

Indigenous beliefs and Zimbabwe's war of liberation: Inside the metaphysics

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Abstract

This article is a record of mysterious and miraculous events of the liberation war, as expressed by former combatants on either side of the conflict during the Zimbabwe's liberation war in the 1970s. The research, therefore, widens understanding of African spirituality in times of war. Respondents were drawn from Mashonaland Central and West who were the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) and Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA) operatives in the respective areas. The special collaboration between guerrillas and spirit mediums in the early 1970s makes it imperative to find out if the taboos of the liberation struggle had any bearing to events which the fighters encountered during the war. Data was collected through studies of secondary sources and oral interviews. The major question, which the research answers is whether there was any relationship between metaphysics and battles which were fought during the war. In answering that question, the study examines African cosmology and reviews the development of relationships between liberation movements and spirit mediums. Lastly, it explores ways in which the metaphysical world manifested itself, how it regulated the behaviour of combatants/forces involved in the war and the living legacies of such beliefs to date. It is pivotal to note that the article contributes to issues of national healing, reconciliation and integration which the Zimbabwean government and other civil society organisations have been trying to spearhead, unsuccessfully though, since the attainment of independence in 1980. With a view of avoiding being cornered within controversial schools of thought,



this research is not based on any theory, but on African worldviews in relation to religion.

Keywords

metaphysics; spirit mediums; guerrillas; mass mobilisation; war veterans; ceremonies

1. Introduction

Metaphysics is a philosophical outlook which tries to reach a more embracing total view of reality without neglecting the unique place of individual things in the holism of reality (Etim, 2013 p.12). In other words, metaphysics refers to the spiritual dimension of human nature which cannot be authenticated through scientific investigations but still shape the way humans perceive life. Viriri and Mungwini (2009, p.180) forward that metaphysics means 'after' physics or that which transcends the physical. It involves synthesis of all experiences in order to achieve a coherent whole which gives a complete picture of reality. Such a picture provides a system of morality that establishes right from wrong; good, and appropriate from bad and inappropriate behavior (Kazembe, 2009 p. 55). The metaphysical view is an anti-science approach, but nonetheless progressive, and workable for those who are committed to it. It makes use of localised deities such as trees, rivers, hills, pools, forests, caves, animals and so on. These can be manipulated by mankind to cause good and bad things to happen.

The way in which civilians and combatants interacted with the metaphysical world during Zimbabwe's war of liberation was logical to circumstances facing them, then, and to indigenous knowledge they had accumulated over the years. Acceptance of indigenous religious beliefs was perceived in terms of the practical results of the whole idea in the face of existential threats. Despite undergoing rigorous military training, some African combatants who fought in this war embraced indigenous beliefs thereby making the war somehow, a religious one. Guerrilla daily activities were generally begun with some traditional rituals and rounded up the same way.

Particular attention was also paid to the behaviour of wild animals and fellow guerrillas, weather and so on, because all that was religiously

symbolic in relation to events likely to unfold. There were also taboos that were associated with the natural environment such as rivers, pools, mountains, caves and forests. Guerrillas were expected to be attentive to all these for their own safety. The taboos and directives were given to the fighters by acclaimed spirit mediums, and elders, in each operational area.

It is because of the above that the armed struggle began with a traditional ceremony in the re-launching of the war by ZANLA in 1972. In a short while, this was followed by the crossing over of the medium of Mbuya Nehanda to Chifombo, and the role of various other mediums in Zimbabwe's war of liberation. From there, focus goes to how guerrillas made daily use of these systems alongside the utility of the rituals to the practitioners. Lastly, the research discusses the present dispensation of reburials and various related ceremonies, currently taking place in Zimbabwe, as an attempt to reincarnate a religion formerly abandoned, but nonetheless crucial to many people in Zimbabwe. The operations of the metaphysical world can be best understood by the long quotation below pointing out that:

Ancient Greeks in 100BC consulted oracles, the Romans used soothsayers and Eu- rope's queens and kings consulted stargazers. In the late 1800, spirit mediumship be- came recognised as a psychic ability. In 1818, the Fox Sisters of New York, in America, are said to have communicated with a murdered toddler buried in the cellar of their house. In 1900, spirit mediums such as Edythe Meander, Jack Kelly, Florence Becker and Mae Graves Ward began to be recognized. In Britain, one of the first mediums was a Mrs Hyden who operated in London. In 1882, a group of Cambridge scholars founded the Society of Psychical Research, and it was then that the subject of mediumship was recognized. In 2010, the world got to know about an octopus named Paul who predicted correctly the results of all German's matches. In Zimbabwe, a good number of war veterans attribute their participation in the war to the spirit of Mbuya Nehanda, who before being hanged, made a prophecy that her bones would rise again (*Financial Gazette*, 13 August 2010).

The quotation above clearly demonstrates one of the greatest forces in life has ever been the power of religion and Africans themselves are not lost when they are incurably religious. The cooption of traditional beliefs in war falls within the context of African worldviews.

2. Methodology

A total of 12 key respondents took part in the research. They were selected on the basis of their memory of metaphysics in as far as it related to the war of liberation. The study was conducted between 2013 and 2021. At first, it involved long trips to Mt Darwin and Bindura with financial support from Midlands State University's Research Board. Later, long trips to Hurungwe, Mashonaland West Province, were also undertaken. Between 2017 and 2021, war veterans were interviewed in various parts of the provinces under discussion. Specific battles, and for Hurungwe, the downing of Air Rhodesia Viscounts in September 1978 and February 1979, were the main focus. Indigenous beliefs, however, ended-up being discussed in the deliberations. This, therefore, influenced the desire to dedicate a paper, exclusively, on indigenous spirituality. There were more trips to be conducted with a view of collecting more data, but this was blocked by restrictions emanating from the covid-19 pandemic lockdown restrictions.

There is no doubt that data here should have been complemented with visits to the National Archives of Zimbabwe. Since the outbreak of the pandemic, the archive which is a major source of primary evidence has remained closed. The worst part of it is that Zimbabwean archives are not yet digitised, hence, files, at the time of writing, could not be accessed online. Primary sources were augmented by both published and unpublished secondary sources. In that direction, the Midlands State University online library remained open throughout the period of study, and did not close even during the pandemic. It was, thus, a key source of secondary information.

3. Spirit mediums and mass nationalism

The role of spirit mediums dates back to the 1896-7 uprisings in Matabeleland and Mashonaland respectively. Thus, the legacy of the spirit mediums, who had participated effectively in the First Chimurenga, was still alive in the 1970s, which explained why the new generation of mediums was equally opposed to the whites and their colonial oppressive system (Bhebe & Ranger, 1995 p. 9). According to Beach (1986, pp. 100-1), the technical term for the spirit of a person of political significance is 'spirit medium' or *mhondoro* or *svikiro* in the Shona language.

The participation of spirit mediums in the liberation struggle comes from a long history of resistance. The spirit of Nehanda continued to play a significant role in mass mobilisation in the Dande area of Mt Darwin. Mhanda (2011 p.102), who was himself a guerrilla during the war, alludes that some spirit mediums accompanied the *svikiro* of Nehanda to Mboroma and Chifombo in Zambia with a number of guerrilla recruits. In view of Nehanda's reputation in the 1896-7 war, it is not surprising that when guerrillas in Dande found her actively supporting the war in their operational zone; they took her away to prevent Rhodesians from treating her as one of theirs. According to Tungamirai (1985 p. 148), 'once the children, the boys and the girls in the area knew that Nehanda had joined the war, they came in large numbers.' With Nehanda safely under ZANLA, and the party Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), she was ballooned into a spirit of the whole nation, thus turning the country into a single spirit province under her. This is the position she continues to, controversially, occupy to the present day. Support was further increased when the spirit medium of Chiwawa and Chiwodzamamera joined the war. All these were representatives of traditional religion with metaphysical powers, believed to rally people behind the war effort against minority rule. By supporting the war of liberation, these mediums had endorsed the cause as morally upright. The coming of the war made mediums important arbiters of power.

During Zimbabwe's war of liberation, the main duties of spirit mediums evolved around the recruitment exercise, mobilisation of support for the freedom fighters as well as giving spiritual guidance (Mhanda, 2011; Lan, 1985). In political terms, this would entail protection against the enemy, prescription of war strategies and preservation of traditional norms. Fay Chung (2006) is of the same view, that, simple adherence to ethical rules such as respect for life, sexual purity, and care of the environment were of paramount importance in the smooth execution of the war of liberation in Zimbabwe.

It was believed that those who bent the rules in their favour would be punished by the spirits. Therefore, spirit mediums were involved in the recruitment exercise and safe movement of guerrillas from one point to another. In light of the above, guerrillas and African traditional religions were inseparable despite the absence of guidance by spirit mediums in the military training of guerrillas. The spirits, and by extension the god they believed in, would protect guerrillas against enemy firepower. When the war was eventually won, the spirit of Nehanda was assumed to have triumphed over the enemy (*Interview*, Mauye, Mahondo, Village, Mt Darwin, 19 March 2014).

Chung (2006) posits that one of the key tenets of traditional religion in Zimbabwe was the belief that ancestral spirits protected their offspring and would guarantee their welfare, provided that the living respected the rules of their ancestors as mentioned earlier. It should also be noted that some of the freedom fighters were both guerrillas, and sometimes peasants, hence were in a better position to guide the struggle; and this was usually complimented by the support of local indigenous leaders such as *mhondoro*. Kriger (1992) views peasants as having been central to the success of the liberation struggle.

The role of the spirit mediums continued into Mozambique; giving guidance to the war effort as they had done in rural Rhodesia. They had suddenly become unofficial military commanders in charge of indoctrination. Chung (2006) forwards that the role of the traditional religious leaders, during the armed struggle, was to provide spiritual and ideological leadership. In both refugee and military camps, the spirit mediums had their own separate encampment where they practised their religion. This idea is confirmed by Mhanda (2011) who cites an incident at Chifombo camp, in Zambia, where the guerrillas were food-poisoned, and the leadership consulted the spirit of *Sekuru* Chidyamauyu, who, in a trance, assured of no loss to life. Mhanda further remarked that the food-poisoning was an attempt by the Rhodesian agent to wipe out the ZANLA guerrillas.

Furthermore, it accords reason that spirit mediums were independent of political leadership, and hence, were free to support or to criticise the political incumbents (Chung, 2006 p.195). As a result, they had a profound effect on the day-to-day business of the liberation struggle. In some cases, however, this made them unpopular with leaders who were found on the wrong end of ethical rules, particularly on sexual purity.

4. Metaphysical aspects of the Zimbabwean war of liberation

Key respondents to metaphysics and the war were Paradzai Mabhunu, who fought in Mutoko; Chikomba, who was in Mt Darwin; George Rutanhire, one of the most senior guerrillas; Mauye, who was a medium in Nyazura, and Masango, who was a guerrilla. Their experiences are complimented by those of Magarasadza, a ZIPRA guerrilla, who fought in Mashonaland West, and Bhinya (a former ZIPRA *mujibha*), as well one ex-Security Force Auxiliary operative. While ZIPRA and ZANLA guerrillas could seek guidance from the mediums linked to those who had led the first Chimurenga, African soldiers fighting on the side of Rhodesians, resorted to their family spirits for

intervention. Whether one was fighting for Zimbabwe or against it, the metaphysical world with its capacity to hide combatants from opponents, was deemed helpful by respondents who were involved either as insurgents or counter-insurgents.

There is need to highlight that guerrilla training, especially outside Zimbabwe, did not emphasise spiritual issues. According to Chitukutuku (2019), guerrillas who were on the war front had to decide on what worked for them, and one of the safest ways was to cooperate with spirit mediums. One former ZANLA combatant, Paradzai Mabhunu (Chikonohono Township, 20, Chinhoyi, September 2013), revealed that when young men made the decision to go out and fight, none of them sought spiritual guidance. Paradzai Mabhunu indicated 'we were just driven by the admiration of guerrillas. We, however, knew that when parents learnt of our sudden departure, they would surely do something about our protection.'

From Paradzai Mabhunu, another former ZANLA guerrilla, Chikomba, noted that there was no indication of any type of teaching in indigenous/traditional religion during the training of guerrillas. After all, in Tanzania as well as many other parts of Africa, notably eastern Africa countries, helping the struggle, there was no place for traditional religion in the training manuals. Instead, guerrilla warfare and mass mobilisation were emphasised. This has led to the conclusion that ZIPRA sought to conquer the landscape using only military might. However, all conducted interviews, revealed that guerrillas heavily relied on spirit mediums too.

After military training, ZANLA guerrillas often went for further training in ideological indoctrination, mainly in Mozambique. This was intended to make them loyal to ZANU and ZANLA as opposed to ZAPU and ZIPRA as well as other militants in the war. Trainees were exposed to knowledge about the party structures, the beauty of the war they were getting involved in and the good behaviour expected of them as they wedged the war. Still, there were no teachings concerning African traditional religion, and how they were expected to communicate with the African god when confronted with difficult military situations. The main goal was to win the war. Military commanders, like Tungamirai, were to learn more of the traditional religion and tactics for winning hearts and minds from guerrillas who were coming from the front.

Seeking guidance from spirit mediums and traditional leaders was not just a matter of political expediency; it was because of the strong belief in the utility for doing so. According to Lan (1985), those who operated in the Dande area, committed themselves to mediums of Nehanda, Kupara, Chiodzamamera, Chiwawa and Chidyamauyu. They avoided Madzomba

because it was believed he was controlled by the whites suggesting that the spirit had long departed him.

Specific events with a metaphysical mark have made an enduring imprint to the lives of former combatants. Disastrous incidences were allegedly avoided through daily traditional rituals. According to Paradzai Mabhunu, day time (which to guerrillas was night as they were preparing to patrol) was begun by traditional prayers. Often, a chosen member of the group led such traditional prayers. Each morning, when guerrillas had returned from villages to their mountain hideouts, the chosen guerrilla would then prune leaves from a *munhondo* tree and utter prayers to heroes/heroines of the liberation starting from Nehanda and Kaguvi, followed by Chaminuka and other heroes of the first Chimurenga. Throughout the prayers, the said guerrilla would be sprinkling some snuff obtained from spirit mediums of the area, such as Nehoreka, deemed to be the leading spirit of the Korekore people. The leader would then distribute the snuff among his colleagues who in turn sniffed it and threw some of it on the ground, for total security during the night (which in practice was daylight), where they slept. Each individual guerrilla was supposed to say prayers to his own ancestor in order to buttress those said by the group. The same procedure was repeated in the evening when guerrillas were preparing to go into the surrounding villages. Each one of them also carried with him some snuff to use when need arose, for example, in battle.

According to Paradzai Mabhunu, prayers resulted in metaphysical protection by the spirits of the land. Mabhunu gave 3 incidences to clearly illustrate the aforesaid. The first one, he reported, happened at Makochera Village in Mutoko. It was reported that close to the village was a mountain range where the medium of the land had instructed guerrillas not to initiate shooting at the enemy in the event of an accidental confrontation as the enemy was supposed to fire first. Further, no shooting was allowed because the range was called *gwararenzou* (elephants' path).

On one fateful day in 1978, Mabunu indicated that his group was coming from its hideout along the river when they spotted a group of Rhodesian soldiers numbering about 20, descending the mountain in a battle formation, and were within 50 meters range, but suddenly, they changed into an extended line and walked along the mountain to the road where they were ferried by waiting vehicles. For Mabhunu, this incident, therefore, was metaphysics at play which blinded Rhodesians from seeing them as such prevented guerrillas from initiating the battle.

The other metaphysical occurrence took place at Chindenga Base, in the same area. It was reported that around midday 2 fish eagles (*zvapungu*) hovered above guerrillas' encampment. As these two birds did so, they were

fighting and stretching their legs as if imitating Rhodesian choppers dropping bombs. Around the same time, Mabunu further reported that a troop of baboons came directly into the camp, dangerously, fighting, and making a lot of noise as they passed. To Mabunu, who was the commander, this was an indication that a fierce battle was imminent. Mabunu indicated that he immediately told his colleagues to leave in the direction the baboons had taken. And when they were about 3km away from their base; the whole area was bombed from above while small arms were directed to the base. Further, where defeat was clear, the spiritual world was said to have intervened in one way or the other, proving the utility of indigenous religion during the war.

The demands of the war also taught guerrillas to manipulate their situation to please the spirits of the land. Where one of them transgressed by lapsing for sexual relations with local women, he was first thoroughly flogged by his colleagues in the presence of villagers. The guerrilla commander had to take him to the local spirit medium to formerly apologise and pay a fine. To cleanse the whole group of misfortune or untold suffering, a battle had to be quickly organised. In one such incident, the offender was instructed to initiate the battle by throwing a stone at a passing military vehicle along Nyamapanda road. He was to do so while standing so that if the spirits had completely disowned him, he would be shot dead by the enemy. He was not and his group followed by a rocket launcher and other small arms. That way, the group had cleansed itself. The failure by Rhodesians to kill a spiritual offender illustrated the strength of his own ancestors in saving him.

ZANLA guerrillas from the north-east, often visited the mediums in the Chokoto area of Dande once they entered Zimbabwe. According to George Rutanhire (Mt Darwin, 20 March 2014), who was in charge of the ZANLA commissariat department in the war, guerrillas were informed by Nehanda that one medium called Gusvamupara or Parangeti had actually sold out the country to whites as such the war might not be won. It was revealed that he had been paid by whites to ensure that the war spills to the advantage of Rhodesia. Symbolically, a black bull is said to have been tied to a tree at Nhenhenhe (in Mozambique) so that through its death by starvation, Rhodesia would remain under perpetual rule of whites. However, reports indicated that the guerrillas walked to Nhenhenhe, found the bull, and as instructed, cut the rope and the bull ran towards Zimbabwe –an indication that the war was to spill over.

Claims by Rutanhire seem to overlook the fact that Zambia was yet another front, so if the war could not be allowed to spread beyond Mozambique, it would still have come into the country through Zambia. To

him, the Zambian component came as an appendage. The authenticity of the statement remains in question because it was not corroborated elsewhere.

The research undertaken by McLaughlin (1996) observes a ceremony to launch the war but does not stress that the attack of Altena farm was directed by mediums. Rutanhire claimed that once guerrillas had returned from Nhenhenhe, they were told by Nehanda to start the war by attacking Altena farm. The absence of official accounts exposes traditional region as at times it is practised privately, and clandestinely. As such, decorated commanders would often find it hard to openly admit that they consulted mediums, but for guerrillas who faced the threat of death, consulting mediums and *sangomas* was synonymous to fetishism.

Mauye (Mahondo Village, Mt Darwin, 19 March 2014) was one of the key informants in providing detailed information on the works of the metaphysical world during the war. He was already a qualified teacher by 1972. When I met him, he had come from Makoni to attend Jimmy Motsi's funeral –a chief exhumers in the Fallen Heroes Trust. Mauye claimed that he assisted guerrillas, severally, to the extent of having his life threatened. In doing so, he miraculously survived because the spirit in him was guiding his operations.

From his submissions, at one time, there was a heavy attack on guerrillas at a place called Ruombwe in Nyazura. Out of the seven guerrillas, all perished except, one who got badly injured, survived. Mauye further reiterated that the spirit told him to go and pick the injured guerrilla at Ruombwe. He reported to have driven there in broad daylight, looked for the surviving guerrilla among the dead and took him to a cave near his home. None of the helicopters hovering above sported him. The surviving guerrilla, Joseph Manjeese, was reported to have been surviving at the time of the interview. In yet another encounter, Mauye said he drove to Chivhu. The sceptical and equally spiritual black Rhodesian forces followed him because his movement was interpreted to mean that the road was safe from landmines. The vehicle ferrying Rhodesian soldiers following behind him, however, detonated a landmine in the same area he had uneventfully passed through.

Eventually, Mauye, like another medium, Enos Pondai in Dande, was arrested on 22 July 1978 and spent the last part of the war in prison. His arrest demonstrates that Rhodesians were taking traditional religion as a real threat to their war effort. Mauye's arrest was triggered by Rhodesians who had intercepted a letter from one guerrilla group informing the other to get spiritual assistance from him. White soldiers who arrested him from his class of 45 pupils, accused him of protecting guerrillas operating in Nyazura,

assisting an injured guerrilla from Ruombwe using his metaphysical powers, and taking care of sick guerrillas. Mauye was tried, with the intercepted letter, being used as evidence that he was assisting guerrillas. Such experiences point in the direction that the liberation war, was also a spiritual war. Mauye remains today as Chief Makoni's medium in charge of traditional ceremonies in the area, especially, those involving war veterans.

At the Burmasyde in Bindura North, I encountered another ex-guerrilla whose name is Masango (*Interview*, 21 March 2014). I summarise his two narratives suggesting that indigenous religion was operating in their midst. In 1978, Masango indicated that guerrillas in Mt Darwin were increasingly being decimated by a lone white soldier called Kruger, who regularly travelled together with his Malawian *n'anga*. When Kruger was moved to Masango's sector, it was said that there was apprehension among fellow guerrillas that their lives were in real danger from Kruger. Each time ZANLA guerrillas laid a landmine targeting him; Kruger's car would pass the landmine safely.

Eventually, the guerrillas visited a spirit medium who instructed them to place their landmines on the side of the road where they would be reached by the shadow of his car. The guerrillas took the medium with them to direct 'planting' of the landmines. The result was that Kruger's car hit the landmines, and he died on the spot, together with his African assistant. In a case of this nature, Masango does not attribute the elimination of Kruger to guerrilla fighting capabilities because, in such a case, they had exhausted their means. Consulting the medium was the last resort, and it produced positive results.

The other dimension of the story is that, whites also believed in metaphysical powers given to them by other Africans to fight the war as evidenced by Kruger working with own black assistant.

Belief in spirituality was such that when guerrillas defeated the enemy in a purely military encounter, they attributed such successes to spiritual interventions in the manner devout Christians link every success to the hand of God. In one such encounter, Masango and his men were on the border between Zimbabwe and Mozambique. Masango, who could not quite recall on which side of the boarder they were; but he remembered that they had gone for four days without food when they stumbled upon a home and asked for food; reported that a woman refused to assist them with food, but pointed to the nine-armed whites who had just left. The hungry guerrillas followed the white soldiers, for about 2km, to a small dam. Eight soldiers took off their clothes, and began swimming, while one of them, with a radio, played sentry. Masango, and his men, killed all the nine white soldiers.

Such success was attributed to powers of their god which they believed in. Masango pointed out that, militarily, guerrillas were at an advantage because they saw the enemy first, and by the time they fired the first shot, which killed the one playing sentry, the rest simply could not defend themselves.

The relationship between guerrillas and traditional religious leaders was at times sour. According to a former ZIPRA cadre, better known as Cuba, in Nyamhunga area of Hurungwe, it was the chief's duty to take guerrillas coming into the area for some rituals to protect them from the enemy. These culminated in the issuance of snuff which would protect guerrillas wherever they were.

One version leading to the death of Chief Nyamhunga is that Security Force Auxiliaries (SFAs) of Bishop Muzorewa persuaded him to show them the secret behind ZIPRA success. The chief then misrepresented SFAs to the local medium and they were given the same snuff set aside for guerrillas. Upon investigations, the chief was pinpointed as the culprit, and he was killed in broad daylight at his shop. Thus, despite the good training of ZIPRA guerrillas, they continued to take a strong belief in traditionalism because, for them, the war itself was a spiritual war which could only be justified through the support of local mediums. Similarly, Bhinya (*Interview*, 8 September 2018), indicated that one spirit medium from Nyamupfukudza, gave ZIPRA guerrillas protective snuff, and a day later, many of them were killed by Rhodesian soldiers. Survivors came back and killed the medium in retaliation.

Just like guerrillas, Muzorewa's auxiliaries also claim that they were protected by the spirits of the land which explains why they survived the war. Some of them followed a strict code of conduct which prevented them from being involved in sexual relations with local girls. According to one informant, Zinhata, it was a taboo for auxiliaries to be involved in illicit affairs with local girls. There are, however, contradictions because many auxiliaries were allowed to marry during the war and take their wives to their camp where they would sleep with them.

Generally, abstinence was the official guerrilla standard practice which in several ways was flouted. The practice of abstinence was deep seated in Zinhata's group because it was regularly clashing with highly trained ZIPRA guerrillas making the threat to life a daily reality, and also because the majority of members in the group were almost illiterate. Zinhata was often sent to the local spirit medium for snuff which was believed to have metaphysical protective powers in case of clashes with guerrillas.

Zinhata had to leave behind his gun, but his colleagues provided escort to the medium. Before entering the hut, he removed his shoes, entered the hut while clapping, sat on the reed mat, and asked the old woman to replenish the snuff. This was a sign of total submission. The woman would then 'roar' for some time, sprinkle Zinhata with snuff over the head, and on his clothes. The medium would then hand him a container (*kasha*) full of snuff (*bute* or *mbanda*), to have it shared among his fellows. Zinhata reported that, the medium would then instruct: '*Sienda muchinda ndeekutarisa paunenga usifamba*,' meaning, 'go young man, and I will look after you throughout your journey.'

Each morning before parade, SFAs in his group, for purposes of protection, washed themselves in snuff-laden waters put in a big clay pot. Thereafter, Zinhata indicated that he would distribute the snuff to his colleagues, which they then sniffed. That ceremony is what they called *culture*. It was believed that it gave them the much-needed psychological security or armour. Even when any one of them got confused, Zinhata said he would take out the small *kasha* and sniff the *mbanda* to get back in the right frame of mind.

The interview revealed that the spirit medium took SFAs as '*sons of the soil*' and protected them from harm, and also did the same procedures for other guerrillas. In Zinhata's analysis, however, the medium could be a sell-out or a charlatan, but not the spirit which possessed him. As such, the spirit medium could flirt with both sides of the quarrel.

The only differences noted in the prayers were that SFAs did not pray to the spirits of Nehanda, Kaguvi and Chaminuka because of the nature of the war they were fighting. However, from Mt Darwin, Guruve right into Hurungwe, they did appeal to Nehoreka, the medium of all the Korekore people. In any case, he was not involved in the Chimurenga War. They told him, and the family ancestors, that they were fighting because the whites were compelling them to do so. All they wanted was protection because this was war. Their enemies were similarly protected by Nehoreka.

Investigations in Chundu (Mashonaland West) was the only one in which the spirit of Chimombe refused to give protective snuff to Rhodesian soldiers throughout the war. As such, ZIPRA triumphed over its enemies because it was insulated by traditional snuff.

Weather could also be manipulated by spirit mediums as a force to the help of guerrillas. A former ZIPRA commander, Soft Magarasadza (*Interview*, 26 May 2021), visited a spirit medium in the Sanyati area (Mashonaland West) to announce the presence of guerrillas. He was leading a group of six guerrillas. The medium instructed them to heap their guns in

the round hut while they put up for the night. When Magarasadza and his men woke up in morning, the medium's home was surrounded by Rhodesian soldiers ready to pounce on the badly outnumbered guerrillas. The *svikiro* is said to have told them to take up their arms and leave without a fight. It was indicated that there was a sudden heavy mist which only disappeared when guerrillas were many kilometres away.

