnapped. People were harassed for their support of ZANU-PF's opposition parties. Violence thrives out of dissatisfaction. In order to halt electoral violence in Zimbabwe, political parties should engage with each other and organisations such as the AU, SADC, EU and the UN should play mediatory roles. To comprehend electoral violence in Zimbabwe, the qualitative methodology and the Defective Democracy Theory were used.

4.8. CONCLUSION

The causes of persistent election violence in Zimbabwe were examined here. This included an analysis of the identified causes based on the information gathered from the participants. Chapter four also assessed how political issues such as intolerance, violence, intimidations and, thuggish and greedy behaviour by the ruling party fueled election violence in Zimbabwe since the country's independence in 1980. The Chapter concludes that stakeholders should work with international institutions such as the UN, EU, AU and SADC to ensure free and fair elections in Zimbabwe. The Defective Democracy Theory was also used to help understand Zimbabwe's electoral violence given that it is the most suitable for this purpose. The next Chapter concludes this study and provides its recommendations.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter concludes this study. This is done by providing the study's findings drawn from the results, their discussions and interpretations done in the preceding Chapter. The findings are presented in the context of this study's research questions and its objectives outlined in the first Chapter. The section on this study's findings is followed by the study's conclusion that ties up this study. In its conclusion, this study reveals whether its research questions were fully answered or not and whether it achieved its objectives or not. Recommendations are made based on the study's findings and its concluding section. The study's findings are presented next.

5.2 FINDINGS

As highlighted earlier, this study's aim was to investigate why Zimbabwe persistently experience electoral violence despite the regional, continental, and international intervention measures meant to prevent that. What the study found is given according to each research question as indicated below.

Why does Zimbabwe persistently experience electoral violence despite the regional, continental, and international intervention measures meant to prevent that?

This is the study's main research question which was answered after considering its subsidiary questions. By using qualitative analysis approaches, this study found that ZANU-PF is responsible for the persistent electoral violence in Zimbabwe. It was found that Zimbabwe persistently experience electoral violence because of ZANU-PF big-wigs' refusal to accept defeat in any poll. This is due to the benefits that come with controlling government, thereby having unlimited access to the country's resources. Thus, once in charge of all spheres of government, ZANU-PF politicians are able to loot the country's resources such as minerals, land, finances and industries to enrich themselves. In view of their unprecedented lootings of state funds or treasury, ZANU-PF elite fear that once they lose power, they would likely be arrested and sent to jail for longer

periods. Thus, the use of violence to intimidate the electorate becomes the only viable option to coerce people to vote for ZANU-PF.

This study also found that there is persistent electoral violence in Zimbabwe because ZANU-PF brutalises opposition party members and supporters so that it remains in power forever. They cause electoral violence because they are aware that if they lose power to another political party, their party leaders would be prosecuted for criminal acts against the citizenry. Thus, ZANU-PF use violence to subdue people and manipulate elections.

5.2.1 Subsidiary questions

In order to answer the study's main research question, it was imperative for this study to break it down into secondary questions for easier specific investigations. The study's findings in respect of these questions are provided below.

Which factors cause electoral crisis in Zimbabwe during elections?

The study found that the main cause of electoral violence in Zimbabwe is ZANU-PF's unwillingness to cede power to another political party despite it losing during elections. ZANU-PF does not want to relinquish power to any political party because its supporters, backers and top politicians believe that it is the only party that fought for the liberation of Zimbabwe from the white minority rule. This makes ZANU-PF try by all means to protect and defend the political power it has. In the process, they use violence against voters as a tool to manipulate each election. In this regard, electoral violence becomes a permanent feature in Zimbabwe's elections.

It was found that voting principles, regulations and human rights are violated to make sure that only ZANU-PF candidates win elections. In addition, this study found that corruption, theft and mismanagement of the country's resources by the ZANU-PF government contributes to electoral violence in Zimbabwe. That is, the ruling party fears that if they lose power most of its top government officials would be arrested for corruptions and fraud.

Furthermore, the study found that ZANU-PF causes electoral violence in Zimbabwe by sponsoring its youth militias to go around villages torturing and intimidating opposition members so that they vote for it during elections. The study found that ZANU-PF militias went to places such as Birunda,

Mbire, Rushinga, Mukumbura, Chikomba, Binga, Lupane, among others, to torture and intimidate opposition members.

This study found that police officers and soldiers cause electoral violence by allowing themselves to be deployed by ZANU-PF in different towns and villages to abduct, kill and torture people suspected of supporting MDC. The ruling party believes that by torturing and intimidating people, they would make them vote for ZANU-PF. The study found that the electoral violence strategy is used by ZANU-PF as a tool to manipulate elections and this has worked to keep it in power.