Magarasadza claimed to have consulted the bulk of chiefs and medium spirits in Mashonaland West to seek guidance on how the war was to be executed. He further reported that one medium informed him, at the beginning of 1979, which was his party (ZAPU) would not win the impending election. It is not clear whether this was simple calculation or it was from spirits.

5. Fate of indigenous religion in independent Zimbabwe

After the liberation war, former combatants were concerned with cleansing themselves of the very act of having participated in the war. Information from interviewees reflects that the new government was unconcerned with traditional rituals in the same way that elite commanders had ignored such relationships during the war. Mambowa, from Karoi, said that as soon as he returned from the war, traditional beer was brewed and family friends and relatives were invited. In the morning, before friends and distant relatives had arrived, a traditional healer (*n'anga*) had been invited to establish if ancestors had been offended or if the returnee had brought any *ngozi* (avenging spirits) into the family. Traditional medicine was administered on to the returnee for the mere reason that he had seen the spilling of blood, which is something disapproved by the spirits. Putting on only a pair of shorts, Mambowa was made to sit on the floor in a hut, as medicine was being administered, and traditional beer poured on him. Thereafter, feasting became a celebration of Mambowa's re-integration to the family. Surprisingly, most of the oral informants did not openly admit to having killed someone during the war.

Reynolds (1990) claims that after the war, *n'angas* he interviewed said that there were more cases of psychiatric problems facing former guerrillas after the war. The major causes were that there had been so many *unsettled* spirits of people who had not been given decent burials. On returning from the war, African men and women who had fought on either side of the quarrel consulted traditional healers with a view of being cleansed. This was important to both individuals and communities. *N'angas* acted like priests who listened

to people's confessions without divulging any of that sensitive information to the public. Thus, people were free to tell a *n'anga* if they had killed anyone in the war or wronged the spirits in any way.

Cleansing could only become effective if the truth had been revealed to the *n'anga* by the client. The traditional healer would then advise the client on what compensation was to be paid, how and to whom. Unless compensation was paid, trouble would persist. Like any other illness, recovery would follow once compensation was paid.

During the war of liberation, some among both the Rhodesian army, and the guerrillas, did shed the blood of innocent people, maimed, sexually abused women and committed other heinous crimes against humanity. The spiritual world was ostensibly against such practices right from the onset of the struggle. Thus, there was need for the returning war veterans to be traditionally cleansed as a way of reintegrating them back into the society.

It seems as if the nationalists' minds were pre-occupied with the reconciliation of only the living combatants probably this was of immediate importance. Taken in this context, it can be argued that differences in political consciousness continue up to this day (Barry, 2004). In fact, the government was supposed to initiate reconciliation and integration at grassroots level through the involvement of the veterans, spiritual leaders and the entire peasant population in a national cleansing ceremony, spearheaded by religious leaders. It is only now that the government is concerned about resolving outstanding issues of *Gukurahundi* (disturbances in Matabeleland and the Midlands between 1980 and 1987). According to a report in *The Sunday Mail* (22 August 2021), traditional leaders in the concerned areas have been tasked to find lasting solutions, and that the government will provide the necessary support. This still leaves challenges of Zimbabwe's liberation war in limbo.

Paradzai Mabhunu argued that he managed to return alive due to the protection he received from the spiritual world. Along with his two brothers who were also ZANLA guerrillas, none of them perished in the war because of respecting the *dos* and *don'ts* as instructed by traditional leaders. On their return, beer was brewed on the basis that '*children*' who had '*touched*' blood could not automatically be admitted into the family without undergoing a cleansing ceremony. Therefore, family members had an obligation to cleanse their children.

According to Mabhunu family initiatives were a result of the failure or unwillingness of guerrilla commanders, and their political leaders to lead the process as they had become overjoyed with independence euphoria. For him, a congress of spirit mediums should have been called to cleanse the

children sent to fight the war. Failure to do so partly explains various psychological problems which former fighters are experiencing.

The idea of calling for a congress of ancestral spirits is supported by the fact that in re-launching the war in July 1972, such a congress was called for in Chaminuka sector by a certain Mrs Duwa (McLaughlin, 1996). Mediums, from as far as Bindura, attended, and so were senior commanders who included, Joseph Chimurenga and Thomas Nhari. Mrs Duwa was appointed by the spirit medium of Karuwa to deal directly with ZANLA forces. This noble idea did not yield the desired results owing to lack of support from nationalist leaders in Mozambique, and Tanzania.

Since the war had been re-launched with support of spirit mediums, veterans of the struggle thought it was also supposed to be rounded off by them with the concurrence or full support from the top political leadership. Paradzai Mabhunu explained that his war time colleagues are going through traumatic experiences because of this failure by their leadership. Family-based ceremonies, thus, took a centre-stage because of government failure to take up the initiative. Many war veterans think that a welcome home traditional ceremony at national level should be organised with the prime objective of reconciling former guerrillas with themselves, their families, and the nation at large.

Without decent burial of those who had died in war, the integration process is believed to be still incomplete. As such, Sadomba (2011) claims that from 2000, spirit possessions affected many children in Manicaland who were demanding re-burial. To that effect, war veterans in Rushinga established an organisation to undertake re-burials. Otherwise, both the ruling ZANU-PF party, and government are yet taken up the issue seriously. This means that true healing on the part of family members comes about when the dead are given a decent burial in a recognisable area.

In the same context, on the 5th of May 2011, a group of 700 people converged at Great Zimbabwe National Monuments (Mawere, 2011). The majority of these were war veterans from Harare Province who demanded permission to carry out ritual cleansing of the psychological problems they were facing as a result of their war experiences. Furthermore, they indicated that they wanted guidance from the ancestors on how they could go to Mozambique to get the remains of the fallen heroes for proper burial. Entrance to the site was mainly through use of force since nobody from the local managers was willing to grant them permission. The group was led by Nehoreka, a popular Korekore spirit medium, who was known for performing rituals during the liberation struggle (Mawere, 2011).

Upon being asked why they had chosen this national site; participants gave a number of reasons. Some asserted that the site was adopted as the residence of the country's ancestors thereby confirming the same opinion given by Fontein (2006) who argues that Great Zimbabwe is highly regarded as a religious site particularly by the local clans of Mugabe and Nemamwa.

During the liberation struggle, Great Zimbabwe site was used as a source of motivation and inspiration. With the attainment of independence, the country was to be re-named after the site. Furthermore, the new state drew a lot from the site in terms of its national symbols, for example, the Zimbabwe dollar coin, the ruling party's (ZANU-PF) logo and the national flag (Fontein, 2006).

Most of the war veterans expressed the same view as many politicians and historians on the significance of Great Zimbabwe monuments as a core of African traditional religion. In this context, the idea of going to the site was understood to be a national event. To the majority of the war veterans, this was actually obnoxious, and rather a sign of irresponsibility, particularly, when they perceived that the government was casting a blind eye on their call for rituals.

In relation to the above, *The Sunday News* of 26 August 2012, reported that a group of 560 people, mainly war veterans, 25 chiefs and 5 spirit mediums, all from Mashonaland region visited the Matopos National Park, and performed a cleansing ritual at the shrine. The group had collected soil and human remains from Old Mkushi in Zambia to, 'bring back', and the spirits of the deceased freedom fighters to Zimbabwe. Both the living and the spirits of the dead had to be cleansed. It was, however, noted that the ceremony attracted widespread condemnation from other traditional leaders, and politicians from Matabeleland region, who argued that bringing human bones and soils onto the shrine was tantamount to disrespect for the area's rites, and beliefs. It was alleged that they exhibited high levels of arrogance and ancestors were, therefore, not happy, hence, the need to carry out another ritual ceremony to appease the ancestors.

Although this move was characterised by sour relations, the incident sheds light on the unfinished business of reconciliation. The demand for proper individual human burial as opposed to mass grave approach is central to the whole controversy. Magwizi, and other members of the ZPRA Veterans Trust, have been making frantic efforts to initiate decent burials for their colleagues who died in war, particularly, in Mashonaland West. Their challenge is the elusiveness of government support.

6. Conclusion

The article has demonstrated that to the foot combatant, indigenous beliefs, and the metaphysical world, were pivotal to the execution of the war. To help appreciate how the liberation struggle was wedged, the chapter has provided a glimpse of the role of metaphysics showing that guns alone did not win the war of liberation in Zimbabwe. Insurgent (and also counter-insurgent) forces, therefore, invoked the metaphysical world to enable them to survive the challenges of the violent war. ZANLA, ZIPRA and Africans in general fighting on the side of the Rhodesians, relied on metaphysics or belief, and practices in spirit mediums, to fight the war, suggesting that indigenous beliefs and religion were not partisan.

All fighters wanted to survive the war, and indigenous beliefs had to be invoked in this regard. Zimbabwe's war of liberation was; therefore, spiritual in as much as it was military. As such, problems that former combatants of the liberation war face today, accordingly, emanate from the failure by political leaders to undertake a traditional nationwide ceremony to appease the forces which made the war winnable. The way combatants look back in time comes from real experiences from the battlefield which, to others, sound like unsubstantiated claims which are far from being realistic. Thus, the spiritual dimension is one important way of appreciating the liberation war, and ought to be valued from how former fighters were spiritually assisted. Apparently, Christianity was not a major source of inspiration, especially among guerrilla fighters.

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Mendacious conservationism and poetic justice in Nadine Gordimer's *The Conservationist*: A postcolonial ecocritical reading

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Abstract

Nadine Gordimer's *The Conservationist* (1974) engages with the conservation of nature under apartheid South Africa. The novel's portrayal of the policy of land ownership and use under this period, signifies the deep issues of racism which many critics have exposed in relation to Gordimer's writings. In this article, I shift focus to the novel's engagement with conservation in a theoretical context drawn from insights in postcolonial ecocriticism, and political ecology. These highlight the joint exploitation of nature and the victimisation of people who lack access to political and economic power. While my analysis concentrates on the ecopolitical force of the narrative, I also examine the novel's deployment of irony as a key device that exposes the racist/classist underpinnings of the politics of conservation, as well as invests agency, and power to the exploited parties. I conclude by pointing out that Gordimer's engagement with conservation, in *The Conservationist*, is in tune with the precept of postcolonial ecocriticism, which postulates that the literature of a postcolonial society should not only portray the exploitation of nature, and the poor, but also advocate for justice. In *The Conservationist*, Gordimer demonstrates the power of imaginative writing to advocate for nature, the poor, and the oppressed.

Keywords: conservation; nature; politics; exploitation; poetic justice



1. Introduction

The Conservationist (1974) explores the issue of land under apartheid South Africa. At the centre of the narrative is the question of unequal distribution, and access to land in which apartheid regime reserved eighty-seven percent of land to white ownership [1]. Many blacks became landless in the process, were forced to squat, and work on white-owned farms instead. Confined to shanties, their living spaces define their social lives. Poverty, disease, drunkenness, criminality, and violence, manifest as direct consequences of dispossession. From this springboard, *The Conservationist* is analysed as a literary representation of environmental injustice. Mehring's ownership of over four-hundred-acres of farmland, his affluent lifestyle; placed side-by-side with the penury, disease, and deprivation affecting the blacks, shows how political power under apartheid connects the environmental with social issues.

Although the land is central to the novel, Gordimer uses the narrative to explore the connection between the land, and such issues as: history, identity, a growing African consciousness, an emerging global capitalist economy in the context of South Africa; claims to heritage, legacy, and the receding power of the apartheid regime (Cook, 1985).

Aligned to some of these issues, this article analyses the narrative as a representation of environmental injustice. Gordimer's depiction of the displacement of the blacks, and their appalling living conditions, challenges apartheid's notion of conservation that derives from claims of protecting nature to the detriment of the black population. Further, the narrative subtly foreshadows the collapse of apartheid—through the fall of Mehring and his mendacious claims of conservation—Gordimer uses imaginative writing as a catalyst for social change.

This article, thus, argues that Gordimer designates the importance of the relationship between environmental and social justice in South Africa. Against this backdrop, the paper deploys the concept of political ecology and environmental justice, which are significant poetics of postcolonial ecocriticism, to examine the novel's portrayal of the joint exploitation of nature and the colonised.

2. Postcolonial Ecocriticism

Postcolonial ecocriticism emerged as a response to the excesses of Anglo-American ecocriticism which started in North America in late twentieth century

(Goodbody, 2007). While early work in ecocriticism concerns itself with the fate of nature in the wake of industrialisation, it fails to recognise the plight of indigenous peoples whose lives and livelihoods are tied to nature, especially in the face of technological modernity [3]. Postcolonial ecocriticism, thus, expands the boundary of ecocriticism by underscoring how “nature and culture constantly influence and construct each other” (Wallace & Armbruster, 2001, p.4). Consequently, the imbrication of the ecological, and the social, alongside how literature in postcolonial societies resist the power structures that affect both humans and nonhumans, form the basis from which postcolonial ecocriticism is of ten theorised (Slovic, Rangarajan & Sarveswaran, 2015). It is with in the notion of inter twining the social and ecological that postcolonial ecocriticism incorporates the principles of ecocriticism, and post coloniality, to conceptualise how writers from postcolonial, settler colonial, and decolonising regions have imagined; inscribed the environment in ways that reveal the connection between the exploitation of nature and the colonised as well as the struggle for environmental, and social justice.

The conceptual political ecology and the study of global environmental justice, posit that environmentalism cannot be “free (materially or conceptually) from mediation by social struggle, and it undermines stable definition of environmental threat and conservation” (Caminero-Santangelo, 2011, p.7). To this end, environmental discourse that stems from political ecology and environmental justice oppose an ecocriticism that is shaped by main stream environmental discourse which separates nature from human culture, and upholds the view of nature as an independent entity. In contrast, political ecology and environmental justice constitutes an environmental discourse that is deeply connected to socio-economic and political issues. It approaches environmental discourses: “in terms of their connection with economic inequality, social justice, and political rights and in terms of how they impact the lives—the homes, livelihoods, and health - of the impoverished and disenfranchised” (Caminero-Santangelo, 2011, p.7). In addition, a critical framework shaped by political ecology and environmental justice is at tuned to “the ways that disparate distribution of wealth and power often leads to correlative and social upheaval and the unequal distribution of environmental degradation and/or toxicity” (Adamson, 2008, p.5). Ultimately, such a framework ties together environmental policies and projects against issues of oppression, struggle and liberation. It recognises the realistic conditions of postcolonial societies, as well as advocates justice for those at the receiving end of capitalise activities of exploitation of natural resources. These insights guide the analysis which follows.

3. Racism, exploitation and environmental (in) justice in Gordimer's *The Conservationist*

South Africa, the setting of *The Conservationists*, is one of Africa's foremost countries in terms of both institutional and non-governmental engagement with environmentalism, mainly through the protection of wilderness, and wildlife (Vital & Erny, 2007). This has its roots in the apartheid era and is, typically, racially skewed to serve the interests of the whites against the black population. The apartheid regime embarked on massive creation of conservation enclaves meant for wildlife trophy hunting, and the showcasing of wilderness for white tourist's leisure. Carruthers explains that the idea was anchored on a romantic idealisation of the land of South Africa as purportedly discovered by the first Dutch migrants (the Voortrekkers).

The conservation parks were, thus, created to showcase the land "as the Voortrekkers saw it: virginal, pristine and primordial" (Carruthers, 1995 p.15). She further explains that in order to drive this idea, the apartheid government declared black people as insensitive, cruel and destructive of the natural environment. As such, management boards were constituted to formulate policies that would regulate the use of natural resources. These boards recommended the expulsion of black people from their ancestral homes to make way for conservation enclaves. This action resulted in loss of livelihoods and ultimately to a general degradation of the quality of life of many indigenous.

The Conservationist revolves around Mehring, his farm and the black farm workers. The novel begins with the discovery of an anonymous dead man on the farm. No one knows the details of his death. Jacobus, the head of the labourers, informs Mehring about the dead body. Mehring calls the police to evacuate the body, but the police simply dig a shallow grave, and shoves it down, right at the spot where it was found.

When Mehring returns, Jacobus informs him that the dead body is buried on the farm. He calls the police station to demand that the body be excavated and taken out of his property, but by the time he returns from another trip Jacobus tells him the body still lay there. The presence of the black dead body sharing his 'land', his 'farm', and his 'investment,' remains a constant source of worry to Mehring. The constant reminder of the dead body on his land sets the tone for the events that runs through the novel.

Gordimer uses the metaphor of the dead body to dramatize the paradox of land ownership under apartheid. On one hand, Mehring owns the four hundred acres of land, yet, he is unable to connect with it. He spends most of

the time away from the farm, relying, instead, on Jacobus to run it on his behalf. On the other hand, the dead black body, entrenched in the earth, serves to show the rootedness of the blacks on the land as thoughts of it causes Mehring to question his supposed ownership of the land, as this passage shows:

He lies for what seems a long time. This place-his farm-really is what everyone says of it, he himself as well...A high-veld autumn, a silvery-gold peace, the sun lying soft on the hard ground, the rock pigeons beginning to fly earlier, now, the river he can hear feeling its dark tongue round the watercress and weeds, there inside the reeds... As if nothing had ever happened - is not- someone dead, down there (*The Conservationist*, 1974 p. 38).

Mehring's thoughts about the farm, in this excerpt, displays a nagging need for reaffirmation of ownership. It also gestures towards a sub-conscious admittance of the ludicrous claim to the land. Hence, by engaging in such activities as laying down on the hard ground for a long time and paying attention to every movement of nature's elements surrounding him, he attempts to bond with the land. Yet, he is constantly jolted by the memory of the dead body sharing the land in a more permanent state of existence. This reveals Mehring's real source of anxiety. His anxiety stems from his inability to connect with the land which he claims to be his, and his fear of losing it.

In crafting the character of Mehring as the symbol of apartheid's notion of a conservationist, the narrative undermines claims of conservation which warranted the expulsion of the blacks from their homes. Gordimer ensures the reader understands the mendacity of the claim that only white people had the knowledge to harness natural resources for proper economic use. One of the deep ironies of the novel is that, it offers a glimpse of a very different image of Mehring than the one produced by himself. Mehring's notions of conservation is an important part of the epistemological ordering brought into question in the novel.

In Mehring's vision, nature is a realm of eternal beauty which is clearly separated from social process and history, and must be carefully protected from the indigenous people who lack knowledge and appreciation of it. Yet, the novel portrays him as a self-deluded conservationist. His perceived relationship with the land is highlighted from the beginning as delusional. Gordimer ensures that we glean beneath his own self-cultivation by introducing him as "the farmer", then undercutting such pretensions by opening the second section with the statement, "Mehring was no farmer, although there is some farming blood somewhere, no doubt" (p. 20).

Mehring bought the farm solely for his business interest and his social status, as stated below:

Many well-off city men buy themselves farms at a certain stage in their careers – the losses are deductible from income tax and this fact coincides with some-thing less tangible it's understood they can now afford to indulge: a hankering to make contact with the land. It seems to be bred of making money in industry. And it is tacitly regarded as commendable, a sign of having remained fully human and capable of enjoying the simple things of life that poorer men can no longer afford (*The Conservationist*, 1974p. 20).

Here, Gordimer, sarcastically, reveals through a cryptic mode, the fantasies and heresies of Mehring's class. Owning land comes with money and status. It is something a person of his race and class does. In addition, it serves as a tax-buffer on his main business of pig-iron.

In the first instance, owning a farm is a symbol of political, and economic power, that sets people of different races and social classes apart. The white/ rich, perceive themselves as super-human but also feel the need to connect with humanity. As such, farming is one activity that gives them an 'earthly' connection. "It [farming] is tacitly regarded as commendable, a sign of having remained fully human and capable of enjoying the simple things of life that poorer men can no longer afford" (*The Conservationist*, 1974p. 20). Rich white men, like Mehring, possess land for their leisure. Mehring takes:

... friends to the farm sometimes at weekends. They said what a marvellous idea, we adore to get out, get away, and when- they debouched from their cars (the children who opened the gate at the third pasture the richer by a windfall of cents) – how lovely, how lucky, how sensible to have a place like this to get away to. There would be a sheep roasted on a spit rigged up over the pit... to people like those on the grass drinking wine and eating crisps lamb from their fingers, the sight brought a sensation of freedom...the freedom of being down there on the earth, out in the fresh air of this place – to – get – away (*The Conservationist*, 1974p. 21).

The above reveals conservation as a parable for debauchery and escapism. Mehring and his rich friends, use the farm to indulge in the pleasures of eating, drinking and displaying their ostentatious generosity by throwing cents at the black children who run to open the gates for their approaching automobiles.

As for the tax matter, the novel narrates that white land owners get tax relief on any losses they incur on the farm. It explains why Mehring is not bothered when the rain does not fall, and the yield declines because "the

losses will go to tax" (*The Conservationist*, 1974p .42). These two reasons show that Mehring owns the farm not because he cares about conservation, but for the apparent reason that it serves his economic interests, and it is a symbol of power exclusively reserved for people of his race.

The novel also provides a third additional reason why Mehring purchased the farm, for his illicit sexual affairs. Even before he purchases the farm, he thinks that it would be a great rendezvous for his sexual escapades. He contemplates how perfect it would be to bring his girlfriend to the farm –for the sake of 'discretion'. As he anticipates his forthcoming appointment with Antonia, he assures himself that it is, "undoubtedly a thousand times better than any flat in town, from the point of view of discretion..." (*The Conservationist*, 1974p.39).

The fact that Mehring thinks of the farm as a place to have his sexual affairs, even before he acquires it, exposes his exploitive motives for owning the farm. Mehring purchased the over four hundred acres of land to serve his leisure, his profit margin, and, his ego.

The fact that Mehring controls the farm and the black people working on it gives him a feeling of authority, and dominion over land, and people. Gordimer criticises this in many instances. One is through the conversation between Mehring and his liberal girlfriend, Antonia. Antonia constantly taunts his so-called authority. She tells him that, "You don't 'own' a country by signing a bit of paper the way you bought yourself the title deed to that farm" (*The Conservationist*, 1974p. 95).

The parallel she draws between owning a country and owning a farm is particularly revealing as both farming and colonialism are fundamental structures of owning, controlling and exploiting. In the context of apartheid, Mehring represents a class of people who, by virtue of their racial, political and financial power, 'own' South Africa and exploit its human, and natural resources. Mehring is, therefore, a mere beneficiary of imperialist racial othering as well as an exploiter of nature. Nixon (1999, p. 8) cognises this cynicism in the depiction of Mehring's conservationist impulse where he opines that "Mehring is simply a prominent industrialist, a weekend farmer with a squanderer, absentee relationship to the land." He represents the worldly-wise corporate white who rose to prominence during the economic boom of the late sixties.

Mehring fancies himself a conservationist who nurtures the land for future generations, yet he knows nothing about farming. Gordimer ridicules Mehring's notion of conservation where he is seen walking around the farm in his characteristic haughty disposition towards the blacks, complaining about

insignificant things like their children playing with pigeon eggs, Jacobus' cigarettes butts laying on the ground or the dogs running around the farm. This is his notion of conservation. Indeed, the extent of his deluded self-identification as a farmer occurs during one of his romantic meanderings through his farm, dressed in his business suit:

His shoes and the pale grey pants are wiped by wet muzzles of grasses, his hands that he lets hang at his sides, are trailed over by the tips of a million delicate tongues. Look at the willows. The height of the grass. Look at the reeds. Everything bends, blends, folds. Everything is continually swaying, flowing rippling waving surging streaming... (*The Conservationist*, 1974p. 218).

This poetic description of Mehring's moments of romance with the land portrays a desperate attempt to own it. Wagner (1994, p.11) describes this moment of Mehring's own self-conception as "irremediably arrogant", but it can also be interpreted as more deluded than egotistical. He is attempting to forge a connection with the piece of land, which he fully well knows is not belong to him, and his haphazard recollection of the phrase, "fair and lovely place" is confirmation of this. The fact that he knows it is "not his vocabulary" and "only something learned by rote" (*The Conservationist*, 1974p. 218), reinforces the falseness of Mehring's claims to the land.

Adding another layer to his conceited claims of conservation, the novel portrays Mehring as always spouting his botanical knowledge of trees, which he reads from books. In one instance, he sends his secretary to buy him a book on flowers which he labours to memorise:

Genus: Amaryllidaceae; species *Crinum* bulb is per mum. One of the secretaries at the office has been sent out to buy the best book available on veld flowers and from it he's identified the lilies as the Orange River Lily, *Crinum* bulb is per mum, spring blooming, favouring swampy ground. It belongs to the amaryllis family, most of whose members are distinguished by the arrangement of the flowers in an umbel subtended by two or more bracts (*The Conservationist*, 1974p. 206).

Here, Mehring learns about farming not on the farm, but from a book. Yet, such attempts at learning the botanical names of flowers do not seem to help him understand the intricacies of farming. Thus, he consistently relies on Jacobus' 'traditional' skills to manage the farm.

Gordimer ironizes her protagonist's claims of conservation, revealing how colonialism undergirds the exploitation of both men and nature through, so-called, claims of scientific knowledge. Right from the 18th century, the idea that nature can be mastered through scientific knowledge had a mutually

enabling connection with the colonial project. Dryton (2001 pp. 4-5) has argued that one of the fundamental structures of colonialism was the expropriation of lands under the claim that agriculture could “reclaim wastelands and make barbaric peoples civilized if guided by scientific planning”. However, Mehring’s reliance on Jacobus to take care of the farm reveals that he is no conservationist, but simply an exploiter.

The land, to Mehring, like to Mr. Howland in Ngugi’s (1987) *Weep Not Child*, exists only as a sign of authority, power and domination. Also, just as Ngotho is indispensable to Mr. Howland, so is Jacobus to Mehring. Howland and Mehring, as agents of colonialism, conserve not the land but the authority (colonialism/white-supremacy) that gives them ownership of the land.

The subject of white supremacy is critiqued in the novel. The master versus servant relationship between Mehring and Jacobus is reversed, ironically, through depiction of Mehring’s incompetence and absolute dependence on Jacobus, and Jacobus’ sheer mastery of farm, and personnel management.

Mehring is entirely dependent on his farmhands’ labour. Jacobus, through his labour, usurps Mehring’s position of mastery. This is made clear in many instances; like when fire from the De Boars farm, razes part of the farm while Mehring is away on one of his numerous trips abroad, and the onus is on Jacobus to manage the fire and stop it from spreading (*The Conservationist*, 1974p. 143). Another instance is when a cow develops mastitis, Jacobus rummages through Mehring’s house for medicine, which he then administers by copying what he had once seen the veterinary doctor do. Jacobus’ expertise in managing the inferno and inoculating the cow to curb the spread of the disease, contrasts sharply with Mehring’s incompetence as a farmer. It is even more striking when the flood occurs, and Mehring is cut off from the farm while Jacobus is left in charge. Mehring’s ignorance of farming reveals his exploitative relationship with the land.

4. Displacement and its social consequences

The Conservationist is invested with the issue of injustice in the distribution of natural resources, particularly, the land. The land has been a prominent motif in postcolonial literature because the physical occupation of territories was a major feature of colonialisation. Many Africans were dispossessed, and separated from their natural environments, as a result of land usurpation. This affected their social and economic lives, and ultimately, their dignity and

self-respect. Gordimer portrays this through characterisation. Many of the black characters are drifters, with no secured livelihood. They move from one location (black reserved areas) to another in search of work in white-owned farms, the abattoirs or the Indian shops. The shanties that provide transit accommodation for these displaced people are dilapidated and hazardous to human habitation. For example, the shanty near Mehring's farm, as young Izak describes is, "a one-room with a roof held down by rocks and pumpkins" (*The Conservationist*, 1974p. 60).

The shanties are also surrounded by dumpsites where young children, and the elderly, scavenge the rubbish pile for discarded items and food. Pushed by hunger and frustration, alcoholism and criminality are common within the black quarters. Most of the times they engage in gambling, prostitution and theft. The shanty, Jacobus says, "is worse than the location... They'll take your money. If they don't do it themselves, with a knife, they'll get those dirty women to steal it out of your trousers" (*The Conservationist*, 1974p. 60).

The location (black quarters on white-owned farms) itself is not a comfortable habitat. It is overcrowded with men, women and young children, struggling to survive. Mehring thinks there are over a hundred and fifty thousand black people in the location by his farm. No one is responsible for them; not even the government. Like the land, they are simply transferred from one white-owner to another. Mehring bought his farm with the people on the location. In a moment of frustration over their overwhelming presence on the farm, he exaggeratedly cries out that there are "a hundred and fifty – thousands of them, practically on the door step". He thinks that "it was something that should have been taken into consideration from the beginning, before the deed of sale was signed." Mehring dismisses that "they're used to anything, they survive, swallowing dust, walking in droves through rain, and blown, in August, like newspapers to the shelter of any wall" (*The Conservationist*, 1974p.234).

Others like Jacobus, Witbooi, Izak, Alena and Solomon who are fortunate to be employed on the farm, may have escaped homelessness and starvation, yet they do not live comfortably. Jacobus, his wife, and youngest child, occupy a room in the servants' quarters. Alina and her man "had fixed up the shed as their room" while the rest of the workers are all crammed in a make-shift 'breeze-block quarters' called the compound (*The Conservationist*, 1974p.22). Despite their discomfort, they take in homeless relatives into the compound which gets "colder in winter... [and] as soon as the sun went down; the coughing of the children went on increasingly and

ignored inside, while the men equated or stood with hunched shoulders around the brazier" (*The Conservationist*, 1974p.29).

They have to also share the little provision the master hands out to them. This means cutting down individual ration in order for the food to go around. Like when a relation of Solomon comes squatting, "his family fed from everybody's cooking pots; Jacobus could not increase the amount of mealie-meal distributed without accounting for it when the supply did not last the allotted period of time" (*The Conservationist*, 1974 p. 85).

5. Poetic Justice

The dramatisation of poor health, shelter and insufficient food which the black people are subjected to provides a view of the deep issues of environmental racism, and injustice. By directing attention to the deprivation of the key pillars of life, Gordimer is deeply invested in the ecological critique of apartheid through what Glissant (1997 p. 27) calls an "aesthetic of the earth"; an aesthetic which "avoids the obsolete mysticism of place and engages with an ecological critique of models of consumption, exclusion and hegemony." Consequently, the subjugation and oppression of the black people beacons for justice. Justice comes in the way that Mehring begins to lose grip of himself, his son and eventually his farm.

Gordimer uses the landscape and elements of nature as symbols to craft a 'new' South African subjectivity that registers the prominence of the blacks whilst the identity that Mehring persistently tries to cultivate through his attempt to bond with the farm, slowly fades away. Mehring's attempt to wholly possess, and keep the farm, fails as his efforts to bequeath the farm to his son falls through. Mehring's anxiety about his 'legacy' is very apparent. He is continually worried about passing an inheritance to his son. In an instance, he declares that "the farm, who else is a farm for but a son..." (*The Conservationist*, 1974 p. 114).

It is clear that Mehring's vision of the future predicts a handing over of the farm to the next generation. This is made clearer in his plan to "plant another hundred trees," and in particular, "Oaks", as his internal monologue reminds us that "You don't plant oaks for yourself but for those who come after" (*The Conservationist*, 1974 p. 172). Yet, his son is not interested in inheriting the farm. The son, Terry, keeps a distance from the father, his ideologies and his Farm.

Terry refuses to spend his holidays on the farm (*The Conservationist*, 1974 p.117). He detests his father's materialism and treatment of the blacks.

Equally, he does not believe in the apartheid government, and plans to leave the country after graduating from college in order to escape conscription into the army. He tells his father that “if anyone thinks [he is] going into their army to learn to ‘kill kaffirs’ like a ware ou, well I’m damn well not” (*The Conservationist*, 1974 p. 70).

This realisation troubles Mehring as he recognises in his son’s anti-government feelings, a growing-away from him as a father, and a potential moving away from the farm, and from South Africa as a country.

By casting Terry as a liberal, the narrative introduces a crack from within. It signifies a challenge to the conservative views of white superiority, which Mehring’s generation upholds, signalling the possibility for change. Terry reflects the idealism of the white liberals. Although they are beneficiaries of apartheid, they oppose its subjugation of the blacks. Terry (like such white liberal characters as Paddy, in Peter Abraham’s (1946) *Mine Boy*, Camila, in Bessie Head’s (1973) *A Question of Power*, Evelyn Bray, in Gordimer’s (1970) *A Quest of Honour*, among several others) opposes racism and subjugation of blacks.

Terry negates his father in several ways. For example, he hitchhikes from school to the farm, refusing to take a plane or train ticket from his father. He forbids the servants from calling him master. Izak tells Dorcas, a wife of one of the servants, that: “His son said he doesn’t want to be called master – he told Jacobus, didn’t he? You mustn’t call me Mr. Terry. He just wants us to call him by his name” (p. 73). The depiction of Terry as a liberal, with his nihilist idealism, further complicates the possibility of the continuation of black subjugation, and eventually marks the climax of the novel. Terry’s rejection of the farm, the country, and all that his father upholds, prefigures the end of Mehring’s, and by extension, white ownership of the land.

As the son shuns the father, he (Mehring) becomes totally lonely and gradually loses all connections with real people. His consciousness is fragmented, and he steadily loses grip on the world around him, such as when he stood in “an awful moment looking at a green light, and not knowing what it meant. He is unable to read even the simplest, familiar system of signs. He is no longer responding to normal signs, he “clings to familiar landmarks in an attempt to hang on to his version of reality, picking out bus stops and beer cartons” (*The Conservationist*, 1974 p. 130). However, the final triumph over Mehring comes in the form of a flood.

A flood occurs which cuts him off from the farm. First, he is unable to reach the farm because the road is washed out by the flood. Secondly, the flood had unearthed the dead body. When he eventually gets to the farm, he is assaulted by the pungent smell of rot, “a stink to high heavens” (*The*

Conservationist, 1974 p. 235). Mehring flees away from the smell and from the farm.

As Mehring races away to oblivion, he meets a girl and attempts to have sex with her in the woods behind an old mine-dump. Again, he is gripped by panic as he remembers the dead body lying on the farm. He tries to reassure himself that it couldn't harm him, but thoughts of violence, the body, and the flood flows torrentially through his mind. Exhausted, he communes with the imaginary Antonia:

Everything is over long ago, dead when it was found. Violence is a red blossom for you to put behind your gipsy-ringed ear, a kaffir-boom flower you wear in London as your souvenir of foreign parts, like those Americans who leave Hawaii with hibiscus around their necks, but violence has flowered after seven years drought, violence as fecundity, weathering as humus, rising as sap. If it had not been for the flood... (*The Conservationist*, 1974 p. 242).

Mehring's thoughts regarding violence is very revealing as it connects, through metaphor, the luxury enjoyed in the metropolis with bloodshed in the colonies. Reference to violence as "red blossom" apparels on the neck, and behind the ears of the imaginary lover now far away in London, and as "souvenir of foreign parts" (*The Conservationist*, 1974 p. 242) on the streets of London, is indicative of the fact that the empire flourishes at the destruction of the colony. Similarly, the allusion to American tourists in Hawaii, a territory with a history of forceful colonisation and marginalisation of indigenous people by European-Americans, reinforces this idea. The passage equally shows that the end has come for Mehring, and the violence, repression and racial injustice that he represents. This is clear where he says that "violence has flowered after seven years" (*The Conservationist*, 1974 p. 242), making a biblical allusion to the story of Joseph and the Egyptian's seven years of bounty and another seven of famine. Mehring understands his current state of affairs as a season of reaping what was sowed.

Thoughts of violence drives Mehring into hallucination. He imagines that some people are lurking in the shadows to attack him. He thinks he is about to be "set upon, robbed, killed, castrated" he shouts, but hears only his own echo. He sees a man, probably a guard, who comes to warn him that the mine-dump is not safe but he imagines the man is together with many others. He thinks they are the killers of the dead body and have come to kill him too. Mehring imagines that a whole gang of them (black people) are coming after him. He imagines he is beaten down and people are shouting "come and look... Its Mehring. Its Mehring, down there" (*The Conservationist*, 1974 p.250).

He couldn't achieve his aim of having sex with the girl in the woods. He dresses quickly and runs, thinking about the girl and the farm, simultaneously. He decides that:

He is going to leave her to them. He's going, in a matter of seconds – mustn't give himself away by so much as glancing towards the car- he's going to make a dash for it, a leap, sell the place to the first offer., jump in, the key's there in the ignition, and drive off reversing wildly... he's going to run, run and leave them to rape her or rob her. She'll be all right. They survive everything... they can have it, the whole four hundred acres (*The Conservationist*, 1974 p. 250).

Gordimer's resolution of the land issue is very compelling. Mehring loses the land in a similar manner that he acquires it; through force and violence. It equally makes a profound statement about colonial possession of African lands which writers have severally demonstrate with images of penetration and rape (Adam, 2003). The failed attempt at copulation with the girl can be interpreted as the end of the violation of both the land and the people. Mehring tells himself that "he is going to leave, he's going to run, run and leave them to rape her or rob her. She'll be all right. They survive everything... they can have it, the whole four hundred acres" (*The Conservationist*, 1974 p. 250). This shows, precisely, what he has been doing to the land, raping and robbing it. This scenario depicts Gordimer's imagining of the end of apartheid, especially because as he (Mehring) races away into oblivion, the farm workers purchase a wood coffin, and Jacobus leads a procession for the dead man on the high farm ground.

The workers rebury the unknown man with proper funeral rites, and it is said that:

The one whom the farm received had no name. He had no family but their women wept a little for him. There was no child of his present, but their children were there to live after him. They had to put him away to rest; he had come back. He took possession of this earth, theirs; one of them (*The Conservationist*, 1974 p. 252).

Re-burying the dead man with proper rites by the entire community of blacks, symbolises not only the retrieval of the land, but the continuity of the black race. As the passage shows, although he was nameless and anonymous and had no children, "their children were there to live after him" (*The Conservationist*, 1974 p. 252).

In this statement, the dead man becomes a symbol of the dispossessed, and oppressed generation. His death, therefore, symbolises

the death of that era, and a new beginning for the blacks. The children who live after him assume real ownership of the land.

6. Conclusion

The postcolonial ecocritical reading of *The Conservationist* reveals two things. The fragmentation of Mehring's consciousness deconstructs the ideologies that justify white proprietorship of the land. His lack of farming knowledge and his exploitation of the farm as a tax-buffer shows the mendacity of the apartheid regime.

In this regard, the novel exposes the conservation impulse relation to the social, cultural and psychological contradictions of apartheid. Secondly, the introduction of the mythological sub-text of the novel recovers the agency of nature and presents a discourse of farming by the blacks that is ethically invested in the land.

The depiction of the failure of Mehring as a farmer/conservationist, the celebration of the skills and resilience of the black farmhands, and the retributive justice of nature in the form of the flood, corroborates the view that the concept of justice is fundamental to postcolonial environmental representation. The narrative's designation of the victory of nature and the blacks over Mehring, and his conceited claims of conservation, indicates the concept of justice at work in postcolonial environmental literature.

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The evolution of music recording technologies in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

Music recording technology has undergone a paradigm shift in the Zimbabwean recording industry. There has been a transition from the use of analogue to digital recording technology in the country. The study borrows the Technological Determinism theory to explore the evolution from analogue to digital of the recording industry. Analogue technology was used from 1956 to the 1990s, and songs were recorded on the reel, and stored on vinyl discs. The compact disc (CD) storage was introduced from which CD files began to be distributed to consumers as digital copies by recording studios. Recording studios in Zimbabwe have embraced digital technology as music is created, and distributed, in the digital realm. The researchers deployed a qualitative methodology to purposively gather data from record producers, studio owners, and musicians, to analyse changes in the Zimbabwe recording industry. Technological complexity, sophistication, dexterity, innovativeness and knowledgeability of producers now determine the quality of music productions. Thus, the research explores the shifting of recording processes from analogue to digital in Zimbabwean studios. Further, the study reveals that technological developments directly impact the modus operandi and determine the relevance, and business viability, of the Zimbabwean music recording-landscape. Further research can accrue benefits to the recording industry particularly in the use of digital software packages.

Keywords: analogue; digital; home studio; musician; pro studio; MIDI; recording industry

1. Introduction

Numerous changes have characterised the Zimbabwean recording industry since the establishment of commercial recording in the country. This article discusses influences of analogue and digital technologies on the evolution of western recording technologies in Zimbabwe. The paper explores technologies governing interactions among musicians, recording engineers, producers, and other incidental musical players. The way the recording industry personnel interacted depended in part on the music recording technologies which they were using. In this study, some reflections were drawn about changes that are characteristic in local music genres which stem from technological vicissitudes.

The researchers investigated the evolution of recording technologies in Zimbabwe using unstructured interviews with recording engineers, producers and musicians. Of particular interest was to note the nature of relationships between the musicians and the producers with regards to what each of them feels is the ideal material for production. The first section of the paper discusses the influence of analogue technology on Zimbabwe's recording industry and deals with how Mbira music, which was rejected by analogue era commercial music producers, gained popularity during the digital era. The second section focuses on the advantages of analogue recording technology, followed by the advantages of digital recording technology. The third, and last, section chronicles the influence of digital technology in Zimbabwe's recording industry which saw the birth of Zimdancehall, and the rise of the riddim, culture.

In the *Zimdancehall*–riddim culture era, analogue, and digital fusion, became prevalent (Mugari, 2016). Although chanters were incorporated in Sungura music, their place and relevance, faced competition from the emerging trends of a steady rise in *Zimdancehall* popular chanting.

2. Background and context

Commercial music production has gone through a series of vicissitudes, and a number of positive developments that uplifted the recording industry in Zimbabwe. Muranda (2021) mentions that the inception of digital technology in the Zimbabwean recording industry has ushered in several changes in the way recordings take shape.

In the past, pro-studios who dominated the industry enjoyed autonomy and influenced goings-on in the recording industry in Zimbabwe. Today, the formal set-up of the industry has drastically melted into a proliferation of informal operations, where the majority of studios are now being run in the backyard without clear cut standards. Gondo (2012), Sibanda (2012) and Vhori (2012) say that the operating landscape, along with prevailing economic, and socio-political circumstances, have motivated adoption of genres like R 'n' B, HipHop, and Dancehall, as artists strive to appeal internationally.

With the advent of digital recording technology, the media has turned digital, and so, have musical products. Piracy has soared, thereby plummeting earnings for analogue- based products. Reluctance to take up digital recording has adversely affected pro- studios, leaving them alienated from both artists, and the consumer clientele. According to Scannell (2001), Niaah (2008), Leyshon (2009) and Muranda (2021) pro-studios' hegemony has slackened due to the emergence of home studios which have liberated musicians by accepting a variety of music genres like Hip Hop, Urban Grooves, and Ragga, in their musicproduction.

The international music recording history is punctuated by the following epochs; the Acoustic era (1877–1925), Electrical era (1925–1945), and Magnetic era (1945–1975), which have determined some technological developments. Some of the developments lost their relevance as they could not sustain the people's livelihoods, while others have undergone a dynamic process of change, from bulk analogue equipment to dealing with the micro chip in virtual equipment, in order to record music.

In southern Africa, music recording began in the early 20th century. According to Zindi, (2015), Gallow as opened in 1932 in South Africa as the first recording company in southern Africa. Records they produced were sent to Britain, for pressing, until the 1950s when a local pressing company was established in South Africa. Gallo then opened a branch in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) (Pietilä, 2015).

Music production in Zimbabwe began in the 1960s, mainly spearheaded by South African based companies, Gallo and Teal Records, who used analogue recording technology (Zindi, 2015). Scannell (2001) also indicates that the first Zimbabwean recording companies were of South African origin. The recording companies' interests were purely business-related, and nothing less than that. The Zimbabwean recording culture was, hence, the adoption of the pioneer companies' design, since the enterprise was a novelty, locally. The borrowed, or adopted legacy, dominated Zimbabwe's music recording

culture during the colonial period, towards, and soon after, political independence in 1980. Traces of colonial influences continued to manifest in musical productions as in several other spheres of people's lives (Dube, 1996).

Thaker (2021) informs that the eras that humanity has passed through, exert demands on how certain tasks had to be executed; hence, the need for relevant knowledge, and skills. The absence or presence of pertinent skills, and tools, mean that humans could tackle or circumvent challenges. All the above changes require some adjustments in terms of knowledge, and skills, in order to survive, and that includes the recording industry too.

3. Engaging Veblen's Technological Determinism theory

The study borrows Thorstein Veblen's (1994) Technological Determinism theory which holds that technology is a driving force behind changes that take place in society. People and cultures always move, and evolve, from simple to complex (Stone, 2015). Technology accounts for much of what people are capable of doing in each era, and how they undertake their daily routines, in particular, recording of music as envisaged in the current study.

Substantial technological advancement is driven by a need to make the highest possible production with ease, yet, with minimal capital, and labour investment. Medosch (2005) advances that science and technology are the forces central to the shaping of social change. Evolution is always imminent, and imperative, pertaining to how things are done.

Grounded by Veblen's (1994) Technological Determinism theory, the study explores how digital inception necessitated the evolution of Zimbabwe's recording industry from analogue to present practices. Thus, the study focuses on how the technologies deployed in Zimbabwe's recording industry have shaped the morphing of musical genres.

4. Methodology

The study adopted a qualitative methodology to solicit data from purposively selected record producers, studio owners and musicians, concerning the prevailing changes in the recording industry in Zimbabwe. Semi-structured interviews were used to gather ideas informing the study from respondents (Galletta, 2013). The interviews were conducted with studio owners, producers and selected musicians. As players in the industry, the researchers also

engaged participant observations in studio undertakings within the Zimbabwean recording industry.

The researchers' interaction with various technologies in the industry escalated understanding of the changes which prevail in the music industry, stemming from the coming on board of new technologies. Researchers used participant observations to broaden their understanding of the information elicited through interviews. In addition to the above, the document analysis approach was deployed to cast further insights into the Zimbabwe recording industry (Bhattacharjee, 2012). This was meant to corroborate other techniques used, like the ones mentioned above.

Secondary sources such as newspaper articles as well as musical websites were used to expand the spectrum of researchers' views of the recording industry. The three methods used helped unearth the data needed for the study, and subsequently, informed the ultimate conclusions.

5. The influence of analogue technology on Zimbabwe's recording industry

Musical events have been a part of people's daily activities since time immemorial. Before the invention of music recording technology, one had to be present at the site of a performance for them to witness any musical event. Analogue recordings were the first to enable people experience music performances subsequently—outside the time of performance—, and also beyond the geographical boundaries of the original performance.

In the analogue recording, acoustic sound-waves are captured directly onto a medium without being converted first to a digital signal (Boyd, 2001). With simple analogue technology, the sound is physically played using 'real' musical instruments. Transducers¹ play a critical role in the transference of signal from source to the storage medium. Physical components, which play various roles in the processing of sound, can be seen by the human eye.

In analogue recording, the sound-wave can hardly be seen². It is only gauged through LED³ signal level indicators, unless an output transducer such as a speaker is used. The storage mediums for analogue recordings were vinyl and audio cassette. Commercial music production in Zimbabwe

¹ Devices that change a signal from one form to another

² There is no visual representation of sound.

³ Light-emitting diode signal level indicator

was pioneered by foreign recording companies that used analogue technology. According to Lwanda and Kanjo (2013), Gallo Records came to Zimbabwe in the 1950s. Around 1960, Teal Records, also from South Africa, was established in the then Salisbury (now Harare) operating in rivalry with Gallo (Scannel, 2001). Gallo became the most influential company with regards to southern African music production (Lwanda & Kanjo, 2013).

The cradle of music recording in Zimbabwe hinges on Gallo and Teal recording companies which are originally South African (Zindi, 2015). The two companies later morphed into ZMC and Gramma Records respectively, and recorded local music genres using analogue technology.

Apart from directly recording black African music, Gallo Records also funded, ethnomusicologist, Hugh Tracey's non-commercial music recordings. Hugh Tracey preserved indigenous African traditional music and popularised it across the world (Lwanda & Kanjo, 2013).

The *mbira*, which had limited space at commercial music recording stables, found a home within ethnomusicological recordings such as those by Hugh Tracey which propelled it to make a big name overseas (Pietilä, 2015).

Many local recordings at the time did not find space within the commercial studios. Hugh Tracey also recorded Zimbabwean Afro-jazz musician, August Musarugwa, using funds from Gallo Records (Lwanda & Kanjo, 2013). The international influence of Hugh Tracey propelled Musarugwa's song, *Skokiaan*, to be an international hit.

Makwenda (2005) says there are numerous cover versions from various artists across the globe who include, Louis Armstrong, Hugh Masekela, Nico Carsten, Robert Delgado, James Last, Sam Klair, Joe Carr, Nteni Piliso, and Herb Albert. Using his field recordings, Hugh Tracey established the International Library of African Music in 1954 (Perman, 2015). This highly exposed the traditional African genres to the global listenership, apart from preservation, given that the music was mainly non-commercial, but communal as passed on over generations through oral tradition.

6. Mbira music and popularity of mbira instrument

The Rhodesia Broadcasting Corporation (RBC) created non-commercial music records using analogue technology. RBC played a remarkable role in popularising the *mbira* instrument locally. Turino (2010) advances that *Chemutengure*, one of Thomas Mapfumo's early hits, was a RBC production.

Examples of groups that benefited from radio analogue recording programmes include Zata Zemba, Mazaimbira, Mhuri yekwaGweshe, Mhuri yekwaMadhohochirwa, Mhuri yekwaGumira, Mushawaparara Mbira Group, and Mhuri yekwaMujuru. The RBC also recorded *Amasiganda/Dzemagitare* represented by artists such as Ngwaru Mapundu, Jordan Chataika, John White, Jackson Chinembiri, and Elisha Tome. All these musicians maintained distinct styles within their genre. There was variety and listeners were assured of hearing different tunes or sounds.

Turino (2010) opines that ethnomusicological activity was instrumental in laying ground to *mbira* international recognition. This belief is also supported by Perman (2015) who adds that the involvement of missionaries facilitated the migration of Dumisani Maraire and Kamba Simango to the United States of America. Chitando (2002) says that musicians-cum-teachers Dumisani Maraire and Ephat Mujuru are prominent figures among the indigenous people who introduced *mbira* music and spirituality to North American audiences and highly prompted inquisitiveness and interest in Zimbabwean *mbira* music.

On *YouTube*, there are many videos on *mbira* music tutorials and performances done by people of different ethnicities, indicating that the instrument has transcended cultural boundaries. Musicians and advocates such as Jennifer Kyker, Erica Azim, Frank Hand, Paul Berliner, and Jocelyn Moon, continue to propel the *mbira* in and outside of Zimbabwe. Thriving *mbira* communities of performers and enthusiasts have also emerged in the United States (especially along the Pacific Coast), Canada, Japan, Germany and the United Kingdom among others (Perman, 2015).

The *mbira* has largely remained in the traditional realm as far as ethnomusicological and radio recordings are concerned. It essentially dwelled on traditional conventions of *mbira* modes such as *Nhemamusasa*, *Bukatiende*, *Mahororo*, and *Chipembere*. The resonance of the instrument with the international world has made the local recording companies budge and embrace and record more *mbira* musicians. This has since accommodated fusion of the instrument with guitars, drum sets and other western instruments such as brass and woodwind.

The survival of a genre through time and commercial processes hinges on its popularity, among other things (Lena & Paterson, 2008). *Mbira* music is now popular in the academic field as well as in the Zimbabwe recording industry owing to the popularity it has gained across borders.

Wilfred Nyamasvisva, musician, and now band leader of Mawungira eNharira, stated that their earlier group (Mbira DzeNharira) was turned away several times when they attempted to record with commercial analogue

studios. Their music was labelled 'unmarketable'. However, Silvester Tapfumaneyi of ZBC offered to record their first album, "Rinemanyanga Hariputirwi," and their music was well received by the public. The above situation opened doors for them to be accepted for commercial recording. They worked to adapt their *mbira* instruments to sound distinct voice ranges emulating the interlocking lead rhythm and bass set up of guitars.

Some analogue mbira recordings deviated from the complex traditional norms regarding accompaniment and progression. Thomas Mapfumo's music is based on *Chimurenga* and *toyi-toyi*⁴ themes fused with South African urban jive and *Marabi* (Turino, 2002). Master Chivero also popularised progressions that borrowed simple *Rhumba* and *Sungura* progression of I IV V V, as opposed to the complex traditional movements which encompass minor chords.

The researchers have witnessed the growth of recorded *mbira* repertoire, especially considering the coming on board of groups such as Mbira DzeNharira, Mawungira ENharira which were preceded by Ephat Mujuru and Chioniso Maraire. Other musicians who made names through the use of *mbira* include Beulah Dyoko, Stella Chiweshe, and Mbuya Madhube. Currently, some young academic musicians are now composing *mbira*-based songs. These include the likes of Edith Katiji, Hope Masike, Vimbai Zimuto and Tafadzwa Matiure.

The fusion of mbira with guitars in Thomas Mapfumo's music can be considered the beginning of contemporary improvisation. Subsequently, Andy Brown and many youths, especially Chioniso Maraire, took the *mbira* to greater improvisational heights. They have managed to place the unique lamella sound within contexts novel to the *mbira* modes. For instance, vocals are sometimes sung in English and embedded in western-style chord progressions and song structures. The use of verse and chorus conjoined by a bridge is 'foreign' to traditional conventions of *mbira* performances. The use of a flexible and easier to play *Nyunga nyunga*; a hybrid *mbira*, results from compelling emphasis within academic circles. Its keys are tuned to a pentatonic sound. This makes it more viable and easier to manipulate, hence, its embracement by the majority of contemporary artists. Among the trending artists, Jah Prayzah and Andy Muridzo are examples of musicians who fuse their art with *mbira*. The next section discusses *Sungura* as a genre which emerged in the analogue dispensation.

⁴ A jogging drive that serves as a morale booster.