How effective is the SADC, AU and the UN's strategies in helping prevent Zimbabwe's electoral crises?

The study found that the intergovernmental organisations do not exact effective pressure to the Zimbabwe government to force them to stop engaging in electoral violence each time they sense that they would likely lose elections. The intergovernmental organisations were seen not to play an effective role in stopping electoral violence in Zimbabwe because there are many unresolved electoral disputes and complaints which were launched by opposition parties and civil organisations since 2000. Until now (2021) nothing effective or concrete has been done to stop the ruling party from unleashing electoral violence to the electorate. People still experience beatings, torture, kidnappings, murder and disappearances despite the attempts by the SADC, AU, EU, and the UN in trying to resolve Zimbabwe's electoral violence related problems.

What is the impact of electoral violence in Zimbabwe's social, political and economic stability?

The study found that electoral violence has led to the displacement of tens of thousands of innocent civilians, particularly those in urban areas. In both urban and rural areas, the study found that families have been torn apart, disintegrated and broken as bread-winners are killed, maimed, kidnapped and disappear forever, while those lucky escape to neighbouring countries. That is, Zimbabwe's family institution has disintegrated with family members scattered all over the world. A lot of children grow up without parents or live in child headed families as orphans due to Zimbabwe's ZANU-PF perpetrated electoral violence. It was found that rape and other gender based violent acts against women have led to marriage breaking ups.

Politically, the study found that electoral violence led to the death, abductions, torture and maiming of prominent individuals such as Tsvangirai and Cain Nkala who was abducted and found dead 30 kilometres to the west of Bulawayo. Nkala was the President of Zimbabwe's self-styled War Veterans Association who was a very vocal and outspoken critic of Mugabe and ZANU-PF's uncontrolled killings of innocent opposition party members. The study also found that opposition supporters live in fear of ZANU-PF and its thugs who masquerade as police and army officials. Political parties no longer hold rallies freely and are not allowed by the partisan police to gather. There is no longer political freedom in Zimbabwe.

Economically, the study found that the country's economy has declined, with industries closing or scaling down their operations due to violence and intimidations. Companies are forced to donate large sums of money to fund ZANU-PF activities. It was also found that companies have retrenched almost three quarters of their workforce given the country's economic meltdown due to ZANU-PF's misrule and economic mismanagement linked to electoral violence. The study found that a lot of professionals have left the country to seek for better working conditions in neighbouring countries. The economic meltdown has led to the exodus of most professionals and able bodied young people to South Africa and other countries in the region and overseas. All participants here are economic refugees seeking for a better life in South Africa given Zimbabwe's economic disintegration largely due to electoral violence unleashed by ZANU-PF.

5.3 CONCLUSION

The study concludes that violence in general has a significant and negative impact on how citizens participate in an election. Fear of violence in Zimbabwe prevents voters from attending election campaign rallies. Fear of violence by opposition parties has reduced the prospects of people voting and working for parties or candidates they support. It can be concluded that in the politics of political survival, violence is one tool among many that can be used to win elections. However, violence is not a sign of the breakdown of law but can often function as a cheap way for the elites to protect their interests and make them take other people's resources, threaten the voting public, indicate a group's willingness to transgress public norms as a form of leverage, and as an economic strategy to acquire new forms of 'discounted' rents. Within Zimbabwe, political violence is rife during elections. It is multifaceted and a tool of multiple parties, often working towards highly

localised ends. The ruling party elites have allowed for and benefitted from violence practiced at several levels. The police are part of violence as they use threats to intimidate voters to vote for the ruling ZANU-PF.

One can also conclude that ZANU-PF uses state resources to manipulate elections. Here, state media is used as a tool to deceive voters. The state-owned media spread propaganda against opposition parties in order to influence voters' thinking and belief about their candidates. On the other hand, privately owned media are banned for exposing ZANU-PF's intimidation tactics and its blatant disregard for the rule of law. Thus, it can be concluded that during elections ZANU-PF is in charge of everything as it maneuvers itself to retain power by winning those elections. In view of this study's findings, this researcher concludes that the study managed to answer all its research questions, thereby achieving its objectives. This study's recommendations are next.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE UN, EU, AU, SADC, AND ZIMBABWE GOVERNMENT

In order to create an environment of non-violence, intimidation and threats, the following recommendations are made. If adopted, they would help make Zimbabwe elections meet universal and regional criteria for credible elections.