7. *Sungura* genre in the analogue era

Sungura music thrived on producer hegemony to emerge as the most outstanding genre as it was the producers' favourite. The recording was an enterprise for financial gain; hence, the main object of recording companies was to make money out of all the recordings made. Bothwell Nyamhondera, former producer (Grammar Records), underscored, in an interview on 4 November 2020, that recording studio time was treated like gold, and as such, the recording cost was more time-based than total work accomplished. Hence, recording studios were equipped with timers that kicked into action at the beginning of a recording session. Because musicians were unable to pay for their recordings, they were recorded under contracts. The contracts bound musicians to an average of 15% royalty money, and the rest of the earning would be channelled to studio costs. In this capitalist approach, there was no time to waste on amateur musicians or uncertainty encased genres.

Copcats, conflicts and rivalry emerged in *Sungura* music during the analogue period. Muranda and Maguraushe (2014) advance that the influence of producers inculcated a culture of copcats and emulators. As musicians strove to land recording contracts, they impulsively toed musical styles of already recorded material to impress on audition. However, music-making is generally a difficult process that is intrinsically constructed. Therefore, it is the capabilities of an individual and the psychological environment which informs their imagination to compose a song.

Wellington Mareva, Band Leader of Mupandawana Knight Riders, stated in an interview on 10 January 2021 that, 'during the analogue era, musicians deemed to be incapable of putting together a tight recording, were easily turned away to work on their act until it was acceptable to the producer. Resultantly, upcoming musicians emulated projects that the producers had accepted earlier.' Successful musicians found their tracks being trailed by fly-by-night musicians. Alick Macheso penned the song *Murondatsimba* to vent out his anger at musicians who allegedly copied his brand of *Sungura*. In this song, Macheso challenges 'copcats' to come up with their lines and not wait for him to record then convert it to make it their work.

Due to emulation, many *Sungura* bands' sound is monotonous because their music is the same. Examples include the music of First Farai, Mark Ngwazi, Nicholas Zacharia, Paradzai Mesi, Simon Mutambi, and Somandla Ndebele. This diminishes the distinctive identity of artists' creative dimensions. While musicians are shaped and inspired to emulate their forerunners within

a genre, it is respectful to come up with one's own identity. Musicians may play common chord progressions and song layout within a genre.

A former producer with ZMC Records, submitted that:

early musicians like James Chimombe, John Chibadura, Jonah Moyo, Ketai Muchawaya, Knowledge Kunenyati, Leonard Dembo, Lovemore Majaivhana, Marko Sibanda, Nduna Malaba, Oliver Mtukudzi, Paul Matavire, Simon Chimbetu, Solomon Skhuza, and Thomas Mapfumo played some selected unique versions of *Sungura* songs. Though they emulated *Kanindo* and *Rhumba* in essence, each musician maintained an identity within their lines of compositions. Despite musicians playing the same genre, their productions were distinctly different.

Khulekani Moyo, Producer at GM Records, stated that:

because *Sungura* attracted a lucrative market, it became the most favoured genre. The popularity of *Sungura* led recording engineers and producers to get accustomed and specialised in it at the expense of other genres such *Amasiganda*, *mbira*, Dancehall, and gospel. *Sungura* became popular with many people who had hopes of recording music in future.

When genres such as rap and *Zimdancehall*, which thrive on backtracks and lip-synching, later emerged, they took time to be embraced. The musicians do not always use real musical instruments and this led the audiences to sceptical reception during the early days. It is important in the next discussion to explore the merits that accrued on the use of analogue recording technology.

8. Merits of analogue recording technology

The analogue recording era was characterised by big companies which invested hugely in the recording processes. Musicians enjoyed full band performances where various talents complimented each other (the inspiration of playing together). The companies helped brand musicians by nurturing discovered talent amongst artists. The A & R departments scouted for talented musicians and contracts were signed. Wellington Mareva, stated that 'the benefits that artists enjoyed included 'free' recording and marketing of their works.' The recordings were not done free of charge because the recording company retained the bulk of earnings to defray recording and marketing costs. Musicians were lured to sign contracts, and the recording companies,

awarded them a percentage of royalties. Jonah Moyo, Devera Ngwenja Jazz Band Musician, observed that:

some musicians who threatened to withdraw from their contracts were given musical equipment, houses or cars by the recording companies as payment to motivate and retain them. Others were incentivised with promotional videos. Promotional copies were produced and strategically distributed for no payment.

Knowledge Kunenyati, Band Leader of Kasongo Band, said that 'recording companies were after making a profit and they subjected prospective groups to strict auditioning.' Changes were suggested on how songs were to be structured for presentation. Subsequently, bands were branded according to recording companies' preferences. Compliance with recording company standards or expectations guaranteed artists a recording contract. It was a great achievement to get a nod after an audition. This implies that the genre played by a musician had to be approved by the music producer and this gave rise to the growth of *Sungura* ahead of other genres.

Jabulani Ndlovu, Music Producer at Trutone Studios, submitted that:

Signing a recording contract bailed many musicians who had no sufficient capital to invest in the recording process because of the high costs involved. By retaining exclusive rights to the work of musicians, recording companies made huge profits. This was also made even more lucrative by the fact that analogue technology proffered little if any room for manipulation of products.

As a result, music produced during the analogue era was less susceptible to piracy. The most convenient way one could enjoy music without necessarily having bought it was through listening to it on the radio or pay to play on jukeboxes. Radio and television stations worked with recording companies to market new releases from customised recordings which they broadcast. Knowledge Kunenyati bemoaned the bygone era saying that:

Nowadays musicians can no longer record easily because recording companies request payment before any recording is done. Moreover, the current crop of producers is more focused on money, and not necessarily the quality of the product. It is the musician who has to be particular what he wants to give out to people, otherwise as long he/she has the money to pay, recording is guaranteed.

Another musician stated that 'during the analogue era, there was little congestion in recording studios, only serious musicians who worked on merit

were recorded.’ Nowadays anyone who wishes to record can do so, giving rise to several musicians competing for airplay. The above referred situation leads to corruption as musicians bribe presenters to be accorded airplay.

During the analogue era, session musicians made money out of musicians who had no substantive bands. The involvement of a session musician in a project adds some new flavour to a song. Session artists were relevant during the analogue era for they wielded unique skills and creativeness in playing real instruments. The arrival of digital technology morphed the *modus operandi* of the recording industry; hence the following segment delves into how the recording industry was shaped.

9. Digital technology in Zimbabwe’s recording industry

Digital technology has kept players in Zimbabwe at par with trending international music recording practices. Like in Jamaica, fledgling recording studios, now in every neighbourhood, make recording inexpensive using computer technology (Niaah, 2008). The era of digital recording has democratised the playing field in music recording, delinking pro-studios from total control, and centring new genres on home studios (Niaah, 2008). It turned around the roles of individuals in the industry, compacting many posts into one. The producer became the main actor in the industry, gobbling the roles of the analogue A & R, recording and mixing engineers.

Furthermore, Clive Mukundu, mentioned that ‘most producers are keyboard players who use their skills to create sounds for the rest of the musical instruments by simply assigning tracks to instrument that are recognised by a given synthesiser within the Digital Audio Workstation (DAW).’ He decries the general absence of timbre diversity found in real musical instruments since the MIDI-produced sounds cannot hide the glaring artificial feel. MIDI lacks the harmonics which build the natural instrument timbre. However, some gospel outfits have made significant strides using the digital instrument approach. The role of session musicians during recording is slowly getting decimated by MIDI sequencing which gave birth to the production and use of *riddims*.

10. Riddim culture in *Zimdancehall*

Zimdancehall artists were mocked as *vapfanha vemaband muhomwe* (youths with their bands in the pockets) when they appeared for the first time on the public stage during national galas in the early 2000s (Chitando, 2002). This was because they brought backtracks on CDs or memory sticks. These backtracks would have been performed based on a riddim as the artist sings lyrics. They would call out to the DJ, or 'selector' for a backtrack number to play so they sing along on the stage. Initially, many people disliked this approach, and sometimes fans pelted them with cans on stage in protest.

The dislike emanated from the analogue ontology where traditional conventions held that a musician was expected to perform on an instrument with a band during a live performance. The art of creating melodies and rhythms with notes in digital set-ups differs from using real instruments. *Zimdancehall* artists prefer pre-recorded instrumentation during live performances in a bid to preserve the originality of digitally created music.

Digital recording technology has influenced the emergence of numerous *Zimdancehall* artists. '*Mangoma*,' as *Zimdancehall* is affectionately labelled by its followers, is a genre that is largely riddim-based, and thrives on traits borrowed from Jamaican dancehall. The genre exploits a booming bassline and a prominent kick drum signature. The sound is digitally produced and most often features percussive timbre to complement the rhythmic nature of the music. Lyrics are rhymed within these bass, and drum throbs, and the thudding groove. Fullerton (2017) says dancehall has sexually explicit tendencies which also manifest in women's sensually provocative fashions. Although sexuality has always been a part of popular traditional genres such as *Jiti* and *Dembe*, *Zimdancehall* have taken the use of *riddims* to new heights, and contexts, a novel phenomenon in Zimbabwean music culture.

Dancehall is associated with partying binges where minimum self-restraint is exercised. The researchers view *Zimdancehall* as a style that runs with a feeling of despair that needs instant solace. A *Zimdancehall* producer who chose anonymity stated that:

there is rampant use of 'sedative' drugs such as *mutoriro*, heroin, Cordain, *Kirango*, *mangemba*, *nyaope*, *maragado*, *zed*, *musombodhiya*, *tegu-tegu*, *katsotsi*, *soldier*, *double-punch*, *glue*, *bronco*, and *mbanje* concoctions that *Zimdancehall* musicians take. *Passa Passa* street parties are platforms to promote new musicians and new *riddims*.

These parties are open to the public and organised through a collaboration between producers and drug dealers. Another *Zimdancehall* producer stated that, '*Passa Passa* street parties aim to create a market for drug dealers who often stand behind, and fund such functions. Some artists perform hyperactively under the influence of drugs.' In the process, the growth of *Zimdancehall* is significantly fanned.

In the early 2000s, some people in the country avoided watching ZTV and listening to local radio stations where propaganda jingles were played every 30 minutes. They acquired free to air digital satellite decoders popularly known as Phillibao and Wizztech to access free to air international channels. At the time, the national broadcaster was still using analogue technology. Phillibao and Wizztech decoders exposed viewers to genres such as dancehall which were not available on the local broadcast channels.

Many upcoming artists in Zimbabwe are now performing *Zimdancehall* music due to a compelling general shift towards the genre. *Zimdancehall* music is evading traditional censorship because home studio production set-ups are informal. Khulekani Moyo, indicated that 'some musicians were silenced on radio for lack of compliance to requirements in terms of either lyrical sensitivity or generosity by tipping DJs/radio presenters with motivational tokens. *Zimdancehall* thrives on online platforms like *Spotify*, mostly, and escape the limitations of censorship and local marketing systems.

Digital technology has contracted the world to a small village. According to Cresswell and Bennett (2015), life is lived on the screen. The era of free channel broadcasting exposes people to channels that play dancehall that feature and inspires the youths. The pomp and flamboyance depicted in the videos clicked with the youths who, apart from getting solace from dancehall, had an opportunity to express themselves through the music. The era was later complemented by the proliferation of home studios as computers became acquirable by some producers. Open view digital platform, *Go TV*, was popular with viewers, but was immediately outlawed in Zimbabwe. The next discussion discusses the merits that have been realised through the use of digital recording technology.

11. Merits of digital recording technology

Digital technology has brought several advantages to the recording industry. Unlike in the analogue era where sessions called for a full band's flawless live performance for a successful recording, digital technology allows for

recordings of individual tracks either guided by a given metronome tempo or without. The advantage is that one person can play many instrumental tracks which make up the song without a full band. Whereas during the analogue era a recording endeavour would collapse if band members failed to turn up or made mistakes, in the digital technology era, this is no longer a problem. Frustrating auditions which were characteristic of analogue producers are now a thing of the past.

Clive Mukundu, Musician and Producer at Monolio studio, noted that 'Monolio Studio recorded many overseas musician's online courtesy of digital technology coupled with internet possibilities.' This approach accommodates people physically residing in different geographical locales. It brings together aspects from different cultures into the recording which otherwise would have not been possible using analogue technology. It enhances cultural diffusionism since the traits of participants are directly expressed within the project. Each person has a motif bank within themselves on which they rely whenever they perform.

In written or spoken words, there is vocabulary that is associated with a given individual writer or speaker (personal choice of vocabulary). Likewise, with musical instruments, it is possible to tell who is playing without seeing them because of motifs with which the instrumentalist is identified with. The researchers concur with this assertion as performers, and understand that it is through exposure and experience that a musician's aptitude is shaped.

A genre is created from a musician's imagination and stimulation in his/her 'sound bank' then nourished by immersion, and involvement with society, culture, performers and technology. Technology comes in to enrich ideas through the addition of a wide range of sound effects. The malleability of sequencing processes used help to reproduce, and embellish imagination. It also provides requisite storage medium and format. Emmanuel Motsi, Musician and band leader of Zimreggastra, said: 'the digital era storage soft copies like MP3, WMA and WAV enable musicians to market themselves widely on a variety of online platforms such as *Facebook*, *Instagram*, *Spotify*, *WhatsApp* and *YouTube*. These online platforms help musicians shape their work by informing them about trends originating elsewhere so that they adopt attributes which enhance their international acceptance.'

Clive Mukundu highlighted one more benefit of digital technology which is the fact that he creates a bank of drum pattern loops which he constructs using real drummers for various local genres. These drum pattern loops can be used later in various recordings done without a drummer. These loops are user friendly in that they can be adjusted in tempo to suit the tempi of each

recording at each given time. The loops vary from *Rhumba*, *Sungura*, *Mhande*, *Jiti*, *Jerusarema*, and *Reggae*. Another strength of the loops is that they are customised to suit local music whose rhythms are largely not represented in default pre-sets found in most DAW built-in loops. Using a DAW, a loop can be dropped into a track then stretched or contracted to suit the chosen tempo so a recording can ensue. Signal processing tools can then be applied to achieve intended sonic characteristics of subsequent sound output.

The researchers observed that digital recording is more user friendly than analogue recording in that it is flexible, and can be manipulated. Mixing, and mastering, processes such as cleaning, dynamics, editing, EQ, FX and stereo imaging can easily be undone or redone through the click of a button. There are instances where mistakes occur during singing or instrument playing resulting in wrong notes. Apart from pitch correction done by several plugins, a note can be targeted within the given track, and adjusted in pitch or duration, notwithstanding the traditional delete and redo option. Alternatively, if the note is repeated somewhere in the phrasing, the correctly played note can be duplicated, and then cut and pasted in a position to replace the wrongly done one. This is made easy by the fact that most digital recordings follow a metronome tempo guide; hence, notes falling within recurring phrases carry close resemblance enough to substitute each other with no glaring difference. Moreover, repeated phrases can be looped through the intended duration such that a musician or sequencer may just do one phrase and loop it over until the intended period or length is covered.

Because technology continues to move to greater heights, studio owners need to upgrade their equipment from time to time. Norman Tapambwa, musician and producer at Live Sound Studio International, observed that:

digital technology is advantageous because unlike in analogue where replacement is imperative when technologies change, digital systems simply call for software upgrading. Digital recording equipment is relatively affordable. Moreover, it is conducive for use in the home for the equipment occupies little space. This also lessens transport requirements when the need arises to relocate, apart from promoting mobility.

The equipment can be moved to places with more clients from time to time. Forward Mazuruse, musician and producer, stated that:

in digital technology, merit comes with Autotune, a plug-in that corrects pitch and enhances the voice of a musician. He says old school musicians continue to cling

on to traditional ways of recording where too little or no enhancement is applied, for instance to voices. Remaining in the past militates against the realization of the full potential of an artist's works. While celebrated musicians like Oliver Mtukudzi were famous, their voices were not quite as good as they would have been with the necessary enhancement applications found in digital technology, and also trending in popular, and contemporary genres like Hip hop and *Zimdancehall*.

Khulekani Moyo, echoed the same sentiments and indicated that the rise of young producers who experiment with, and bring novelty, to musical sounds. On platforms such as ZIMA, some awards are scooped by young home studio producers while renowned professional studio producers are hardly considered. Moyo (2016), Kudita (2020) and Shumba (2020) concur that Oskid, who produces dancehall artists such as Winky D, has won the producer of the year award more than once despite being a 'new kid' on the block.

Another advantage of digital technology is that synchronising can be done manually because individual tracks, or ranges within a track, can be highlighted for relocation or volume adjustment. A tool like range selection in Cubase can be used to highlight and drag a range either within a track, or range of tracks to correctly position or to duplicate the section. The same tool can be used to combine segments within a track to either move them at once or to duplicate the selected range. It makes loop construction easy to deal with in respect of phrase duplication.

When track write mode is engaged, the signal can be treated with different sound effects at various points including volume levels as well as panning. In automation mode, a sound event is instructed to follow a prescribed trajectory of transformations as designed at various points of a given track. Moreover, trending software packages make it possible to utilise multiple approaches in dealing with notes. These include the note typing mode in which software like Mixcraft, which enables the musician to use a laptop keyboard to play musical notes using selected electric keyboard utilities such as pitch bend and transposition.

Digital tracks can be viewed for editing in piano roll or staff notation modes where utilities like pencil and eraser are available for creating and adjusting notes. This accommodates users from different orientations to utilise their theoretical knowledge for the best possible musical arrangements. Notes can be entered by use of a pencil tool, and preferred duration can be selected to suit the intended rhythm. Intermittent loudness can be constructed by tweaking the control utilities in the piano roll mode as intended for the final sound output.

There is also a facility to quantize notes, that is, to let the software automatically place the notes at the correct positions according to the selected time signature to match the tempo, and intended rhythm. The artificial laying of notes is very perfect. Mixcraft includes the 'humanise' option in the MIDI editing menu to randomise the flow of notes and disguise them to feel like they were played from a live human performance. This demonstrates how digital technology attempts to emulate the human aspect with regards to music performance. The utility helps conceal the excessive precision of software note placement that tends to take away the natural feel of the music. When 'humanised,' some notes will fall slightly before or after while others occur precisely on time to imitate a real human performance.

12. Convergence of analogue and digital technologies

The study observed that *Sungura* drumming is slowly being taken over by the loop approach. Forward Mazuruse, stated that 'instead of hiring a drummer, I do better with constructing drum loops in the DAW.' Apart from being economic by limiting hired labour, it saves him from grappling with cable glitches, and humming noises. As such, he can maximise his volume without the fear of cable electrostatic and magnetic interferences. In addition to creating a clean drum signal, he emphasised the advantage of being able to create drum loops that otherwise would not be playable humanly. Several artists, especially gospel musicians have since embraced digital drumming.

Some prominent *Sungura* artists have since adopted loop-based drumming as well as MIDI instrumentation. However, it should be noted that loop percussion takes away some amount of 'life' and warmth from the music.

While significant efforts are being made to manipulate the DAW to bring out tenets of local genres like *Sungura*, it by default, is customised to foreign genres whose rhythms and sometimes tones run parallel to local expectations.

Clive Mukundu says that: 'genres like *Sungura* and *Mbira* are highly dependent on the hi-hat for their quintessential definition. It is best to use loops created during live recordings for these particular genres to retain richness of rhythm texture. Characteristically, the tempo is rigid, and the humanly feel is absent.' Although notes can be quantised or humanised, a glaring inconsistency with conventional standards can always be heard in digitally made *Sungura* and *Mbira* music. Despite these shortcomings, musicians go on to make recordings with digital drumming. This may result

from lack of a 'musical ear' compounded by the autonomy brought by digital technology.

13. The place of chanters

Competition for space has also resulted from the proliferation of genres. The olden genres are now facing some competition from newer genres in that the larger part of music consumption is tilting towards the youths who have more disposable time and are numerous. Youths readily embrace current trends, trending fashions and styles. They are neither worried about sustaining rooted culture nor maintaining identity. They may be easily swept by foreign styles, and genres like dancehall, and hip hop, for instance. For example, there have been clashes between *Sungura* and *Zimdancehall* musicians in a bid to prove who is superior to the other.

The power of *Zimdancehall*, like any other dancehall music, lies within a musician's ability to engage the audience, and make them active participants in the performance. Chanting has always characterised *Rhumba* and *Kanindo* but *Sungura* musicians seldom chanted. Because of competition from *Zimdancehall*, more *Sungura* musicians use chants. *Zimdancehall* artists' ability to make the crowds sing along has prompted a heightened engagement of chanters in the *Sungura*. Popular *Sungura* bands Orchestra Mberikwazvo and Utakataka Express engaged Jonas Kasamba and Shiga Shiga as chanters. As a result, chanting has since cascaded down the entire *Sungura* fraternity, and has now become an attribute of the genre.

14. Conclusion

The Zimbabwe recording industry had more personnel during the analogue than the digital era. The A&R office scouted for talent, and the producer oversaw the recording process. The engineer presided over the technical process and the musicians originated the sound with some producer input. *Sungura* music rose to be dominant and other genres like *Chimurenga*, Afro-fusion, and Afro-jazz occupied little space in the trending recordings. Musicians in the analogue era enjoyed 'free' recording and marketing of their music despite getting unsatisfactory percentages of royalty dividends.

Analogue systems produced warm music which lasted decades of unfading listenership. The vinyl era had minimal to no piracy at all. Although,

during the analogue period, people could copy audio on blank cassettes, piracy was minimal because the quality of sound deteriorated rapidly each time it was transferred to other mediums.

However, music is culture, and culture is dynamic. Technological changes often dictate how things are to be done. Digital technology undid the monopoly of the analogue recording industry and brought unlimited recording possibilities. It brought flexible mobility and ubiquity. It enabled music to be made by people who may not be unskilled to play musical instruments. Simple manipulation of sound banks or music typing simulate real instruments. This has promoted new genres like *Zimdancehall*, R n' B and hip hop in Zimbabwe. Moreover, it has opened employment opportunities as it is less expensive to establish a digital studio. This is because it requires less space and the equipment is affordable; digital technology has opened unending possibilities. Other genres have adopted digital utilities and evolved. The autonomy of musicians is now more pronounced in the digital era than before.

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Book Review: *Duramazwire Utano neUrap* and *Denhere Utano neUrap*

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Book Review: *Denhe neDuramazwi reUrap neUtano*

About the book

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Author Boniface Manyame
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1. *Denhe ne Duramazwi* (Encyclopaedia and Dictionary) Author short-bio

It is often said that the main achievement of the French Revolution (1787–1789) was not the Paris Commune or the storming of the Bastille. Rather, it was the intellectual ferment of the Enlightenment of the period that went with it, in turn changing Europe.

The ‘dictionary movement’ has been gaining momentum in Zimbabwe, and several other countries in the southern African region. It has changed the position of indigenous languages, hopefully, with similar lasting effect as the French ‘encyclopaedists.’



Dr Boniface Manyame has single handedly done a sterling job, authoring *Duramazwi* (a dictionary) and *Denhe* (an encyclopaedia). He graduated in medicine in the 1970s at the then University of Rhodesia (now University of Zimbabwe). His long career is illustrated on the back cover of the book by the various roles he has played in the health service in Zimbabwe, including a stint in Gweru and Zvishavane (Midlands Province).

2. *Denhe neDuramazwi* (Encyclopaedia and Dictionary)

The *Denhe* and *Duramazwi* were originally separate books, published by Kagondya Books, Harare, in 2015. Mambo Press, in Gweru, combined the structure and format into one book of 562 pages. This is, essentially, a monolingual text, divided into 19 chapters (381 pages), with 127 pages of index (*gwashamazwi*), and a 51-page appendix (*chiwedzerwa*) which is a glossary of English-to-*ChiShona* terms. There are over 2,500 entries in the monolingual section.

In the acknowledgements, Dr Manyame pays tribute to the assistance rendered from a variety of language experts such as Dr Esau Mangoya of the African Languages Research Institute (ALRI) at the University of Zimbabwe, and *ChiShona* Language teachers at Oriel Girls High School (Harare). Dr Mangoya was one of the editors of the first *Duramazwi* *Urapi neUtano*. Others include health professionals in the Ministry of Health namely, Dr Portia Manangazira, College of Health Science Obstetrician; Prof. Steven Munjanja, Ophthalmologist; Prof. Rangarirai Masanganise, and others, who are *ChiShona* first language speakers.

Dr Boniface Manyame states the aims of the endeavour noted as to:

1. Fix the medical definition of common usage *ChiShona* terms so that they have a specific technical meaning in medical/health contexts.
2. Explain medical terms and meanings so that the public understands the medical conditions explained in their own language. As with English and other languages, technical words require standard definitions, whether the source term is borrowed from another language, from the standard form of the language or dialect.
3. Give *ChiShona* names to conditions that may not already have such terms. In naming, the following steps are given as the process that was used:

- a. Is there a *ChiShona* word already? [e.g., vertebral column–*muzongoza*] If NOT, then:
- b. Is the English term easy to translate? [e.g., spinal cord–*tambozemuzongoza*] If NOT, then:
- c. Can the word be written as a *ChiShona* word? [e.g., hormone–*homoni*] If NOT, then:
- d. The word should be written or used in its English form.

The African Languages Association of Southern Africa (ALASA) recommends inserting an additional two steps of looking at neighbouring languages when there is no locally available word or translating from the original Graeco-Latin root of the English word (Botibo, 2010). In this way, there are new coinages, changes of meaning and extensions of meaning, many of which may be new to readers. In this sense, this new professional dictionary does significantly advance the development of the *ChiShona* language by making available language resources for health professionals to venture away from the sanctuary of English. Among the arguments against use of indigenous languages are limitations imposed by lack of technical terminology and resources for their development.

The first obvious observation is that by combining the *Denhe and Duramazwi*, two different systems are at work. The encyclopaedic organisation by body systems means, word entries are scattered throughout the book. A good example is *chifo*: inflammation. This word first appears as *chifo cheapendikisi* in **Chitsauko1: Kuzeyakudya: Dumbu, Ura, Chiropa ne Pangiriyasi** (Chapter 1: Mastication, Abdomen, Intestines, Liver and Pancreas). In chapter 1 alone, there are fourteen different head words starting with/*chifo*/, but/*chifo*/ itself is not defined until on page 256. A single head word in Chitsauko 1 (Chapter 1); cross referenced to the entry in page 256 with different types of inflammatory conditions relevant to the chapter would have been a better arrangement. Similar points could also be made about many other entries.

There are many rephonologisations of terms such as:
anyurisimu [aneurysm], *leza* [laser],
sayatika [sciatica] and
sejari [surgery], to name a few.

In this sense, the dictionary follows in the footsteps of the Kiswahili **Kamusiya Tiba** This is borrowing, and is a very useful, and rapid way of enriching a language. English borrowed massively from French and has digested it well.

There are some words that were already present in *ChiShona* but forgotten or unknown at least to the general medical professionals. For example, these are the upper limb: *dingaringa* [scapula], *bendekete* [shoulder], *pfudzi* [shoulderjoint], *ruoko* [arm—as in upperarm], *mukono* [forearm], *gokora* [elbowjoint], *honokono* [olecranon], *chiningoningo* [wrist], *chanza* [hand]. *Dingaringa*, *mukono* and *honokono* are not words one hears much these days. Bringing back these terms into daily use also links back to indigenous knowledge systems and delving deeper for more forgotten terms.

The author states that one of his aims is that indigenous words as used in medicine should be fixed to technical or specific meanings. This is called semantic extension as it stretches the meaning to include something not previously regarded as part of the meaning. *Kudzidzimuka* generally means ‘torouse’ from unconsciousness or deep sleep. The author suggests that such a word be ‘fixed’ or be accepted to mean ‘to resuscitate’, in the medical sense. This enables the development of acceptable terms from this to populate the vocabulary. Language specialist can further play a role in developing different grammatical permutations of such terms: Table 1 below provides some examples.

Table 1: Examples of further development of terms from ‘*kudzidzimutsa*’

English	to resuscitate	resuscitate	resuscitation	resuscitaire	resuscitator
<i>ChiShona</i>	<i>kudzidzimuka</i>	<i>dzidzimutsa</i>	<i>dzidzimudzo/udzidzimu</i>	<i>pamudzi-dzimutso</i>	<i>chidzidzimutsi</i>

One also observes some new word coinages such *uropimvura* defined as ‘*hydrocephalus*’ (brain water). However, hydrocephalus is currently used as a diagnosis of a medical condition in which there is excessive water or water pressure on the brain. I would prefer if *uropimvura* was translated to mean *cerebrospinal fluid*, which is an anatomical term meaning the ‘*water around the brain and spinal cord*’ because it is a loan translation. The source language word is translated into the recipient language in its form. *Rutambira* [atrium] is another term from ‘entrance hall’ in a Roman building. Further, *chisakadiwa* [side effects or unwanted effects], *chiratidzi* [symptom of a disease], *ichiratidzo* [physical sign of disease] and many others.

Another interesting development observed in the book is use of word compounds to form new words (Madzimbamuto, 2012). Bantu languages generally have this vast capacity to generate new words in the way Latin and Greek have been used in science and technology to form new words. For instance: *cardio* (Greek: heart) and *logo* (Greek: study) forming *cardiology*.

The *uropi* example able and *mvura* to give *uropimvura* is an obvious starting point. Dr Manyame gives ‘prophylaxis’ as ‘*dzividzorapa*’ which translates literally to ‘preventive treatment’. He could have gone further than he attempted in the book, because this generates some very useful compounded words, using terms such as ‘*musimwa*’ for ‘transplant’, ‘*mabvisa*’ for ‘-ectomy’ (remove), ‘*chifo*’ for ‘inflammation’ and others. Terms so generated would then look as in the table below:

Table 2. Examples of word compounding for terminology development in *ChiShona*: (*different portions of the bowel have different names e.g.: **duodenum**, giving *duodenectomy*, *duodenitis*; **ileum** giving *ileitis*, *ileumectomy*; **sigmoid** giving *sigmoidoscopy* etc.)

<i>Musimwa</i>	<i>transplant</i>	<i>mabvisa</i>	-ectomy	<i>chifo</i>	-itis
<i>musimwabapu</i>	lung transplant	<i>mabvisabapu</i>	pneumectomy	<i>chifobapu</i>	pneumonitis
<i>musimwaitso</i>	renal transplant	<i>mabvisaitso</i>	nephrectomy	<i>chifoitsvo</i>	nephritis
<i>musimwamwoyo</i>	heart transplant	<i>mabvisamwoyo</i>	cardectomy	<i>chifomwoyo</i>	carditis
<i>musimwaura</i>	bowel transplant	<i>mabvisaura</i>	(colon) ectomy	<i>chifoura</i>	(col)itis
<i>musimwabvupa</i>	bone graft	<i>mabvisabvupa</i>	osteectomy	<i>chifobvupa</i>	osteitis

The dictionary, therefore, is a big step forward in developing *ChiShona* as an indigenous language capable of absorbing technical and scientific knowledge making them useful for information and education. In this way, *ChiShona* would then be used alongside English even in professional contexts such as medicine.

3. *Denhe* [Encyclopaedia]

Denhe is defined as ‘*mudziyo mukuru unochengeterwa upfu*’, in other words ‘a large repository.’ (Chimhundu & Mangoya, 2001). It differs from ‘*dura*’ in that ‘*duramazwi*’ means both ‘explanation’ and ‘store of words’. So, a *Denhe* has been used to suggest ‘encyclopaedia’ and ‘resource text’ when used with reference to school books. Encyclopaedia could also be differently translated as ‘*durazivo*’/ ‘*denhezivo*’, meaning ‘knowledge repository’. A dictionary is a linguistic product [words, definitions, etymologies, grammars etc], whereas an encyclopaedia, meaning, ‘bringing up everything’, is a philosophical product. It is a repository of all knowledge (*durazivo*) generally or in specific fields.

Chapter organisation lends itself well to the *denhe* concept. In each chapter, terms are arranged alphabetically as entries in a dictionary with head words. An explanation of some terms then follows, which are more detailed

than a dictionary entry. A definition is not necessarily given, being cross referenced elsewhere. The symptoms of many conditions are given and sometimes related to a mechanism.

In Chapter 1 of the book, it may have been better to separately give an overview of the gastrointestinal system first, and then build the entries by cross referencing, as encyclopaedias generally do. There are also many interesting words some of which appear new such as *chikutumeno* [dental caries], *rumedzo* [oesophagus], *sviniko* [stenosis, constriction].

The other chapters are Chapter 2: *Bapu nemikana yekufema* (The lung and respiratory passages); Chapter 3: *Nzeve Mhuno neHura* (Ear Nose and Throat); Chapter 4: *Mwoyo netsinga dzeropa* (The Heart and Blood Vessels); Chapter 5: *Ropa* (Blood) covering all the major systems in medicine. These are standard heading in textbooks of human anatomy and physiology. This is a very big task for one person to have done, even with assistance and Dr Manyame is congratulated.

Diagrams are difficult and expensive to produce, and it is understandable that this was omitted on those grounds. Most readers in the health field may have access to diagrams from other sources, but this is a book that lay people can and, indeed, must also read. This could become a handicap in future, when the utility of the book will really assert itself.

Structural words as used in anatomy and medical classification are nouns or used as nouns for which there are many ways of constructing nouns. Physiology on the other hand relies on verbs and developing verb terminology is more difficult. The number of new or technical terms in *ChiShona* for use in physiological science is much less. This will need addressing.

For the future, work probably needs to focus on the *Denhe* concept with subject and language specialists working together. A dictionary could follow when consensus has grown around some key features of a *ChiShona* medical vocabulary. Other fields need to be considered also as having separate sections such as *zviringopenzo* [anatomy], *fiziyoroji* [physiology] and other basic sciences as well as other clinical disciplines like *rufimbo* [anaesthesia], physiotherapy and so on. In other words, the task has been raised to the collective level.

We await similar developments in the other indigenous languages of Zimbabwe especially *IsiNdebele*, *ChiTonga*, *IsiZulu*, *TchiVenda*, *SeTswana* and others that can be linked to developments in neighbouring countries such as South Africa [*Mzansi Africa/Africa Borwa*], Botswana, Mozambique. In South Africa, language development is underpinned by government and the constitution.

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An epidemic within a pandemic of women, children and domestic violence: A case of Zimbabwe from 2020-2021

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Abstract

The current global Covid-19 pandemic has not spared Zimbabwe from the impact of domestic violence against women and girls. To curtail the spread of the covid-19 virus, the government of Zimbabwe enforced restrictions on movements causing an epidemic of gender-based violence. The trend became 'an epidemic within a pandemic' against women and children. Emerging evidence reflects that lockdown affected economic growth and increased poverty, caused inability for women to escape from abusive partners; ineffective health, and law enforcement service delivery. As a result, unequal gender relations, and patriarchal norms against women became prominent. Identified forms of domestic violence are physical, sexual, economic and psychological abuse leading to deaths, injuries, commercial sex work, stress, early marriages, and unwanted pregnancies; child labour and sexually transmitted infections. The study identified government, church, policy-makers and non-governmental organisations, donors and women's organizations as institutions with possible solutions. The study argues that the domestic violence epidemic has exposed, and been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, hence multifaceted intervention strategies are needed to safeguard vulnerable groups. Strategies comprise of psychosocial support, use of social media to disclose domestic violence, effective legal and justice system operations, inclusivity in policy-making, and implementation process, economic empowerment for income generating projects, and provision of an effective health delivery system. Complexities which hinder effective intervention against domestic violence were also identified. Hence, the study recommends that stakeholders to ensure that necessary services remain accessible. Also, adequate funding to enable high quality of domestic violence interventions,

prioritise prevention, response and risk mitigation activities as part of stakeholders' objectives in humanitarian programs and inclusivity of women, and girls in policy-making, and implementation. The study adopts a qualitative approach. Under current lockdown conditions, desk review, official and media reports analysis on the topic; WhatsApp interviews with key selected informants were used.

Keywords: epidemic, domestic violence, pandemic, Covid-19, women, children.

1. Introduction

This research explores the impact of domestic violence against women and children (young girls) as an epidemic during the Covid-19 pandemic. It also examines the underlining factors leading to domestic violence, identifying intervention strategies to arrest the causes of the concerned epidemic and putting forward recommendations to the stakeholders for safeguarding vulnerable groups. Domestic violence has been viral before, during or after the prevalent of disasters. The domestic violence became a traumatic component which is prejudiced by economic, social, cultural and psychological factors; leading one to quest for the causes, effects, impact and possible interventions that can safeguard the victims. This study argues, and concurs with ZADIG (2012), that epidemics, and pandemics, present terrible threats to human life, and health; hence require effective efforts in order to prevent them from inflicting much harm. The study reflects a compound disaster of Covid-19 exacerbating the domestic violence epidemic against vulnerable groups.

An epidemic can be understood as a disease that affects many people in one place or a situation where the number of cases of a disease is greater than anticipated in a given environment (Green et al., 2002; Lock et al., 2001). However, for the purposes of this study, the term means a crisis exacerbated by the prevalence of the current pandemic (Covid-19). Last (2001) and Marsh (2020) regard a pandemic as an epidemic prevailing worldwide, or over a wide area such as crossing international boundaries negatively affecting a huge number of people. Over and above, Zadig (2012, p. 5) stresses that 'seasonal epidemics are not considered pandemic.'

When compound disasters hit, the victims are not even spared from stress, deaths, injuries, isolation, and discrimination, among others. Intervention, though needed, can be very difficult which then increases the risk of harm to victims and responders alike (Coppola, 2015). However, the purpose of this study is to investigate the epidemic of domestic violence within the prevalence of Covid-19 through feminist perspective (theory) using the existing literature as well as primary data. The research quests to expose the causes of the problem (domestic violence), analysis of the consequences of an epidemic within a pandemic of domestic violence against women, and children; identify intervention strategies towards the management of crisis, and provide government, policymakers, and civil society with recommendations for safe-guarding the vulnerable groups (women and young girls).

2. Background to the Zimbabwean crisis from 2020-2021

According to Martin and Ahlenback (2020), the first Covid-19 case was reported in Zimbabwe on the 21st of March 2020 and by 9th of November 2020 the pandemic posed 8,531 confirmed cases and 253 confirmed deaths. Like other countries upholding World Health Organisation (WHO) preventive measures against the pandemic, the Government of Zimbabwe closed its international borders and schools on 23rd March 2020. Thereafter, it declared a national disaster on the 27th of March 2020, and initiated a national lockdown on the 30th of March 2020 which was then lifted on 16th of May 2020. During this year the lockdown was effected on the 11th May 2021 and eased in July 2021.

Scientifically, the coronavirus Covid-19) is a respiratory infection – an illness caused by a virus that can spread from person to person with the symptoms that can range from mild to severe illness (WHO, 2020; Balkhair, 2020). Martin and Ahlenback (2020) argue that the experiences of other countries showed that if restrictions were eased too soon there could be a sharp rise in cases and deaths; hence, such measures remained in place in Zimbabwe. Having such a scenario of a lockdown, posed risks to the epidemic of domestic violence against women, and children especially girls during the pandemic (Martin and Ahlenback, 2020). Abraham et al. (2019), and OCHA (2020a) define domestic violence as all trends of sexual, physical, economic, psychological violence or deprivation of individual's rights by a family member, non-family member or intimate

partner. Generally, and in this study, domestic violence is, therefore, treated as an epidemic.

Pandemics create an enabling environment that may spark variable forms of violence against women and children during or post-pandemic. In the case of West Africa, epidemics of rape, sexual assault, and other related acts of gender-based violence against women, and girls were experienced (Perteman et al., 2020). Liberia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone were affected by Ebola while United States, France, China, Thailand, and Serbia were affected by H1N1 flu. As a result, measures to reduce the spread of outbreaks were put in place such as closure of schools (Perteman et al., 2020). According to Gausman et al. (2019), closure of schools exposes children to domestic abuse, and deprives them of their right to learn, and in many settings, women and girls living in poverty encounter pressure to engage in sexual relationships to gain financial or in-kind support such as transportation, food, and clothing.

Covid-19 lockdown restrictions in Zimbabwe, exacerbated the pre-existing high levels of violence against women, and girls who were forced to spend time enclosed with families, and their abusers (ZIMSTAT, 2020). According to Rauhaus et al. (2020), incidences of domestic violence rise after natural disasters have occurred such as cyclones, hurricanes, HIV/AIDS, and in this case COVID-19. It has also been argued that the sharp increase in domestic violence could have been exacerbated when individuals are stressed with job loss, discrimination, trauma or community dislocation (Rauhaus et al., 2020).

The prevalent, and subsequent issues, such as an increase of domestic violence, are also gendered and void of feminine of caring, compassion, and empathy. As women become dependent upon men for economic stability, this renders more power and authority to men within the household (Okin, 1998). In view of the above, the research agrees with Okin (1998) in that the pandemic has created a situation where victims may be confined to their abusers for a prolonged time. Within such environment, victims suffer from other coupled stressors including financial strains, for example; unemployment, health concerns, and lack of social support.

Abraham et al. (2020), and Martin and Ahlenback (2020) lament that the COVID-19 outbreak has reduced access to law-enforcement which made the victims susceptible to domestic violence. Martin and Ahlenback (2020) proffered that during the early days of the national lockdown the Musasa Project, a gender-based violence serving non-governmental

organisation registered 764 cases of gender-based violence as compared to 500-600 per month before COVID-19. The perpetrators were intimate partners (69.5%), constituting physical and economic violence while non-partners (30.5%) were committed by law-enforcement agents, and could be experienced at service provision points.

Further to that, the non-partners violence was in the form of sexual violence, and rape; harmful practices including early marriages, sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse (Sachiti, 2020; SAFE, 2020). Martin and Ahlenback (2020), further argued that key drivers for gender-based violence during pandemics are patriarchal social norms, and gender inequalities in Zimbabwe. In support, Fraser (2020) asserts that the COVID-19 lockdown promoted the prevalence of domestic violence due to forced coexistence, economic stress and fears about the virus, hence disturbed access to support services for survivors especially in the health, police and justice system. Because an epidemic, and a pandemic coexist like the left and right leg, perennial challenges are experienced as established by UNICEF (2006) with reference to HIV/AIDS or Ebola, and by implication, COVID-19 imposes the same fate. Economic growth is affected; hence, governments may fail to adequately support orphans with basic provisions like food, medical care and education.

Morantz et al. (2013), Evans & Popova (2015), and Ferguson (2019), stressed that in sub-Saharan Africa, orphaned children mostly suffer during social restrictions from stigmatisation, intra-household discrimination, material, and educational neglect, excessive child labour, exploitation by family members, psychological, sexual, and physical abuse. However, the United Nations (UN) has called for widely action to fight the surge of domestic violence by considering women and girl child's safety as governments respond to the pandemic (Rauhaus et al., 2020). In the same manner the UN's proposal by Rauhaus et al, corresponds with Peterman et al. (2020, p. 19) in that, 'available evidence suggesting multiple mechanisms across typologies of violence against women and children, should challenge formulation of policy and implementation guidance to inform a gender-responsive strategy to avert additional epidemic'.

Generally, any form of violence against human beings takes away human dignity, hence, intervention by all stake holders to safe-guard human life is critical.

3. Materials and Methods

The study was guided by qualitative design in its approach. It accessed secondary data from relevant online articles, local news from Zimbabwe Television (ZTV), and online interviews based on the research topic guided by research objectives. These objectives are meant for the study to; comprehend the nature of the problem, analyse the consequences of an epidemic within a pandemic of domestic violence against women and children, identify institutions' management of crisis, and to propose recommendations to the government, policymakers, and civil society for safe-guarding the victims of domestic violence.

On sourcing secondary literature (desk research), key themes searched for were; epidemic, pandemic, domestic violence against women and children/girls, impact of COVID-19 in Zimbabwe, gender-based violence and abuse. Using content analysis, the study examined local news which had been considered important to establish the tone of news coverage in the country that portrays vulnerable groups (women and children/girls) during the prevalence of compound disasters; COVID-19 and domestic violence (epidemic).

For the online published, and unpublished literature, were from institutions like academic institutions or non-governmental organisations that have been adapted to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, and gender-based violence between May 2020 and March 2021.

Content analysis was mainly qualitative, and engaged in an in-depth study of the narratives to identify meanings, themes and the patterns within the framework of research problem, and objectives. Data was gathered from members of Musasa Project (non-governmental organisations) against gender-based violence, law-enforcement agency who handle related cases of domestic violence.

Further, data was also gathered from university academic staff and the general members of society through online interviews in order to have variable opinion over the problem under investigation. Respondents were both males and females branded of various age groups, and for reasons of confidentiality the interviewees were identified by codes, for example, Respondent 1, 2, and so on. The desk research approach for data gathering was significant in order to observe COVID-19 regulations though it has some challenges of communication with interviewees.

In this study, a feminist perspective was adopted as a theoretical model in the discourse of domestic violence despite being exacerbated by the current

pandemic (COVID-19). McPhail et al. (2007) state that feminist model is grounded in the principle that domestic violence is the result of male oppression of women within a patriarchal system. In this regard, men are regarded as the primary perpetrators of violence while women, and girls, being primary victims. Men pervade violence through use of control; including physical, sexual, economic, psychological abuse by embracing approaches of intimidation and isolation. According to Kanuha (1998); Markowitz and Tice (2002), the model demands the public solutions for the victims, such as establishment of programs and services for females who are beaten, and effective judicial system to hold perpetrators of violence accountable.

4. COVID-19 trends and impact

According to Beck (2020, p. 5):

there are unique factors about COVID-19 that make it particularly alarming. With regards to physical distancing and movement restrictions that have been put in place across the world to curb the pandemic, women and girls face an increased risk of experiencing violence at the hands of family members, intimate partners or others living within their homes.

Peterman et al. (2020) assert that COVID-19 rendered quarantine and social isolation ineffective because they brought about challenges of coping behaviours, anxiety, post-traumatic stress, depress disorders as well as limitation of freedoms. This scenario is well reiterated by Respondent 1 who echoed that family members stayed together for a long time due to COVID-19 induced lockdown. In that enclosure, the more physical interaction increased, the more the rate of conflict also increased. This conflict was also influenced by lack of conflict management skills, loss of jobs as a result of lockdown hence, poverty increased domestic violence. According to Renzetti (2009), and Doyle and Aizer (2018), poverty and poor coping strategies yield to conflict, arguments, and interpersonal violence. Unfortunately, unequal gender relations and patriarchal norms, affect women and children as victims of domestic violence (Heise & Kotsadam, 2015; Gibbs et al., 2020; Perrin et al., 2019).

From 20:00 hours ZTV News bulletin (2021, July 17), a woman from Dema area (Seke Village), was bashed by her husband after requesting money to buy gas for domestic use. The husband argued that he did not want to be bothered by his wife's request as he was financially broke due to the lockdown.

Respondent 7 also argued, 'the fact that people have now spend more time together as a family, they tend to observe a lot of mistakes on each other and out of frustration of just staying home raised quarrels may affect children and wife.'

According to Rafah and Osborn (2020), sometimes women are found entangled in a situation whereby failing to escape abusive partners due to various reasons such as emotional attachment and societal ideologies. Because of the limited financial resources due to lockdown, Beck (2020), Kidman (2016), and Wodon et al. (2017) agree that economic insecurity leads to early marriage, street kidding because of material and educational neglect, child labour, sexual, and physical abuse. Having such a scenario, Respondent 2 commented that COVID-19 is a catalyst which fuels depression, frustration, and resentment in people. This study noted the trending of an epidemic within the pandemic, as observed by UNDP (2015); and Petermen et al. (2020) during Ebola and COVID-19 outbreaks when communities suffered lack of law enforcement. In that respect, Respondent 5 responded that:

...due to lockdown, spaces for getting assistance in case of a domestic violence have been reduced since most people are being confined to their households. At one time, movement time was curtailed because one would need a traveling document to pass through police roadblocks. Closure of schools prolong contact period and thus increases chances of abuse and violence. Intervention from community support systems like police, neighbours and churches has been cut off because of social distancing and other lockdown measures.

Response by Respondent 7 indicated that loss of livelihoods due to COVID-19 lockdowns exacerbated frustration in men who ended up redirecting it to women and children. The study observed that due to culture, and gender norms, men are supposed to be the bread winners. Unfortunately, lockdowns changed some of the norms, and conflict emerged as men offloaded their anger on to the wives and children. Domestic violence also increased due to women's multiple roles leading to tiredness and failing to honour their husbands, who spend most of their time relaxing, with their conjugal rights. As established in Martin and Ahlenback (2020), there is some evidence, including from women's rights organisations, and the media, that certain women and girls have been most affected by, and are at increased risk of gender-based violence during the pandemic. In NSW (2020), sex workers reported that law enforcement agents have used a variety of repressive measures against sex workers during the COVID-19 lockdown, including increased raids, arrests and prosecutions of sex workers, and crackdown in areas known for sex work.

On the health issues, Global Financing Facility and Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition (GFFRHSC) (2020) established that the COVID-19 pandemic negatively impacted on women's and girls' sexual and reproductive health and rights. The socio-economic implications caused sexual reproductive health services to be unaffordable and it limited accessibility, hence, between 88,300 and 371,000 women in Zimbabwe could be unable to access contraception resulting in 2,210 to 111,000 unintended pregnancies (GFFRHSC, 2020). Martin and Ahlenback (2020) contend that unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections consequentially led women and girls to be distressed, as they risked unsafe abortions and maternal mortality and further financial implications. To worsen the situation, the inaccessibility of gender-based violence services meant that women and girls could not always obtain the doctor's reports needed to build a legal case against perpetrators (Perry & Saynde, 2017).

The study can affirm that since the advent of COVID-19, it has been an era of an epidemic within a pandemic which deserves holistic strategies from various institutions. As has been suggested by Rsp12, 'intervention is critical in such a time as this [one] to save victims from all kinds of domestic violence which threatened their physical, social, economic and psychological dimensions of life'.

5. Prevention and Protection

COVID-19 creates a perfect storm of complications, whereby cases of gender based violence are likely to rise significantly, while at the same time the ability of survivors to seek help, or the capacity of providers to respond effectively, is more limited than ever.

As the researcher believes in the sacredness of life, external support is of paramount importance when it gets threatened. With regards to the principle of priority, Beck (2020) argues that donors, policy-makers, and implementing organisations should give preference to gender-based violence prevention, response and risk mitigation strategies as critical components of COVID-19 related programming. In addition, adequate funding and political will can make intervention against domestic violence possible. According to Fraser (2020), when epidemics violently engulf rights of women and children/ girls, it is vital for health, education, child protection, security and justice, social protection and job creation to directly work with survivors as a positive response. According to Beck (2020), for the sake of service provision, stakeholders should provide gender-based violence risk mitigation, response services and prevention services.

Response from Respondent 4 shows that the Zimbabwean government and churches have a role to play in as far as prevention and protection of women and children/girls are concerned. The interviewee (Respondent 4) articulated that through government's initiatives, there is a need for media to have an advocacy role against domestic violence, effective health and social services, inclusive of psychiatric services, to cushion citizens against loss of income. Over and above, there is a need for some policy changes and strategies on the part of the law enforcement agencies which at times are found wanting, to reduce domestic violence incidences against vulnerable groups.

Respondent 5 said that the church can be instrumental by providing safe homes for victims of domestic violence, rendering counselling services as well as constantly empowering communities with income generation projects to avert economic and social crisis. In Rsp9's contribution, the church should sensitize the congregants on the effects of domestic violence through its theological reflections and contextual bible studies based on themes like forgiveness, love, caring and parenting. As established by Peterman et al. (2020), multiple mechanism across typologies of all abuse against women and children should lead to a relevant policy formulation and implementation guidance for gender responsiveness.

Despite formal social support systems, Pereira et al. (2020) proposed informal social support networks; social media such as WhatsApp, twitter, phone call, telegram, Facebook, among others, to be used by family members, core-workers and neighbours to disclose to the public and security of any nature of domestic violence. According to Respondent 1, families have a fundamental role of sitting down and addressing domestic violence issues amicably, or refer to third party's intervention. In view of Pereira et al.'s (2020) approach, the study views it as ideal since social media knows no boundaries in terms of reporting. However, an appropriate response is, therefore, needed from the concerned stakeholders.

According to Murphy (2020), the proposal for implementing and investing in a flexible mechanism by multilateral and bilateral donor institutions is important in view of gender-responsive participation to curtail risks brought by pandemics such like violence against women and children. Financial support guarantees social support for vulnerable groups especially relief funds from local governments to bolster non-governmental organisations for services towards violence against women and children (Murphy, 2020). From what Respondent 6 shared, there is concurrence with Murphy (2020) on the ideology that government's sufficient budget can make it possible to increase

awareness campaigns during lockdown towards violence against women and children.

Sullivan (2012) proposed intervention by availing shelter or temporary housing for the domestic violence survivors is vital. Victims also feel safer if accorded accommodation and counselling, legal protection, food among others. Respondent 10 noted that other civil society organisations can do awareness campaigns against domestic violence through media and conducting workshops to sensitise communities, offering psychosocial support to the victims. Through awareness campaigns, the study echoes Respondent 11's suggestion that victims should seek for Police assistance as well as safe shelters from churches, traditional leaders' homes, but the challenge could be on implementation during lockdown. In line with COVID-19 regulations, Respondent 3 suggested that the church can do counselling sermons through online church services and increase the frequency of devotional messages to address domestic violence matters.

In view of the aforesaid, the study argues that the approach is not 100% effective because of network connectivity problems as well as lack of money for data bundles, hence reaching out all survivors of violence becomes impossible. With regards to the provision of psychosocial support to gender-based violence survivors, Fraser (2020) suggested that women's organisations and activists have a big role to play by coming up with various approaches to raise awareness during the pandemic (COVID-19). For example, setting up networks can help survivors when volunteers pay attention to abuse and support families to resolve conflicts peacefully. Since information is power, Fraser (2020) proffered that publishing online manuals on how the vulnerable groups can be protected through legal aid is of great help and also to educate conflict management skills at family level since conflict is ever there and inevitable. Since technology globalizes almost everything, raising awareness online using hashtags #AntiDomesticViolenceDuringPandemic# can make an effective alarm to a larger extent.