- The UN, EU, AU and SADC should deploy election observer teams with strong mandate to ensure that election results reflect the will of the people. They should refuse to endorse any results that do not meet this requirement. The UN, EU, AU and SADC electoral teams have a responsibility to report on runoff elections based on regional principles guiding elections, and in a manner that accurately reflects the conditions on the ground.
- The government must ensure that both the army and the police are not biased towards it and are neutral during elections. The army and the police's role during elections is to ensure that elections are held under peaceful conditions, and that anyone who starts violence is arrested and prosecuted without fear or favour. The government must take appropriate disciplinary or legal action against military officers who fail or are alleged to have not ensured that forces under their command act neutrally at all times.

- The war veterans and youth militias should be demobilised and disarmed. This would ensure that elections are held peacefully without anyone or anybody intimidating opposition supporters. Elections are supposed to be free and fair for everyone who wants to participate in them.
- Measures to end the practice of torture, intimidation, murder and rape, *inter alia*, should be instituted to make Zimbabwe's political play field level for all political parties in that country. The government, under the UN, AU, EU and SADC supervision, should be made to dismantle all known torture camps and bases, and prosecute those responsible for torture and murder of opposition supporters. In other words, there should be law and order in Zimbabwe if elections are to be held under free and fair conditions. Thus, police should protect all Zimbabweans during election periods regardless of party affiliation.
- Cease the politically motivated arrests of civil society activists, journalists, lawyers and election officers and observers. This would help maintain a semblance of peace and tranquility in Zimbabwe so that her elections are seen to be free, fair and transparent.
- Allow unfettered access to all humanitarian agencies seeking to assist displaced people in the provinces affected by violence. That is, all Zimbabweans must be allowed to receive humanitarian aid from NGOs without government forcing them to assist ZANU-PF members and supporters only. NGOs are generally neutral and their neutrality should be seen to benefit all those who live in Zimbabwe and need humanitarian assistance.
- Ensure that all people have freedom of movement within Zimbabwe and that those in need of medical attention are able to seek it without any hindrance or any judgment of their political affiliation. That is, the ZANU-PF government should immediately stop forcing its hospitals to attend to ZANU-PF supporters only. The selective treatment of Zimbabweans should stop immediately as all those who live in Zimbabwe deserve equal treatment despite differences in political orientations and aspirations.

- All political parties in Zimbabwe, including intergovernmental organisations such as the UN, AU, EU and SADC should condemn electoral violence and stamp their authority in ensuring that elections are held freely and fairly at all times. This would help the Zimbabweans to choose leaders they want to govern them without fear or favour. Holding free and fair elections would help bring democracy in a country that has seen its citizens suffer under ZANU-PF rule.

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Interviewees

Respondent 1.

Respondent 2.

Respondent 3.

Respondent 4.

Respondent 5.

Respondent 6.

Respondent 7.

Respondent 8.

Respondent 9.

Respondent 10.

Respondent 11.

Respondent 12.

Respondent 13.

Respondent 14.

Respondent 15.

Respondent 16.

Appendix A: Data Collection Tool

Section 1: Demographic Data

1. Gender: Female [] Male []

2. Age group

| 18 - 29 | 30 - 39 | 40 - 49 | 50 - 59 | 60 - 69 | 70+ |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----|
| | | | | | |

3. Highest level of education attained

| Non-matric | Matric | Bachelor's degree | Postgraduate diploma | Honours Degree | Masters | PhD |
|------------|--------|-------------------|----------------------|----------------|---------|-----|
| | | | | | | |

4. Marital status

| Single | Married | Divorced |
|--------|---------|----------|
| | | |

5. Nationality

6. Employment

| Yes | No | Self-employed |
|-----|----|---------------|
| | | |

Section 2: Causes of the persistence of electoral violence

1. How do you define electoral violence?

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2. What do you think contributes to electoral violence in Zimbabwe?

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3. Do you think media contributed to electoral violence? Yes/No. Please explain

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4. What are the factors contributed to electoral violence?

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5. Did you witness the electoral violence in Zimbabwe? Please Explain

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6. Which year did you witness the electoral violence in Zimbabwe?

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Section 3: Effectives measures of IGO Bodies to address electoral violence

1) Do you think the IGO bodies influence electoral violence? Please Explain

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2) Do you think the IGO bodies are playing enough role to prevent electoral violence? Please Explain

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3) What are the measures that the IGO bodies can take to end electoral violence in Zimbabwe?

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4) Does the electoral violence have to do with the nature of the government that doesn't want reform? Please Explain

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Section 4: Impacts of electoral violence

1. Who were the victims during electoral violence?

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2. Does electoral violence compelled you to leave your country (Zimbabwe)?

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3. How many victims did you witnessed?

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Thank you !!!