Activists supporting domestic violence survivors need to engage hosting livestreamed workshops to advise on how and where to get assistance (Fraser, 2020). However, the approaches suggested by Fraser (2020) can be fruitful if there is political will from government through financial support since the issue of running community and social support programmes needs funding for both survivors/victims and humanitarian organisations. Whilst Respondent 6 reported that awareness campaign against domestic violence can reduce its prevalence, it is also a noble idea for communities to come up with income

generating projects to improve nutrition at household level since poverty ignites domestic violence.

Legal intervention was seen to be valuable in Rsp5's response. The interviewee informed that perpetrators of domestic violence should, accordingly, face the full wrath of law, for example, the arrest of rapists. Also, rather than waiting for crimes to be committed, law enforcement agencies can empower the community to detect early warning signs of violence and abuse and take appropriate measures. While the legal process takes its course, it has been established by the UNICEF GBViE Helpdesk (2018) that police and justice systems can become overwhelmed during an epidemic, creating an 'atmosphere of impunity' where gender-based violence increases. However, the study argues that despite being overwhelmed by the situations, the police and justice system are there to enforce law and order in society. There should be no proffering of lame excuses or compromising the justice system.

6. The complexities in prevention, response and risk mitigation processes

Though it is a cause of concern to respond, prevent and mitigate matters of gender-based violence against women and children within the context of COVID-19 pandemic, the government, social services providers and other actors were faced with some challenges during intervention (Beck, 2020). Funds for gender-based violence programming were limited because priority was given to COVID-19. Healing systems and national social services became overstretched as resources were diverted towards COVI-19. UN (2020) reported that the economic crisis precipitated by the pandemic has resulted in multiple gender impacts that require specific attention. On ZTV 8:00pm news report (2021, July 18), some women came forth and testified that they engaged into sex work due to economic insecurity. Unfortunately, they lamented that the male counterparts did not pay well and when they complain of physical abuse from patrons. A report from UN (2020) alleged that the pandemic, indeed, increased the burden of women's unpaid care work especially girls who also suffered child labour due to heightened family needs. According to UNICEF (2020), the COVID-19 outbreak compounded existing child protection issues, depresses economy, restricted access to basic services to non-formal traders leading to increased anxiety, psychosocial distress and depression in children and caregivers.

UN (2020, p.3) notes that the 'health sector continued to suffer from nationwide strikes by both doctors and nurses and increased brain-drain'. Strikes were a wake-up call for the government to provide health workers with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and for salary adjustment. Unfortunately, the long standing national economic meltdown prevented the government to address the concerns of workers on time. According to Martin and Ahlenback (2020), women and girls were facing increased care burdens with additional time needed for caring for children out of school and family members who cannot access healthcare due to hospital closures. In other words, the government's health Ministry failed to respond to health services needs of the vulnerable groups. The UNFPA (2019); and Chattu and Yaya (2020) encourage the health sector to be accessible to female health care workers. Muzarabani (2020) alleged that lockdown restrictions could not make it possible for women and girls to access safe abortion services. In Zimbabwe abortion is only permissible under the legal pretext, for example, in cases of rape and incest or when the mother's health is at risk or in the case of foetal abnormalities. Obtaining the necessary appointments and court documents to access a court-ordered abortion was often delayed even before the lockdown restrictions, making this option unviable for many victims (Muzarabani, 2020).

Martin and Ahlenback (2020) argue that the Zimbabwean government's deployment of law enforcement agencies; police and military to make sure citizens compliance with lockdown regulations in most cases, while cases of gender-based violence were not given enough attention. Also, during the prevalence of the pandemic there was an increase in food insecurity and household financial instability leading to higher levels of gender-based violence' (Martin and Ahlenback, 2020, p.16).

The study argues that for the sake of survival, one has to work and feed the family. Unfortunately, the non-formal women traders were victimized by police and military as they breached COVID-19 regulations trying to make ends meet (Martin and Ahlenback, 2020). The police and military (representing the government) are alleged to have destroyed the stalls and produce of street vendors in areas like Bulawayo. Despite that, during demonstrations against the government's handling of the COVID-19 response, law enforcement agents perpetrated violence against women (Anderton, 2020). In such a scenario, the research observed that instead of the law to protecting and mitigating all forms of abuse against the vulnerable groups, government was found on the wrong side though it was implementing COVID-19 measures.

Respondent 8 identified another challenge that worsened child abuse within the lockdown framework. The interviewee alleged that the majority of

perpetrators of child abuse are those familiar to them, probably relatives, but because of confinement within this same space children might not be able to report. For the case to be reported, victims and their relatives could not travel to report to police because for one to travel, they needed a letter from police, and long distances needed public transport which was barred from operating or if they had personal transport, fuel cost could not allow them to make a journey. According to Fraser (2020), the COVID-19 regulations impeded access to support services for survivors especially in the health, police and justice system.

The study reveals that the government failed to realign COVID-19 restrictions with human rights principles because the law is supposed to save citizens. According to Martin and Ahlenback (2020), girls, especially those with disabilities and in rural areas, were faced with the challenge of accessing online educational material. Those who managed to access it faced heightened risk of online violence and abuse.

The same reason of economic insecurity, and having to travel to make a police report hindered the victims from being assisted. Fraser (2020) suggests that governments should adopt a paradigm shift in its approach for court systems. A case of Beijing court states that the justice system has been using online court hearings and 'cloud visits' to handle cases and protect vulnerable survivors such as women and children during the epidemic (Fraser, 2020).

This study argues that Fraser's findings are adaptable to Zimbabwe if the Government adopts them. As long as the prevalence of COVID-19 persists, traditional approaches to service delivery may not be effective, hence the study also suggests that innovation is the best way to go. With regards to ensuring observance of human rights in the response, GiHA WG (2020) argues that lockdowns, quarantines and other regulations to manage and fight the spread of the virus, should always be handled in strict accordance with human rights standards. The position of GiHA WG is very important in the sense that if lockdown measures and human rights are failed to be harmonised, they can cause more harm than good since both are meant to preserve human life and dignity.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study established that an epidemic of domestic violence was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic in Zimbabwe because of various challenges. It has been discovered that COVID-19 became a fertile ground for unequal

gender relations and patriarchal norms to prevail in violating rights for women and children. As the pandemic forced the sectors of business, legal and justice, education, and health services to change the traditional way of operation, it negatively affected the vulnerable groups (women and children/girls). The loss of livelihoods due to lockdowns reduced incomes leading to family tensions.

The study established that there has been an increase in household poverty which led women and girls to engage in sex work in Zimbabwe. Young girls were forced into transactional sex in return for cash, food or even sanitary products and at the end of the day, could be infected with sexually transmitted infections and having unwanted pregnancy.

Socially, failing to resolve misunderstandings exposed women to physical, economic, sexual, psychological abuse. Unfortunately, as the survivors of domestic violence seek health services and legal protection, COVID-19 minimized chances for effective delivery of services.

The research also revealed that education for learners was disrupted. The privileged managed to do online learning while the underprivileged did not. During lockdown, most girls were sexually abused and failed to go back school. In the study, complexities were identified which hindered effective intervention against domestic violence on women and children/girls. The identified challenges are noted as COVID-19 regulations, economic instability, government's failure to align restrict measures of the pandemic with human rights regulations.

However, the study suggests what can be done to protect women and children in an epidemic within a pandemic. Stakeholders like the donors, government, church, policy-makers and non-governmental organisations for women's organizations and activists against gender-based violence or violence against women and children should ensure that necessary services remain accessible.

Also, adequate funding to enable high quality domestic interventions should be availed. These stakeholders should take focus on domestic prevention, response and risk mitigation activities as part of their objectives in humanitarian activities.

The study also recommends that in terms of policy making, women and girls need to participate in leadership and decision-making process to be assured of gender-based violence prevention and response in combating unequal gender relations and patriarchal norms within the framework of COVID-19. These, among other solutions, suggested in the study could assist the country out of the deep-seated crisis that it currently finds itself in over the vulnerable groups.

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Joseph Muwanzi

Interviews: Social-Media; WhatsApp Text Messages

Respondent 1, 12 July 2021

Respondent 2, 12 July 2021

Respondent 3, 12 July 2021

Respondent 4, 12 July 2021

Respondent 5, 12 July 2021

Respondent 6, 16 July 2021

Respondent 7, 16 July 2021

Respondent 8, 18 July 2021

Respondent 9, 18 July 2021

Respondent 10, 18 July 2021

Respondent 11, 18 July 2021

Respondent 12, 18 July 2021

The blended approach as an avenue for equity amid covid-19 and future emergencies: Refining pedagogical approaches in higher education

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Abstract

Education systems around the world have been faced with unprecedented challenges as the delivery of education massively shifted to online learning solutions due to the sudden and widespread closure of schools following the outbreak of covid-19 in December 2019. Using Bourdieu's lens, this qualitative case study employed observations and WhatsApp discussions to analyse the university student's narratives on the rise of social and cultural reproduction in HE; and the prospects of the blended approach as an avenue for equity amid covid-19 and future emergencies. Ten students, drawn from one purposively selected Zimbabwean university, residing in diverse geographical areas and from different socio-economic backgrounds participated in the study. Findings submit that while the online teaching presents itself as a reasonable alternative in the middle of covid-19 pandemic and beyond, this reinforces the social position of the elite while the poor anchors the base. The study implores the governments of developing countries through their Education Departments to refine pedagogical approaches in higher education by using the blended approaches to level the learning terrain dominated by the rich. The rationale for this article is thus to contribute towards the need for consistent equality of opportunities in HE considering the impact of covid-19 and possible futuristic emergencies.

Keywords: blended approach; equity; covid-19; higher education; social-cultural reproduction

1. Introduction

This study was motivated by the need to recover from the setback, and adversity set by covid-19 in higher education institutions in the context of equalities of opportunities. Since the impact of the pandemic on higher education (HE) was abrupt, and in the majority of cases, there was no contingency plan other than to attempt to continue classes online, it was important to conceptualize a way out of this crisis, ensuring inclusion and equity in institutions of higher learning (Maule-ffinch et al., 2020). This is important, to address what Jansen (2011, pp. 10-11) acknowledges, and warns of the crisis of having two generations in a sea of inequality in Africa wherein “a small, elite, well-functioning system for the rich classes, and a massive, dysfunctional, impoverished system for the majority of poor children.”

Very little, in the context of inequality, is established regarding the effects, and efficacy of the covid-19-induced online teaching, and the capacity to successfully learn digitally. Wilson (2020) affirms that digital exclusion has thickened the wall of division between the children of the rich, and the poor, in the society in general, and education in particular. This unjustifiable situation has caused those in already susceptible situations –the poor, a regrettable setback than they were before the covid-19 pandemic.

With the socio-economic divide already extant in societies, the impact of the pandemic aggravates the rich, and the poor dichotomy, the privileged and the less privileged, especially so in HE (United Nations, 2020; Wilson, 2020). Covid-19 has underlined the extent to which students in HE suffer together as one, but also how the experience of a global pandemic has been very different, and unequal. This has had a woeful impact on the already marginalised, and dispossessed students, further evidencing those institutions of higher education that they are not equal in their ability to provide for, and protect, their students from exclusion. Therefore, until normalcy returns to the education sector, which, however, cannot in the immediate future, online teaching alone, as a means to address future emergencies may entrench, and perpetuate the interests of the elite and disadvantage the poor. Global scholarship is scant, and silent, on issues to do with the upsurge of social-cultural reproduction in HE during covid-19, and other future emergencies. This study provides insightful contributions in this unexplored territory given that nobody in the education sector has been left untouched by the impact of the covid-19 pandemic, and that great change has been forced upon us all.

Considering that covid-19 is unlikely to be the last large-scale school disruption, it is imperative to build a more resilient education ecosystem based

on combination of the online teaching, and face-to-face interaction, because the blended approach provides learners with an adequate number of benefits, and among them, “accessibility, pedagogical effectiveness, and course interaction” (Johnson, 2002 p.5). Employment of the blended approach is thus tempting. As noted by Serrate-González et al. (2021) the circumstances currently affecting HE worldwide due to the covid-19 pandemic have demanded teaching staff to necessarily, and forcibly, implement methodologies that permit combining learning ambits. This is because the roles of students, and lecturers during covid-19, and beyond, changed at a very short notice; evolving into a terrain that threatens equity issues in education.

This article is a sociological analysis of the Zimbabwean university student’s narratives on the rise of social and cultural reproduction in HE; and the prospects of the blended approach as an avenue for equity amid covid-19, and future emergencies. The research was designed to take up Bowden’s (2021) call for the need for HE institutions to understand how student success can be supported in the wake of covid-19, and the sudden shift by institutions to emergency online teaching. As noted by Yosso (2005) that institutions of Higher Learning can begin to address institutional inequities, and disrupt patterns of cultural reproduction by being more responsive to the valuable forms of capital as possessed by diverse students.

2. Social and Cultural Reproduction

While social reproduction is a term coined by Bowles and Gintis (1976) to mean the various ways that are used to maintain the social relations of production in the world of work, Bourdieu (1974) is associated with the term cultural reproduction. This is a concept which refers to the various ways through which the cultures of the *haves* are maintained or reproduced by the education system due to the possession of cultural capital.

In the context of this study, the covid-19 induced online teaching, presents challenges to efforts directed towards flattening social stratification in societies leading to the reproduction, and maintenance of social and cultural reproduction which is founded on the people’s earlier possession of cultural capital. As argued by UNESCO (2013, p. 14) inequalities stemming from the advances in technology despite several interventions made, continue to persist, and widen in many cases of which this must be seen in the context of “persistent and considerable disparities between the rich and poor, both within and among countries, and about the adverse

implications of these disparities for the promotion of human development throughout the world.” Without considered and targeted interventions, the online models being used during the covid-19 in poor African states may serve to exacerbate existing inequalities. Even in many affluent countries, disadvantaged students may not have reliable access to devices and connectivity, making them less able to participate in online education than their peers (Rigall, 2020).

Evidence of unequal access to internet connectivity during covid-19 in institutions of Higher Learning is evident from recent researches (Bernadi, 2020; Kgari-Masondo & Chimbunde, 2021). Singh’s (2014, p. 6) confirms that “the difference between the poor man’s schooling, and the rich man’s schooling is becoming starker with each passing year”, despite the claim made by Scheidel (2017), the economic historian, who argues that lethal pandemics can revolutionarily transform society, resulting in the flattening of economic inequality. Critics like Bernardi (2020), who after experiencing the covid-19 pandemic, question this hypothesis, and argue that the covid-19 pandemic outbreak has negative implications for equality. This is because socio-economic status has created a societal phenomenon where those with greater economic resources have access to more opportunities than those of lesser financial means (Herbert, 2018). Those who enjoy these opportunities are stratified and placed on the top layer of society because the chances they get permit them to venture into the field of work with exceptional ease, thereby improving their socio-economic status and continuing to enjoy the stratification benefits unabated. This paper argues that social stratification has been there prior to the outbreak of covid-19 but had been entrenched by it.

Indeed, while the world was not completely on track to achieve equity, in HE, because the “No one is left behind” philosophy is still a pending agenda, this covid19 pandemic has particularly exacerbated disparities worldwide, with vulnerable students, who are usually more at risk of being discriminated against, are at higher risk of being left behind. Bennel (2021) aptly argues that there is the rapid emergence of new social class relations which are closely related to key educational developments in many countries. As such, while pedagogies in HE has greatly evolved, new challenges have appeared too.

In line with the vision of education for all whose objective is of ‘leaving no one behind’, HE institution could envisage to renew its pedagogical approaches towards ending inequalities in accessing education by giving further momentum to reshape their infrastructures and teaching

methodologies, in order to reflect the new challenges of the 21st century. As suggested by Yosso (2005) that institutions of Higher Learning can begin to address institutional inequities and disrupt patterns of cultural reproduction by being more responsive to the valuable forms of capital possessed by diverse students, families, and communities. Thus, an expanded understanding of student and community assets can be leveraged to promote student success while providing more equitable learning opportunities. Providing such opportunities demand reconfiguration of the Higher Education teaching approaches that support inequitable access to rigorous, and engaging instruction, as well as the norms, assumptions, and expectations that propagate their use. One such approach is the employment of the blended approach during COVID-19 and other contexts of similar nature like natural disasters and forced displacements.

3. The blended approach

The blended approach in HE had been on the cards in line with the Fourth Industrial Revolution which requires the use of technology in the teaching and learning not only during pandemics like covid-19 but rather in line with the demands of the digital society in which the world is now engaged. Serrate-González et al. (2021) define blended approach as a teaching-learning model that includes face-to-face classes and e-learning, reinforcing the advantages they both provide.

The approach involves the incorporation or combination of the conventional face-to-face teaching with online learning. Daskan and Yildiz (2020) explain that it is the integration of online with face-to-face instruction in a planned, pedagogically valuable manner; and not just a combination (addition) of online with face-to-face but a trade-off (replacement) of face to-face time with online activity (or vice versa).

As explained by Muhuro and Kange'the (2021) it entails thoughtful integration of face-to-face teaching in tandem with online modalities, such as, radio and web-based technologies or mobile learning, with the strength of each mode mutually and reciprocally reinforcing one another. Most significantly, blending pedagogical approaches offers the opportunity to invigorate the curriculum, introduce new pedagogies, personalise learning, and allow more flexibility for lecturers, and students in course delivery (Wanner & Palmer, 2015).

4. Theoretical framework

Bourdieu's cultural capital theory informed this study. According to Bourdieu (1986) individuals enter the educational system with different legacies of cultural capital and cultural know how, based on their social background. These initial differences in cultural capital are not equalised over the educational career, and beyond, but rather are exacerbated. From his analysis of society, Bourdieu defines capital as "accumulated, human labor which can potentially produce different forms of profit" (Bourdieu, 1986 p. 241).

It can be viewed as accumulated history, transferred through time in either objectified, that is, material form or embodied in a person (Svendsen, 2001). Further scrutiny and refinements of the theory of capital reflects that Bourdieu identified four forms of capital that accounts for differences that exist among individuals and groups. These are cultural, economic, social and symbolic (Haralambos & Holborn, 2013), and possession of these forms of capital determines an individual or group's position in society and defines the probabilities of success of that individual or a group. According to Bourdieu (1986) these forms of capital are either inherited or acquired and their possession is passed on from one generation to the next. In this way, a vicious cycle occurs in which the "disadvantaged remain cocooned in their plight" (Giddens & Sutton, 2013 p. 543).

Cultural capital refers to those accumulated experiences which students bring from home to school which assist them to decode educational mysteries (Gwirayi, 2010). These manifests in different forms, namely, material objects such as textbooks, laptops and smartphones; activities such as visiting cinema, art galleries, and places of historical interests; and dispositions, attitudes and behaviours which are commensurate with the demands of education. According to Bourdieu's theory, children from middle class families are advantaged in gaining educational credentials due to their possession of cultural capital. Bourdieu's (1986) theory of cultural reproduction posits that the educational system awards and advantages students who possess these forms of cultural capital. In this way, patterns of social capital might match with patterns of cultural capital in schools and then later in life will similarly predict privileged access to opportunities of jobs.

Income and wealth in such forms as shares, land or property, and income, from employment becomes economic capital (Bourdieu, 1986). For Bourdieu, students bring their social-class backgrounds into school with them. This suggests that the form of capital can be inherited by children from parents. Given the challenges posed by the covid-19 pandemic, some university

students inherited wealth from their families, and hence, were better prepared for schooling using online platforms than others. In that view, students from affluent groups enjoyed the use of well-advanced Information Communication Technology (ICT) gadgets while their counterparts from non-affluent groups had redundant and problematic tools.

Social capital as advanced by Bourdieu connotes social connections in the form of acquaintances, friends, relatives, including a support network of people on whom the individual can rely in need and that are in fact in a position to offer material and other assistance of real benefit (Giddens & Sutton, 2013). Closely related to social capital is symbolic capital which refers to status (Haralambos & Holborn, 2013). Whenever students from different regions and ethnic groups converge, there is a natural tendency to compete for respect and honour. The fundamental premise in Bourdieu's capital theory is that students from the rich families arrive at school with resources, knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are in correspondence with the dominant culture and thus are considered more valuable within the educational setting (Wilson & Urick, 2021) which in turn will determine the life chances of the individuals in later life.

I made use of the theory by Bourdieu to assess the rise of social and cultural reproduction in one Zimbabwean university considering that the students attending the university were from different social classes and possessed different forms of capital. According to Bourdieu the major function of the education system is to maintain and legitimate a class-divided society. In his analysis, schools are middle-class institutions run by and for the middle class. With this in mind, Bourdieu's lens shed light on the intricate of the impediments which instigated social stratification during covid-19, and beyond. It also became handy in discerning how universities could be empowered to avert the creation of social classes based on the socio-economic status.

5. Methodology

Using Bourdieu's lens, the study used the university students' experiences to reconnoitre the rise of social and cultural reproduction in HE and establish the feasibility of the blended approach as an avenue for equity in HE amid covid-19 and future emergencies. The case study deeply engrained in the qualitative approach made use of observations of the student's work and their reaction time to attend to task to generate data on how they were

managing the learning activities considering the effects of covid-19 and the ecological context of their home backgrounds.

The study was framed from the qualitative approach to obtain a deep and comprehensive description of the students' experiences, grounded on the argument that the major features of it are meanings and the settings (Yin, 2015). The students' views, and their experiences, could not be subjected to numerical analysis hence the appropriateness of the qualitative approach in the current study.

The study was set to find meaning in text (Creswell & Poth, 2017); hence, it searched for an understanding of their experiences. I adopted an interpretive case study where I borrowed from Yin (2015) who regards a case study as being endowed with multiplicity of perspectives which are entrenched in a particular context and also from Cohen, et al., (2011 p. 289) who view it as a "unique example of actual people in genuine locations."

Accordingly, I sought to get different views from different students from different geographical locations of Zimbabwe. One Zimbabwean university was selected as the case. The university was chosen basing on the fact that it is one of the emerging universities whose vision was to ensure education for all in university was realised by enrolling students with diverse backgrounds from all corners of the country. I made use of observations of students' work and a WhatsApp platform - an online platform to generate data.

I made observations of the students' work and how they managed time and tasks given. Thereafter, I engaged them on a WhatsApp platform because it was the only way I could solicit data given the lockdown restrictions imposed by the government of Zimbabwe to curb the spread of covid-19. The tenacity of the online discussion was to establish and reconnoitre students' lived experiences as students from different ecological settings. I provided the online prompts which were intentionally designed to allow open-endedness in terms of answers. As such, the study interrogated the context in which the lectures were conducted using observations and discussions to discern how covid-19 impacted on equality with regard to the provision of education materials.

Ten students participated in this study. I purposively selected a single class of ten students, for convenience, from one university endowed with all traits that showed the shadings of students in Zimbabwean universities. That allowed findings to be juxtaposed to other analogous universities in identical positions in Africa. The ten students were selected by virtue of the fact that they were in the same class undertaking a module on Education and Social Change and that they came from different geographical areas and possessed

different forms of capital. The choice of the class was premised on the context that the course they were doing was related to the spheres of social change and how these spheres were interrelated. Covid-19 provided a perfect example of how social change could affect education. In addition, the students came from diverse socio-economic backgrounds and were Africans trying to shake the constraints of inequalities.

Ethical clearance was sought from the university before selecting participants. Participants completed consent forms to show their willingness to take part in the study. Issues of privacy and confidentiality were explained to the students. For concealment of identities, pseudonyms were used and recording of their responses as text were also sought. The key issues which emerged from the discussion, and observations in line with the focus of the study were then analysed thematically. The data generated from observations, and discussions, were thus recorded, sieved and categorised into themes before analysis.

6. Findings and Discussion

Data generated through the WhatsApp discussions and the observations made on the way students worked, and the time they took to attend to tasks given were analysed in line with the themes that emerged from the study as per the locus of the research. As such, I reduced the amount of data by sieving the most relevant data and categorising related and significant patterns concerning the students' experiences on their online learning of their work during COVID-19, and how that relates to the emergence of social and cultural reproduction in HE.

Thus, the data were recorded, read several times, reduced to recurring themes and then presented and analysed thematically. The main themes are shown in Table 1.1 below

Theme	subthemes
1. Escalation of Cultural Capital Reproduction	1.1 Online approach advantages students from the rich. 1.2 The rich maintain the status quo.
2 Rise of Social Capital Reproduction	2.1: The online teaching disconnects the poor from the rich. 2.2 The online learning was an avenue to connect with old acquaintances.
3. The blended approach as an avenue for equity	3. Usage of face-to-face strategies to compliment the online learning.

Table 1.1 showing themes and subthemes

6.1 Escalation of cultural capital reproduction

From the discussions on WhatsApp and observations, the study revealed that while the online was an option during the covid-19 pandemic, it presented insurmountable challenges of equity as reflected in the differentiated access to internet connectivity and the cost of internet data bundles. As narrated by Student A that:

I appreciate the university' effort to introduce online teaching and learning during this pandemic. However, rather than making all students access the same content, assignments and related materials, I feel the online approach is skewed towards those who can access the internet and afford the data bundles. This is because when online learning was introduced, I was in an area where mobile network connectivity was a challenge. It adversely affected me in joining the Google class platform. More so, with poor network connectivity, it is taxing to do research for my assignments yet I am expected to meet deadlines for submission just like anyone else who is better placed in terms of location and finance.

Student F also said:

The online learning is a blessing to those who have ICT gadgets during this pandemic. I have no laptop except for an old and unreliable smart phone that I use during this period. Remember a good laptop and a modern phone are a preserve for the affluent. I wish the pandemic can be contained anytime soon. If it continues, then learning at university will be for the rich who possess the electronic resources. Then the concept of leaving no one behind in education is a myth.

Observations on student responses on tasks given also revealed that while some students were quick to attend to the tasks, others took over a week just to join the online class which was created for them. The time one took to join the google classroom was an indicator of one's social class and the ecological location.

The sentiments by the two students above together with the observations made, confirm several studies (Adnan & Anwar, 2020; Daniel, 2020; Kgari-Masondo & Chimbunde, 2021) which crisply pointed that lack of internet connections was a hurdle encountered by the poor in learning using the online platform particularly for those, living in rural setup and in marginalized communities. This view supports Bourdieu's capital theory which argues that those who are deprived of both cultural and economic capital were disadvantaged in schools whereas the affluent enjoyed because of what they inherited from parents. Students who found themselves on the negative side of the ledger were impacted by inequities already present in the system. In this case, covid-19 has not created new problems but highlighted longstanding ones (Mutch, 2021). This suggests that online learning reinforced the social classes that is evident in any society and maintains the status quo. This is because the online learning had resulted in completely different learning experiences for students in one university and their future uptake of work will depend on that differentiated education (Kgari-Masondo & Chimbunde, 2021).

The study agrees with Rigall's (2020) observation that in other regions of the world, high-educated parents have better access to internet and laptops, tablets, and so on, as well as the knowledge and non-cognitive skills to support their children's home schooling. They also have the economic resources to hire tutors and purchase the best online options for course materials. The observations and discussions support the cultural reproduction perspective by demonstrating that students who have more access to normative education-based resources outside of school and academically aligned to resources tend to report more opportunities for jobs later in their lives (Wilson & Urick, 2021).

Drawing from observations and WhatsApp discussions, university students who did not have access to high speed or reliable internet services at home were thus struggling with online learning. Such a struggle driven by Covid-19 could exacerbate their fragile condition and force them to drop out, perpetuating a situation of exclusion as a result of the inequity to access of educational materials which were delivered online. Such an inequality dents the 'No one should be left behind' philosophy in terms of knowledge construction and consumption. I agree with Maule-ffinch et al., (2020) that poor households often lack the equipment and connectivity that richer

households take for granted, compounding the problem. Online pedagogies were thus viable when mobile network providers improve coverage and connectivity across the nation but low connectivity in households in low- and middle-income countries remained a challenge. As such, university students from such poor families could leave university not competent enough to compete globally. Seen this way, social and cultural reproduction is a ghost that will continue to haunt the poor in the social strata.

In consequence, covid-19 had exposed the weaknesses of some developing countries like Zimbabwe in addressing issues of equity in terms of how knowledge is distributed in universities. The pandemic served as a warning that the scales had been tipped too far in the favour of a single class and had produced scarcity as a means to empower some, while disempowering others. As put by Bennel (2021) that there will be new social class, new forms of educational competitions – intensifying competitions for the formal sector jobs. This paper is not asking for abandonment of technology driven pedagogy but rather implores the developing nations to at least provide access to internet, tablets and data bundles to even the disparities which Covid-19 had exposed and other future emergencies will show.

6.2 Rise of social capital reproduction

Observations and WhatsApp discussions indicated that the online teaching and learning induced by covid-19 led to the rise of social capital reproduction since it left students both poorly socialised and connected. Unlike Students B and E who made no mention of problems Student C reported that:

Online learning unleashed a myriad of challenges to me since I am used to face to face interaction with my colleagues and lecturers. Since the introduction of online learning, the lecturers' non-verbal cues and gestures which used to give us hints on whether the topics under discussion are important or not are no more. The online teaching presents a shock with regards to interaction with the lecturers online whom I am not familiar with. There is that shock of interfacing with a lecturer I am not familiar with them in terms of what they dis/like. As a student I cannot engage in group projects with others. The help we used to share among ourselves is immediately cut off. My friends, lecturers and relatives are not reachable because of the lockdown and I cannot get any help from them because I am poorly connected to them.

While some students expressed discomfort with online learning, Student G had this to say:

I have no challenges with regards to getting information on what I am learning at university. Instead, the online learning has opened more opportunities for me to connect with my former lecturers, old friends from high school, parents and even relatives who all show empathy and willingness to assist me in learning online. So COVID-19 is a blessing in disguise for it rejuvenates my old acquaintances for the advancement of my knowledge at university.

The above shows that not all students had difficulties like lack of interaction with the lecturers in the absence of traditional classroom socialisation. Only those who had poor social networks could not enjoy the online learning. However, lack of on-campus socialisation implies that students could not socialise, and carry out group activities, in distance learning mode. Consistent with this finding was Adnan and Anwar's (2020 p. 46) observation that lack of proper interaction with instructors is another "major concern associated with online learning." Bourdieu's lens reflects that the absence of social capital in the form of acquaintances, and support network led the students not to get emotional support and other academic assistance from friends and tutors. I also agree with Bao (2020) that in traditional in-class teaching, body language, facial expressions, and teachers' voice are all important teaching tools. These assisted in communicating messages to students. Owing to the absence of body language, students' anxiety which rose during the online teaching induced by covid-19 were to be relieved in various ways to ensure that they could actively and effectively engage in learning (Bao, 2020).

6.3 The blended approach as an avenue for equity

It emerged from observations, and WhatsApp discussions, that overnight decisions on online learning was difficult to embrace without the combination of the new, and the old approaches. Student H had this to say:

The online teaching works well for the rich. We from poor backgrounds are more comfortable with the face-to-face lectures we are familiar with. 2 to 3 days of face-to-face interactions with lecturers where social distance can be maintained is also possible considering that the sizes of universities classes are small. Otherwise, the rich are at an advantage, and university education then can be seen as a privilege of the upper class. To mitigate that inequality, there is need to introduce a regulated face-to-face interaction with lecturers which can then reinforce what could have been learnt using the online modes such as WhatsApp lessons, radio-based lessons and virtual classrooms. This can flatten inequalities in universities, and the society.

The significance of this finding was that there was a stronger need for academic institutions to rethink, and reclaim, use of face-to-face strategies to compliment the online learning. This suggests the use of the blended approach wherein HE institutions need to be more responsive to the students and communities that they serve. This means that there is need to revert to some old pedagogy which was in use years before covid-19. From the verbatim of the student, who suggested the combination of online teaching and traditional methods of face-to-face, it was evident that use of online teaching remained the preserve of the affluent unless serious interventions are formulated, and embraced. I agree with Yosso (2005) who challenges the traditional interpretations of cultural reproduction theory and argues for community cultural wealth as an alternative concept that reflects the assets, or capital, possessed by historically marginalised students, and communities.

Insights from Bourdieu's capital theory reveals that possession of the forms of capital determined the student's position in education, and defines the chances of success in accessing educational materials. This suggests that if covid-19, and the online teaching, continued without some balances and checks, then the underprivileged will remain confined in their poverty. Once redress fails, in this context, the rich could maintain and entrench their interests, and then, the poor could face striking exclusion of both the mind and their employable chances as they could not compete with the rich in the world of work after completing the uneven university education.

Considering the covid-19 induced online teaching, those advantaged by the high economic status before the pandemic enjoyed on the pretext of their cultural inheritance to do their university work, thereby positioning themselves in upper rungs of the society which confirms the cultural reproduction theory. Those historically advantaged by virtue of being rich continue to benefit from educational developments that arise due to emergencies. This was particularly so when we listen to the voices of the poor student in the educational activities during covid-19 period as emerged from the WhatsApp discussions and observations in this study.

In order to increase participation of the student from the poor, this article argues that there is need to look into these inequalities and formulate learning strategies where students enjoy access to HE without alienation. This can be done through the employment of the blended approach which takes into consideration both the context of the poor and rich. As explicitly explained by Rigall (2020) the digital divide remains a pressing issue, which will require significant attention to ensure that all students, regardless of their background, can benefit from emerging models for education provision. It

has been reported that unequal access to online learning can lead to inequalities between socio-economic groups within society (Petrus, 2018).

The employment of the blended approach, as argued in this study, is guided by equitable approaches in favour of the marginalised, in particular, the students from poor families during pandemics and future emergencies. As opined by Muhuro and Kange'the (2021) that in cases of natural disasters such as storms, floods and cyclones, blended learning is the best option. This is so because blended learning is flexible, user-and-diversity-friendly (Castro, 2019). As such, blended learning has thus become important during the current outbreak of diseases such as covid-19 where face-to-face teaching is prohibited as a means to combat the spread of the disease. While online teaching per se relies on good internet connectivity, there are many opportunities during covid-19 which are context-driven like using controlled faced to face interactions that respect social distancing and offline technology, such as basic cell phones or radio in remote locations.

7. Recommendations

From the study, there are many gaps in the development of online teaching and learning during covid-19, and future emergencies, due to lack of equal access to internet and affordability of data bundles by students from different socio-economic statuses, especially for the students from poor families. It is, therefore, high time to ensure the realisation of the right to education in all contexts. For equality of opportunities in HE, it is imperative for the developing countries together with their education departments to provide all enrolled students with internet access, tablets and subsidised data bundles. HE institutions can, in collaboration with the government, disburse low interest loans to students from poor families to bridge the lacuna between the poor and rich. Governments of developing countries need to take policy measures to effectively put an end to all kinds of exclusion and ensure equality of opportunities in education.

It was a finding of this study that online teaching on its own is not enough to cater for diverse students who are drawn from different social-class. There is a greater need for educational institutions to rethink and re-use the old face-to-face approaches to complement the online approach in the context of covid-19 and future emergencies. This blended approach will go a long way in abating the gap between the rich and the poor which is imminent in the face of covid-19 and other futuristic emergencies. The

traditional face-to-face approach, however, must instigate the social distancing principles so as not to endanger the students from the risks of covid-19 pandemic, and other emergencies.

8. Conclusion

This study argued that the time to rethink, and reimagine, is now as the world attempts to regroup, and rebuild, what has been exacerbated by covid-19. Furthermore, forged by adversity, the global pandemic has forced us to look forward and prepare higher education for futuristic emergencies other than covid-19.

The paper demonstrated that while covid-19 had brought more harm than good in HE, it sent a clear statement that education was now propagating inequalities though unintentionally as students from the affluent are advantaged in accessing online education while the poor cannot afford the cost of online learning unless other strategies are employed to assist them.

An underlying premise of this study is that addressing the rise of social and cultural reproduction, and inequities, in HE calls for a shift in teaching approaches that challenge the mechanisms of cultural reproduction. The article confirms that HE during covid-19, and beyond, represents an arena for contestation between the *haves* and the *have-nots*. The poor students' experiences during covid-19 in HE reflects social stratification in the making since it continues to cast its shadow over education. As such, education through online pedagogy alone remains an enterprise which entrenches and perpetuates the interests of the rich rather than propagating equity in society.

The pandemic has also created questionable narratives and false dichotomies in pedagogical approaches used in HE to solve the myriad problems of equity that covid-19 has either caused or exacerbated. The study implores governments of developing nations and their education departments to redesign their pedagogical approaches and employ the blended approach as an alternative to create equal access to HE by all students from all walks of life. The paper further argued that the blended learning approach should be deliberately designed for inclusion by considering the differences in individual circumstances but without endangering the students.

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Domestic tourism promotion strategies during and after the Covid-19 pandemic in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

The Covid-19 induced lockdowns, including the closure of national borders, have created opportunities for innovative destination marketers to optimise the involvement of their nationals in domestic tourism. A qualitative approach in which 15 in-depth interviews with expert informants were carried out online using WhatsApp Video Calling, this study sought to identify domestic tourism promotion strategies in Zimbabwe. The expert informants were purposively sampled from tourism-related government departments, tourism parastatals, private sector tourism representative organisations, publicity associations, and tourism operators. Data was thematically analysed. The main identified strategies to promote domestic tourism in Zimbabwe during and post Covid-19 pandemic include making tourism products affordable and accessible, improving the income levels of Zimbabweans, developing appealing packages, and programs; tapping into the visiting friends and relatives market, embarking on aggressive marketing campaigns, introducing incentive travel particularly for civil servants, and a continued commitment to the observance of all Covid-19 prevention, and treatment guidelines. The study implications are that in Zimbabwe, it is imperative for the government, the private sector, and the community, to partner in various ways and at different levels in implementing these strategies to promote domestic tourism in the country.

Keywords: Covid-19 pandemic, domestic tourism promotion, tourism promotional strategies, marketing, Zimbabwe tourism industry.

1. Introduction

Domestic tourism involves residents of a country traveling within their own country for leisure, business, and other purposes not related to payment of remuneration (United Nations World Tourism Organisations, UNWTO 2008; Singh, 2009). It forms the greater component of tourism trips in both developed and developing tourist destinations. Domestic tourism is a long-established practice dating back to ancient societies (Rogerson & Lisa, 2005). More than 60% of tourism trips in Europe are domestic tourism trips. Domestic tourism does not include the crossing of international borders but it is confined to trips within a country by residents of the country.

These local tourism trips can be for various reasons such as visiting friends, and relatives, business, leisure, weekend breaks, holiday vacations, for medical and religious purposes, all within the borders of a particular destination (Mapingure, du Plessis & Saayman, 2019). Globally, domestic tourism is the mainstay and a key driver of the tourism industry (World Travel & Tourism Council WTTC, 2018), accounting for more than 70% of total travel and tourism spending. It is a veritable tool to promote sustainable tourism development (Kabote et al., 2017).

Domestic tourism provides the rationale for upgrading and development of infrastructure, instils national pride and patriotism in people, creates employment, and generates income and wealth for the local economy (Zimbabwe Tourism Authority ZTA, 2018). It disperses visitors across regions thus redistributing the benefits countrywide; it helps countries to withstand damaging impacts of disasters and pandemics such as Covid-19, and lastly, improves the attractiveness and appeal of a destination (Woyo, 2021; National Tourism Recovery & Growth Strategy, Zimbabwe NTRGSZ, 2020; WTTC, 2018). Moreso, domestic tourism contributes to poverty alleviation and help limit overreliance on the agriculture, mining, and manufacturing sector (WTTC, 2018). It helps to address seasonality associated with tourism operations and helps to disperse tourists to less visited areas such as the rural areas that are sometimes shunned by foreign tourists. It helps locals to appreciate their local tourism resources (ISTO Bulletin, 2020).

Globally, successful tourism destinations are those with a vibrant domestic tourism sector (Zimbabwe National Tourism Recovery and Growth strategy ZNTRGS, 2020). In 2017, domestic tourism spending accounted for US\$3971 billion, that is, 73% of the total global tourism spending. China took the lead in terms of domestic tourism success, accounting for US\$841 billion followed by the USA with US\$801 billion (WTTC, 2018), with many countries in Europe and America also heavily relying on domestic tourism including France, the USA, Italy, and Germany among other leading tourism destinations in the world.

Domestic tourism is the mainstay of the tourism economy in Brazil with contributions amounting to 94% to the tourism industry. In India, Germany, and Argentina, domestic tourism contributions account for at least 87% of the total tourism market, thus highlighting the importance of domestic tourism (WTTC, 2018). In terms of its determinants, domestic tourism is influenced by the availability of disposable income, availability of time, incentive travel, labour rights, government policy, increased affluence in society, a culture of travel, and increased leisure time (Scheyvens, 2007). Moreso, transport infrastructure development, capital investment, level of economic development/affluence, governmental support, availability of affordable tourism products, and services (WTTC, 2018), influence domestic tourism. Furthermore, natural disasters and pandemics such as tropical cyclones, earthquakes, and diseases like Covid-19, and Ebola negatively affect domestic tourism through travel disruptions.

Even though the Covid-19 pandemic is not yet contained the world over, the positive news is that a vaccine has been developed to help fight the virus and the disease. With the advent of vaccines being rolled out across the world, governments have started easing out the lockdown restrictions to allow societies and economies to function normally.

In Zimbabwe, the government through the Ministry of Environment, Climate, Tourism, and Hospitality Industry launched a tourism recovery strategy with a biased focus on domestic tourism promotion during the second half of the year 2020. The focus on domestic tourism is premised on the fact that international tourism is closed plus even if borders were to be opened, international tourism will take longer to recover (Woyo, 2021).

Despite its potential, the domestic tourism market is yet to be fully exploited in Zimbabwe (Kabote et al., 2017), yet, it is the low-hanging market that can cushion the tourism industry from the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. Indeed, in the Zimbabwe National Tourism Recovery and Growth strategy (ZNTRGS) document launched by the Zimbabwean

government in 2020, domestic tourism promotion is considered to be one of the anchor pillars of tourism recovery during and after the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the recovery and growth strategy are silent on how exactly is domestic tourism going to be promoted neither does it specify the promotional strategies. The ZNTRGS document states that “domestic tourism is expected to provide a cushioning effect to (tourism) sector” (ZNTRGS, 2020 p.2), without elaborating how it is going to be promoted. It is against the aforesaid background that this paper proposes particular strategies that can be used to promote domestic tourism in Zimbabwe amid, and in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic. The strategies are for all stakeholders inclusive of tourism-related government departments, the private sector, and the residents of Zimbabwe, and potential domestic tourists. The proposition of domestic tourism promotion strategies for all stakeholders is premised on the fact that in Zimbabwe, tourism is a government-led, private sector driven, and community-based. Thus, strategies targeting these three main stakeholders of the tourism industry are likely to guarantee uptake, and success for the growth and development of the domestic tourism sector in Zimbabwe during and post Covid-19 pandemic.

According to Woyo (2021), the Covid-19 pandemic created an opportunity for Zimbabwe to focus on domestic tourism promotion, given its reliance on international tourism during the pre-Covid-19 era. The tourism enterprises in Zimbabwe rely heavily on international tourism markets of Africa, Europe, America, and Asia at the expense of the domestic market. The reliance on international tourism by local operators is due to many factors which, among them, include that the international market has purchasing power and willingness towards local tourism products, and services. The other factors include low disposable incomes among the locals, lack of travelling culture (Zhou, 2016), and a difficult economic environment (Mapingure, du Plessis & Saayman, 2019). Thus, the only market to tap, and exploit fully, during the Covid-19 pandemic is the domestic market to breathe life into the tourism industry enterprises.

On 1 March 2021, the government of Zimbabwe eased the lockdown regulations by moving from level 4 to level 2, opening the society and economy to operate rather a bit normally. For the tourism industry, this presented an opportunity to hit the ground running to recover from the lost business, and revenue induced by Covid-19 restrictions. In the obtaining circumstances, the domestic tourism market is the only viable market to exploit as the international market will take relatively longer to recover as this is exacerbated by the slow rollout, and uptake of the Covid-19 vaccines.

The domestic market is available for takers by the local tourism enterprises as they launch their recovery and survival offensive in the year 2021 and beyond. Whilst tourism enterprises in Zimbabwe had their fair of challenges such as low occupancy, low revenue, and low profitability before the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic, these challenges were exacerbated by the pandemic making the situation untenable, thus requiring some intervention of some sort perhaps by way of turning to the domestic tourism market to salvage the dire situation. So, domestic tourism promotion strategies as an alternative to the dearth of international travel during the Covid-19 era are required. Yet, the adoption, and mainstreaming of domestic tourism is a panacea for tourism development (Kabote, Mashiri, & Vengesayi, 2014; Kabote et al., 2017), during and after the Covid-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, Woyo (2021) posits that resilience, and recovery, from the unprecedented impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic are dependent on well-planned strategies to promote domestic tourism. However, the study does not specify the actual marketing strategies that can be used or implemented in Zimbabwe to promote domestic tourism. Further, the ZNTRGS (2020) policy document lists domestic tourism promotion as a pillar strategy to tourism recovery and growth in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic in Zimbabwe. The document points out that “the domestic tourism market is yet to be fully exploited” (ZNTRGS, 2020, p.14). According to ZNTRGS (2020, p.14), domestic tourism provides a “cushioning effect to the sector as international source markets are projected to take longer to recover” from the unprecedented impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, this study identifies domestic tourism promotion strategies which can be employed by the tourism sector in Zimbabwe during and post Covid-19 pandemic.

2. Covid-19 and domestic tourism

Covid-19 pandemic triggered an unprecedented crisis in the tourism industry never seen during the last 100 years (Chirisa, Mutambisi, Chivenge, & Mbasera, 2020; Rodr & Alonso-almeida, 2020). It is so far the biggest health disaster that has affected the world in the 21st century (Zenker & Kock, 2020). The Covid-19 pandemic is a natural health disaster that has brought a crisis of unimaginable proportions to society, economies, and the global tourism industry (Zenker & Kock, 2020). Covid-19 is a unique

health disaster with unprecedented impact on the global economy (Kabadayi, O'Connor, & Tuzovic, 2020; Woyo, 2021), and the tourism industry has been hard hit due to its dependency on travel and social mobility, activities that have been curtailed by the Covid-19 pandemic (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2020).

According to the World Travel and Tourism Council WTTC, (2020), 121 million jobs in the tourism industry have been negatively impacted globally creating an economic and social crisis due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Covid-19 has brought devastating impacts on the tourism industry globally (Woyo, 2021), and economies that rely on tourism are on their knees.

Covid-19 impact on the global tourism industry has been devastating, though the full extent of the effect of the pandemic is still under assessment. Tourism is a victim, and the Covid-19 pandemic has long-term impact on both domestic and international tourism. With borders closed, international travel curtailed, and international airlines grounded, the tourism industry has lost millions in potential revenue; more than 75 million jobs have been lost, and certainly, some tourism enterprises closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic (Ranasinghe et al., 2020; Woyo, 2021).

Research has shown that domestic tourism tends to play a major role in the survival and recovery of tourism destinations during crises and pandemics such as the Covid-19 (Kabote et al., 2017; WTTC, 2018). Globally, tourism destinations increased their levels of focus on domestic tourism in response to the global meltdown caused by the Covid-19 pandemic (Woyo, 2021). Domestic tourism provides immense opportunities for contribution to national development goals such as economic growth, job creation, and poverty alleviation. Domestic tourism should lead the recovery, and survival of the tourism industry during and post Covid-19 pandemic (ISTO Bulletin, 2020; Nofal, Al-Adwan, Yaseen, & Alsheikh, 2020) as destinations would open first for local travel before opening for international travel for fear of importing new and dangerous variants of the novel coronavirus. Health and safety, disposable income availability, travel restrictions, and economic performance are key success determinants of domestic tourism performance (Rodr & Alonso-Almeida, 2020; Woyo, 2021).

Domestic tourism promotion yielded success during a crisis as well as post-crisis in recent history. During the global financial crisis of 2008 to 2009, Mauritius survived by turning to the domestic market having deployed effective marketing mix strategies (Naidoo, 2011); Kenya turned to the

domestic tourism market following the post-election violence of 2008 (de Sausmarez, 2013). Similarly, Malaysia tourism also survived the 1997/1998 Asian financial crisis by turning to the domestic tourism market. In terms of pandemics, the Covid-19 is not the first one to be experienced in the world.

The 21st century has already witnessed four global pandemics, namely SARS-CoV in Asia, MERS-CoV in the Middle East, Madcow disease in Europe, and Ebola in West Africa, negatively impacting economic sectors including the tourism industry (Hussain & Fuste-Forne, 2021). Under all these pandemics, affected tourism destinations turned to the domestic tourism market for recovery, and survival (Gössling, Scott & Hall, 2020). Thus, domestic tourism market promotion is a default response for tourism destinations when faced with crisis, disasters, and pandemics of whatever nature given that international tourism demand dried up due to Covid-19 lockdowns, and restrictions. Notedly, several countries have turned to the domestic tourism market during the Covid-19 era with success. The countries include Brazil, China, Costa Rica, Japan, Croatia, France, Italy, Morocco, Mexico, Poland, Thailand, and Spain among others (Urrutia & Belanger, 2020). Therefore, domestic tourism promotion is suitably important for Zimbabwe as a tourist destination in the obtaining situation. Moreso, with the advent of the vaccine in 2021, and its rolling out within Zimbabwe, and other southern African countries, prospects are high that the tourism industry would fully open up and business claw back to pre-Covid-19 pandemic performance levels. Thus, the domestic tourism market should be the first market to focus and exploit (Basera, 2018; Makhaola & Proches, 2017), hence the need for domestic tourism promotion strategies in Zimbabwe.

3. Methodology

Zimbabwe is a landlocked country in southern Africa. Zimbabwe's tourism industry is anchored on its abundant natural resources, rich cultural heritage, and diverse scenery (ZNTRGS, 2020). Victoria Falls is Zimbabwe's signature tourist attraction among other attractions such as the Great Zimbabwe National Monuments, national parks, and the Eastern Highlands. While the tourism industry experienced some relative growth over the years, depending largely on the international tourist market, the Covid-19 pandemic completely shut down the international market. This

presented an opportunity for the tourism industry in Zimbabwe to turn to the domestic market for recovery and survival. Thus, this study explores the promotional strategies that can be used to stimulate domestic tourism in Zimbabwe amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

This study adopted a qualitative approach with in-depth interviews being the data collection method to explore the domestic tourism promotion strategies in Zimbabwe during and post the Covid-19 pandemic. The study participants were 15 expert informants (based on the saturation theory) drawn from a wide spectrum of organisations that are directly involved in the tourism industry at different levels in Zimbabwe; from government departments, tourism parastatals, publicity associations, and hotels to enhance the validity and diversity of information for the study. Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on their job positions (managers, officers, and directors) and years of experience (more than ten years) in the tourism sector. Participants were informed of the study objective, their rights to confidentiality, anonymity, and withdrawal from participation.

The interviews were carried online using WhatsApp Video Calling in June 2021 with each of the sessions being recorded. Each interview session took 10 to 15 minutes. Online interviews were the preferred method of data collection due to the government of Zimbabwe's sanctioned Covid-19 restrictions (Woyo, 2021). The interview questions focused on domestic tourism promotion strategies that can help tourism enterprises survive the unprecedented impacts of Covid-19 in Zimbabwe. The questions were based on the review of literature on domestic tourism. The 15 recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim, manually coded, and analysed using thematic analysis. The key theme was strategies to promote domestic tourism in Zimbabwe during and post Covid-19 pandemic. Results generated are presented in the next section.

4. Results and discussion

This section presents domestic tourism promotion strategies that can help the tourism industry in Zimbabwe to recover and survive the Covid-19 pandemic. Firstly, **Table 1** below presents the demographic characteristics of the 15 study respondents for a better understanding of the context and content of the study findings for informed decision-making (Mhizha, 2014).

Respondent	Designation	Organizational type	Gender	Age	Experience	Location
R1	Director	Hotel	Female	45	16 years	Masvingo
R2	Marketing Manager	TBCZ	Male	40	15 years	Harare
R3	General Manager	Hotel	Female	41	16 years	Bulawayo
R4	General Manager	Hotel	Male	42	15 years	Mutare
R5	Marketing Manager	Hotel	Female	40	12 years	Victoria Falls
R6	General Manager	Hotel	Female	39	11 years	Gweru
R7	MICE Manager	ZTA	Female	42	12 years	Harare
R8	Tourism Officer	MECTHI	Female	37	10 years	Masvingo
R9	MICE Manager	ZTA	Male	39	14 years	Harare
R10	Tourism officer	MECTHI	Male	37	11 years	Harare
R11	Manager	TBCZ	Female	43	16 years	Harare
R12	General Manager	Hotel	Female	48	15 years	Kariba
R13	Tourism officer	MECTHI	Female	36	13 years	Harare
R14	Manager Association	Publicity	Male	44	14 years	Masvingo
R15	General Manager	Hotel	Female	38	14 years	Kariba

Table 1: Summary of demographic characteristics of study respondents

Source: Author's compilation, 2021

Domestic Tourism Promotion Strategies

The key domestic tourism promotion strategies for Zimbabwe that emerged from the thematic data analysis are discussed hereunder.

i) **Building tourism and travel culture within the Zimbabwe society**

Most study participants observed that the culture of travelling for tourism purposes was limited among Zimbabweans suggesting a need to build the culture of travelling in Zimbabwean people to create a viable and sustainable domestic tourism market that can support the tourism sector. This was noted to be a medium to a long-term strategy to promote domestic tourism during and post Covid-19 pandemic. The need for culture change with regards to tourism is illustrated below.

R3: Our Zimbabwean society lacks the culture of travel for tourism purposes. travelling for tourism is alien to our society.

R8: Travelling for leisure like visiting Victoria Falls does not find its way in the budgets of many of our people, even those with the means and income to partake in tourism activities do not do so, e-e-e I think it's a cultural issue.

R6: Honestly speaking, domestic tourism is the only option to make sure that the tourism sector can survive this pandemic, however, there is need to instil a culture of travelling in people through various efforts.

Some of the post-Covid-19 activities or efforts to create a culture of travel to promote domestic tourism outlined by informants included the promotion of school trips to different local tourism attractions for all levels from primary grades to secondary and high school including universities and colleges. By so doing, the culture of travel is inculcated into students at a young age such that even when they are adults they would keep on undertaking trips as individuals, with friends, and even with families. Also, the issue of introducing 'know your area' campaigns via radio, TV and online platforms such as websites, social media sites such as Facebook and WhatsApp emerged as an effort that can promote travelling culture among Zimbabweans during and post Covid-19 pandemic as noted below:

R1: One way to promote domestic tourism culture is through aggressive campaigns through radio, TV and by taking advantage of online communications to get the message out there.

R4: Information is power, it builds awareness and desire plus drives people into action, so there is need to run continuous campaigns, emphasising on the benefits of partaking in tourism activities.

R10: School trips are important in building the culture of travel in people, catch them young, it's not easy to teach old dogs new tricks. If it was in my power, I would institute a policy for our education institutions to undertake trips with students to local tourism destinations at least once a year for every grade or level to instil the culture. By so doing, the industry starts ticking from those school trips through revenue generated.

Nurturing a culture of tourism, and travel, among the children and youth is arguably a great way to build an enduring domestic tourism market for Zimbabwe through taking deliberate steps that inculcate the tourism culture at a young age. This can also help in developing awareness about the country in young people through advancing a discover-your-Zimbabwe thematic campaign actualised through deliberate tourism trips by education institutions to different local attractions. This finding was also echoed by Woyo (2021) in which the willingness of the domestic market to travel, and pay for travel-related services needs to be inculcated for domestic tourism to bloom in Zimbabwe. This will go a long way in sustaining the tourism industry during the Covid-19 pandemic, and even other future pandemics.

ii) Affordability of tourism products to the local tourism market

Informants bemoaned the pricing of tourism products in Zimbabwe as a major obstacle to domestic tourism growth particularly in an economic environment constrained by Covid-19. Incomes for local people have been lost due to Covid-19 induced lockdowns. Therefore, making the tourism products affordable to domestic tourists is one strategy that can help stimulate the domestic tourism market. Price is a key driver of demand. According to the law of demand, more is demanded at a lower price. Thus, to stimulate demand for local tourism products, there is a need for tourism service providers to review their pricing models with a view of making them more affordable to locals so that they can participate in the consumption of local tourism products. This was noted below:

R6: Truly speaking our tourism industry pricing is skewed towards the international market, it is damn expensive.

R11: Hotel accommodation in Zimbabwe is expensive and beyond the reach of many locals, who are pressed with an economic crisis.

R4: The tourism enterprises need to charge affordable prices for locals, the hotels and other facilities in the sector must substantially reduce their prices for them to reap benefits from the local market.

Thus, results show that one of the effective and quick-win strategies to promote domestic tourism is making the tourism products affordable to the local tourists. This result is consistent with Woyo (2021) and Kabote, Mashiri & Vengesayi's (2011) studies in which it was established that affordability of tourism products, and services is one of the ways to promote domestic tourism in Zimbabwe as a resilient strategy in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic.

iii) Improved income levels

Results showed that the Covid-19 pandemic worsened Zimbabwe's already underperforming economy. The Zimbabwean economy is not in good shape, even before the Covid-19 pandemic. The economy has been battling multiple challenges ranging from a severe liquidity crunch, unemployment, and low wages for those in formal employment, and hyperinflation among other economic issues. This has resulted in workers grappling with low, and compressed wages and salaries or incomes. Respondents indicated that it is important for the Zimbabwean economy to stabilise first before one can talk of domestic tourism promotion. There is a need to improve the income levels so that people have adequate disposable income to spend on domestic tourism products and services during and post Covid-19 pandemic. Local people are struggling to meet the basic needs of their families, such that it will be difficult to persuade them to travel to local attractions for leisure when they are struggling with basic survival issues as illustrated below:

R2: Zimbabwe has been battling an economic crisis even before COVID- 19, so the economy has to get right first if the locals are to partake in tourism activities.

R7: The biggest obstacle to domestic tourism promotion is poverty and unemployment in the country.

R9: As we speak, the majority of Zimbabweans are struggling to put food on the table due to an ongoing economic crisis.

R10: Look at the rate of inflation, unemployment, and poverty; it's quite irrational to expect the local people to play a part in the recovery and survival of the tourism industry in Zimbabwe.

R11: Let's put the economy right first for the domestic tourism market to be able to play a meaningful part in the growth of the tourism industry in Zimbabwe.

This finding agrees with Woyo (2021) who asserted that poor economic performance characterised by high inflation, unemployment, a liquidity crunch, and droughts is a primary hindrance to domestic tourism growth in Zimbabwe. The COVID-19 induced lockdowns have exacerbated economic decline in Zimbabwe as normal business operations have been disrupted. Domestic tourism promotion is feasible on the back of a well-functioning local economy in which the locals have enough disposable income to spend on tourism-related activities.

iv) Development of domestic market customized products

Respondents emphasised the need to develop tourism products and facilities that are tailor-made for the domestic tourism market. Interview narratives suggest that the existing tourism product profile in Zimbabwe is skewed in favour of the international market, particularly when one considers the food menus offered in hotels and restaurants with foreign names. In addition, now that the international tourism market is subdued because of Covid-19 restrictions, the activities on offer for tourists also need to be locally oriented to accommodate the needs of the domestic tourism market as noted below:

R13: My feeling is that one of the fundamentals to promote domestic tourism lies in tailor-making the tourism products to what the locals prefer.

R12: Our tourism industry operators should offer a wide range of products for the locals.

R5: The tourism enterprises in the country should provide a cocktail of products that provide entertainment, educational and recreational benefits.

R15: You see, we now have the millennials as part of the tourism market, and this market like a lot of varied activities to occupy and satisfy them.

Thus, the views of the study respondents attest to the need to design tourism products and facilities to the travelling needs and wants of the domestic tourism market in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. Given that Covid-19 restrictions have completely shut down the international tourism market component for the Zimbabwean tourism sector, it is about time that the domestic market fills up the gap. To this end, the adoption of information and communication

technologies (ICTs) such as the internet and social media in product development to boost domestic tourism in Zimbabwe would go a long way towards this as recommended by Woyo (2021). Also, national parks, national monuments, and museums should seize the tourism demand vacuum created by the depressed international tourism market induced by Covid-19 as an opportunity to customise their products for the domestic market, in addition to making the most affordable to stimulate domestic travel to these national attractions thereby catalysing national travel. There is a need to increase the number and range of activities that are tailor made for the domestic market to increase visitorship (Woyo, 2021), now that the domestic tourism market is set to fill the demand gap created by the subdued international tourism market as a result of Covid-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, respondents pointed out the need to promote, strengthen and commercialise sport and religious tourism in Zimbabwe as these draw large numbers of people to a particular destination in the country as a post-Covid-19 domestic tourism promotion strategy. Zimbabweans are religious people who undertake several religious pilgrimages at different times of the year. Innovative tourism enterprises can exploit business opportunities that are brought by these religious gatherings by different churches such as Zion Christian Church (ZCC), Apostolic Faith Ministries (AFM), Family of God (FOG), United Family International Church (UFIC), Prophetic Healing and Deliverance Ministries (PHD) among other churches. Moreso, as a strategy to promote domestic tourism during the Covid-19 pandemic, tourism stakeholders in both the public and private sector can add their voice in encouraging religious tourists to get vaccinated as the government of Zimbabwe has given the green light to churches to allow vaccinated people to congregate. Thus, information dissemination encouraging congregants to be fully vaccinated so that they can attend religious gatherings during the Covid-19 pandemic era is one strategy for domestic tourism.

v) Segmentation of the domestic tourism market and running discount programs

The strategy of properly segmenting the local tourism market using targeted packages, and running discount programs, for the local tourism market dominated the responses as an effective promotional strategy for boosting domestic tourism in Zimbabwe in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic. Market segmentation and discount programs take into consideration the constraining

effect wrought by the Covid-19 pandemic on the tourism market's ability to afford tourism products. Though this is related to product development, it is imperative to treat it as a separate thematic strategy given the fact that it dominated the strategy recommendations as shown below:

R1: The tourism industry operators must design appealing low-cost packages and programs for the domestic tourism market.

R2: Appealing packages for the domestic tourism market segments such as schools, colleges, universities, and corporates are the way to go and the packages should be affordable.

R3: It is important that programs that appeal to the local tourism market be developed as this will help create demand.

R14: The good thing with packaging is that they can be tailor-made to the specific tastes and preferences of the domestic tourism market in terms of everything including such things as accommodation, transport, food, activities, and prices.

R7: Packaging and programming are the two effective tools to manage demand for tourism products in the local tourism market.

R13: If done well packaging for the domestic tourism market has great potential to generate good results for the tourism industry in the wake of Covid-19 pandemic.

These views on packaging suggest that it is a low-hanging recovery and survival strategy for the tourism industry to gain from the domestic tourism market. Packages can be day packages, weekend packages, holiday packages, school packages, corporate packages to ensure that there is everything for everyone. If done well it can stimulate local demand for tourism products and facilities in Zimbabwe during and post-Covid 19 pandemic era. Woyo (2021) and Kabote et al. (2018) submitted that making tourism products and services affordable, including packages help in promoting domestic tourism in Zimbabwe.

vi) Tapping the visiting friends and relatives (VFR) domestic market segment

Findings showed that Zimbabweans have family structures steeped in the traditional extended family set-up and acquaintances, which from time-to-

time require them to meet and socialise. Such a set-up of friends, and relatives, is an opportunity that could be exploited to promote domestic tourism. This market is in abundance in Zimbabwe. This view is premised on the fact that during the Covid- 19 induced lockdowns, there were no travels. Friends and relatives were locked up in their homes, thus creating an enduring hunger to socialise with loved ones in other parts of the country. The envisaged opening up of intercity travel without restrictions in the post-Covid-19 pandemic would create a surge in the number of local people visiting their friends, and relatives, in different parts of the country.

Respondents implored tourism enterprises to be innovative and find ways of turning travel to see friends and relatives into a valuable market which translates into the generation of money for the tourism industry through utilisation of its facilities as illustrated below:

R12: Look, I feel there is an opportunity for the local tourism players to make some money from the local people who shall be taking advantage of the lifting of travel restrictions to travel around the country visiting some friends and relatives.

R15: There is some money that can be made by restaurants, lodges, and hotels from the locals that shall be visiting their relatives in different parts of the country given the opening up of intercity travel in the country.

R11: The locals who shall take advantage of the lifting of travel restrictions, like no exemption letters are now required, people can now use their cars for travel for different purposes including visiting friends and relatives represents a lucrative market for innovative tourism entrepreneurs.

R9: The visiting friends and relatives (VFR) market has for long been neglected in terms of making it a money generating market for local tourism players. To me, this is a lucrative market that requires innovative thinking to turn it into a valuable tourism market.

R8: My friend people have been locked in their homes for over a year now, the lifting of some travel restrictions will result in an upsurge in locals travelling around the country for purposes of catching up with their friends, meeting and greeting their relatives. There shall be travel locally and that's a potentially good market to tap into and survive as an industry.

Results strongly suggest the VFR as a post-Covid-19 pandemic lucrative market which the tourism service providers can tap into for their quick recovery, survival, and growth in Zimbabwe during and post Covid-19 pandemic. This aligns with Dube-Xaba (2021) who found VFR to be a viable market to drive the recovery of the tourism sector during and post-Covid-19 pandemic.

Moreover, there is a need to promote diaspora packages that cater to people in the diaspora so that they can sponsor their families to have holidays in Zimbabwe during and post-Covid-19 era. Also, when they come back home for visits, they can have holidays for total relaxation with their families during and post-Covid-19 pandemic.

vii) Accessibility of tourist centres in Zimbabwe by the local market

Respondents pointed the fact that generally most tourist attractions/centres in Zimbabwe are not easily accessible by the local tourism market given the current state of the transportation system. For example, rail travel in Zimbabwe needs attention as it is currently down. Rail normally provides the cheapest form of transportation, and is a favourite for many local people as it gives an opportunity for great sightseeing as the train normally passes through a variety of scenery, and attractions, both natural and manmade. In addition, local air transport in Zimbabwe is also down such that even the local airline is not able to service the domestic routes to different tourist centres like Kariba, Masvingo, the Eastern Highlands to mention but a few. Air travel is fast, and convenient, and its availability usually promotes increased travel. Further still, the road network in Zimbabwe is generally not in the best state for ease of travel, and some highways are notorious for accidents that have needlessly claimed human life. These issues are illustrated below by study respondents:

R3: Tourism is dependent upon a good transport system and this does not exist in Zimbabwe.

R2: to promote domestic tourism there is need to improve the accessibility of our local attractions both in terms of physical access and in terms of cost.

R8: Roads in Zimbabwe are not safe for travel and in rural areas, it is a nightmare especially during the rainy season, you go to rural areas at a huge risk of getting stuck for days due to bad and impassable roads.

R4: Local travel needs an efficient and regular air transport system for it to happen.

R6: There are local people who have their monies but are hindered from travelling due to lack of air connectivity within the country. They do not have time to drive for hours and hours enduring all these potholes in our major highways, risking their lives.

R12: Look the other key issue that requires attention if domestic tourism is to be promoted is fuel availability and cost. In Zimbabwe fuel is rarely available and when you find it is damn expensive.

R14: Fuel is the lifeblood of local travel as the majority of people use buses and personal cars to travel around the country. Fuel must be made readily available and affordable for domestic tourism to happen.

These results show that improving the accessibility of tourist attractions/centres to the local market will go a long way in promoting domestic tourism in Zimbabwe. Having better accessibility is also emphasised by Woyo and Slabbert (2020), as they cited poor accessibility as one of the major challenges hindering domestic tourism growth in Zimbabwe. There is a positive relationship between the accessibility of tourist destinations or facilities and the level of domestic tourism. Accessibility to different tourist centres in Zimbabwe, according to the respondents, can be improved by addressing the challenges bedevilling the three modes of transportation in Zimbabwe. For example, air transport can be improved by introducing flights to places of interest such that travellers can get to destinations within the shortest possible time so that people can have more time for leisure; upgrading of airports/ airstrips to create more access points, and charging affordable cheaper airfares on domestic flights to induce demand. Road accessibility can be improved by sprucing up dust roads linking the local tourist destinations so that the roads are trafficable.

Good road infrastructure is critical together with feeder roads to places of interest, especially in remote areas. Travellers need to feel safe when driving on highways. Rail transport can be improved by revamping the existing idle rail transport network since rail transport resonates with large numbers of people as it is usually far cheaper than road and air transport.

viii) Aggressive marketing of local tourism attractions and destinations

Respondents expressed the need to intensify advertising and promotion campaigns of local tourist attractions by the national tourism body, that is, the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority (ZTA). Tourism service providers can also complement the advertising campaigns. For a very long time, advertising and promotional campaigns at the national level have been targeting the international tourism market segment at the expense of the local market before the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. Views by respondents seem to point to a lack of information on local tourism attractions by residents. Hence, one of the effective ways to promote domestic tourism is by raising awareness

through radio, TV, and online communications. Another way to disseminate information is through local community radio stations recently rolled out. Moreso, making sure that all tourist attraction information is translated and is readily made available and accessible through all the local official languages as spelt in the constitution of Zimbabwe will help in promoting domestic tourism in Zimbabwe. Thus, from a marketing model perspective, awareness raises interest, interest raises desire, and desire results in action through embarking on domestic tourism travel. This is noted in the following responses:

R2: Look, we have people here in Masvingo who have not visited the Great Zimbabwe Monuments and some they do not even know that it is here in Masvingo, its surprisingly true Sir.

R3: To boost domestic tourism there is a need to make a lot of meaningful noise about the local attractions, our people in most cases are not even aware of these attractions around them.

R14: Let's assume nothing, we need to amp our marketing efforts to every Zimbabwean about the local tourism attractions, packages, and facilities to enhance domestic tourism.

R10: There is lack of information among our people about the benefits of participating in tourism activities and this can be addressed through aggressive dissemination of complete, comprehensive and accurate information.

R15: Aggressive marketing campaigns are the way to promote domestic tourism in Zimbabwe.

Thus, the results suggest that aggressive marketing campaigns targeted at the domestic market with complete, and accurate, information can help promote domestic tourism in Zimbabwe during and post-Covid-19 pandemic era. Respondents indicated that aggressive marketing campaigns can happen at all critical levels for effective results, that is, at the government, city, tourism enterprise, and local community level to achieve the desired outcomes. This is premised on the fact that in Zimbabwe, tourism is government-led, private sector-driven, and community-based, so there is a need for greater partnerships for domestic tourism to succeed during and post Covid-19 pandemic. The aggressive marketing campaigns can use the marketing mix tools of product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence to achieve the intended objectives and aims. This finding is consistent with Woyo and Slabbert (2021) in which aggressive marketing was found to be one of the most effective destination management techniques

to promote destination competitiveness and domestic tourism in Zimbabwe during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Moreover, to enhance extensive publicity, the study results suggest that the following action steps can go a long way in promoting domestic tourism during and post Covid-19 pandemic; updating listings of places of interest and supporting facilities and services; introducing and activating information centres at provincial and district levels so that critical information can be accessed closer to the places of interest; updating and circulating tourist maps so that potential local tourists can get information readily available on digital platforms and as hard copies; creating websites at national, regional and district levels so that information can be readily available; publicising various destinations e.g. through documentaries, short films, social media, radio, and TV programmes. Actively publicise yearly calendar events in various provinces that have a bearing on tourism.

The above agrees with Nofal et al. (2020) who asserted that the incorporation of digital marketing techniques plays a critical role in promoting domestic tourism during pandemics in support of the need to embark on aggressive marketing to boost domestic tourism.

ix) Promoting incentive travel

Respondents indicated the need for employers at different levels particularly at the government level and private sector to promote incentive travel during and post Covid-19 pandemic. Employee incentive travel schemes can be another low-hanging strategy that can be implemented to promote domestic tourism in Zimbabwe during the Covid-19 pandemic. Both the public, and private sectors, are implored to give some of their employees' holiday perks applicable within Zimbabwe. Direct incentives such as domestic tourism vouchers for civil servants can go a long way in stimulating domestic tourism in Zimbabwe during and post Covid-19 pandemic as noted below:

R3: To save the tourism industry from collapse due to the debilitating effects of Covid-19 pandemic, the government can provide domestic travel vouchers to its civil service.

R4: In Zimbabwe, tourism is a government-led, so it's incumbent upon the government to offer incentive travel options for its huge civil service, maybe through vouchers that are redeemable within Zimbabwe.

R6: The private sector can be encouraged to give domestic travel benefits to its employees, this will help cushion the tourism players in Zimbabwe such as hotels and restaurants in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Results suggest that incentive travel has immediate tangible benefits of promoting domestic tourism promotion in Zimbabwe during the Covid-19 pandemic era. It does not only provide the necessary push for the locals to travel, but also the time as well as the financial resources to meet travelling expenses, thus proving to be an effective tool. Incentive travel is important in driving the growth and development of domestic tourism (Celuch, 2012) during, and post pandemics such as Covid-19. Incentive travel is noted as one of the key motivations for travel (Mapingure, du Plessis, & Saayman, 2018; Mapingure, Engelina & Saayman, 2019) that can be exploited to promote domestic tourism in Zimbabwe during and post Covid-19 pandemic.

x) Adherence to Covid-19 protocols and treatment guidelines

Reports by health authorities worldwide suggest no immediate end to the Covid-19 pandemic despite the proliferation of vaccines. The efficacy of the vaccines is yet to be ascertained. This means that both tourism players, and the local tourists, need to remain vigilant in the ongoing fight against the novel coronavirus for the health and safety of all. Respondents pointed to the need for tourism players to embrace the vaccination programme by making sure that all their staff is vaccinated against Covid-19 pandemic. Also, tourism operators need to add their voice in encouraging the local people to get vaccinated in a bid to create a local tourism market that is vaccinated against Covi-d-19 for the safety and health of everyone.

Results point to the fact that creating a Covid-19 free destination is a sure way to help in the promotion of domestic tourism in Zimbabwe during the Covid-19 pandemic era. In addition to the vaccination issue, it is important for tourism players and local tourists to keep observing the Covid-19 prevention guidelines such as masking up, social distancing, hand washing, regular testing and screening, and regular fumigation of tourism facilities as noted by respondents below:

R1: We need not relax because the country has been opened up for intercity travel, Covid-19 is still among us.

R8: Continued vigilance by all is still necessary despite the discovery of the vaccine, the virus is ruthless.

R7: One of the ways to promote domestic tourism safely is by continuing to abide by the Covid-19 prevention guidelines for us to remain alive.

R9: In the face of some resistance to the virus reported through social media, it would be strategically wise if tourism operators can take the lead role in vaccinating their staff as well as adding their voice to encouraging the public to embrace vaccination.

R4: Let's abide by the Covid-19 prevention and treatment measures for us to enjoy the fruits of domestic tourism.

These views suggest that continued observance of Covid-19 prevention and treatment measures by both tourism players, and the local tourists remain a key strategy in promoting domestic tourism recalling as well that 'health is wealth'. Thus, only a healthy individual can partake in tourism activities. Complete adherence to Covid-19 prevention guidelines and vaccination remains the key to the health and safety of both staff and visitors (Bakar & Rosbi, 2020; Gössling, Scott, & Hall, 2020; Ioannides & Gyimóthy, 2020) for the promotion of domestic tourism in Zimbabwe during the Covid-19 pandemic. **Figure 1** below shows a suggested framework of domestic tourism promotion strategies for Zimbabwe during and post-Covid-19 pandemic

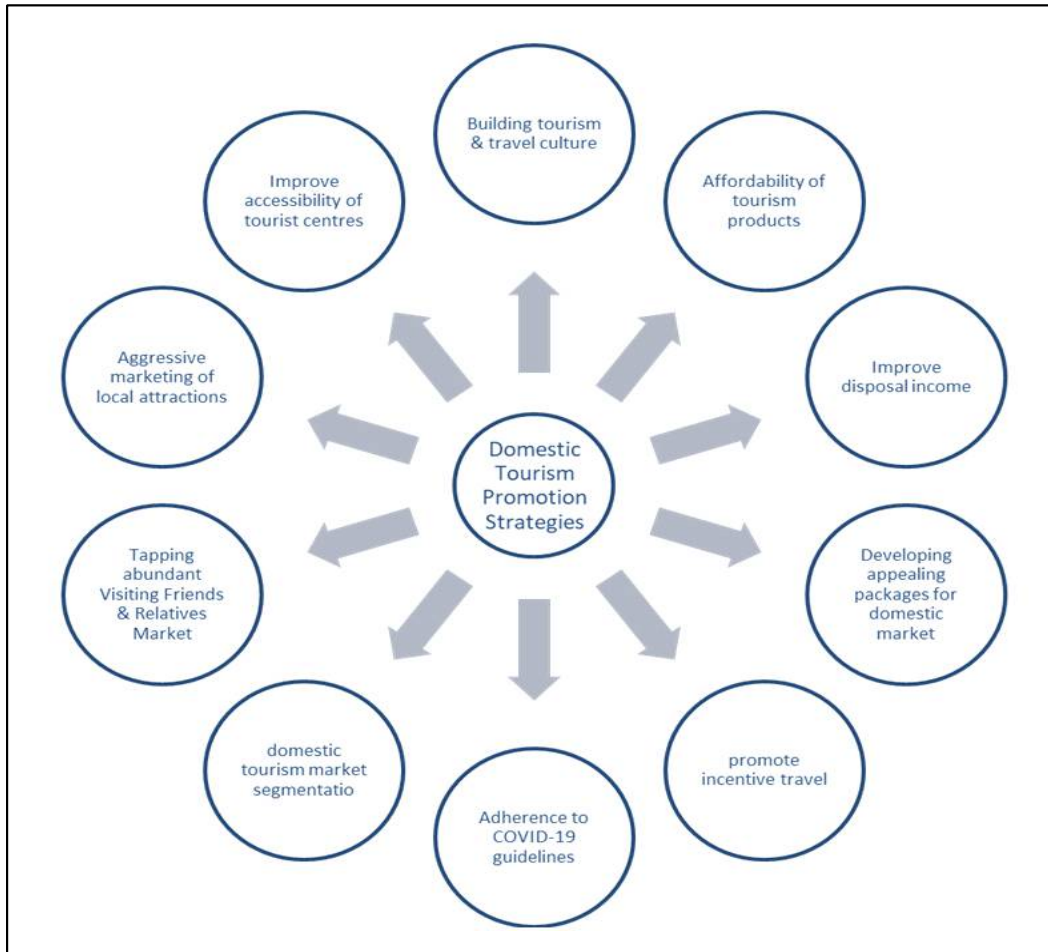


Figure 1: Domestic Tourism Promotion Strategies for Zimbabwe during and post Covid-19 pandemic

Source: Author compilation, 2021

5. Conclusion

Whilst the COVID-19 pandemic brought the global tourism industry to a standstill, it is not all gloom and doom as it presents an opportunity for tourist destinations like Zimbabwe to develop their domestic tourism market as a substitute to the traditional international tourism market. The study demonstrated that although the Covid-19 pandemic is a threat to the existence of the tourism industry, it presents a rare turning point in terms of marketing

direction and strategy for the tourism industry in Zimbabwe in the context of its domestic tourism market segment.

The study identified, and explored, key strategies that can be implemented at various levels to promote domestic tourism in Zimbabwe during, and post the Covid-19 pandemic. The identified strategies include instilling a culture of travel in young people, making tourism products affordable and accessible, improving the incomes of local people, improving the economy of Zimbabwe, developing of domestic market customised products, segmentation of domestic tourism market, running discount programs, designing and developing appealing packages and programs, exploiting business opportunities presented by the visiting friends and relatives market, embarking on aggressive marketing campaigns using the marketing mix, introducing incentive travel particularly for civil servants, and a continued commitment to the observance of all Covid-19 prevention and treatment guidelines.

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Covid-19 pandemic and women's vulnerabilities in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

While the Covid-19 pandemic affects the health and well-being of all, women and girls are disproportionately affected, especially in developing countries. Thus, the desk review sought to establish women's vulnerabilities in face of the Covid-19 pandemic in Zimbabwe. The intersectional thinking was used to analyse and conclude the study. It emerged from the analysis that while the measures instituted to combat Covid-19 including calls for social distancing, quarantining and lockdowns remain key, they have disproportionately affected women's socio-economic well-being exacerbating the long-standing gender inequalities. As shown by intersectional feminism, women and girls' social identities overlap, and compound with pre-existing inequalities that subjugate them in society including patriarchy, culture, religion, and poverty to limit women's community and personal security, access to employment and income, safety nets, and sexual and reproductive health. The study recommends gender mainstreaming in socio-economic response measures by state and non-state actors during, and after Covid-19 pandemic.

Keywords: intersectionality, feminism, pandemic, vulnerability, women



1. Introduction

On December 31, 2019, Chinese officials reported cases of an unusual pneumonia in the city of Wuhan, Hubei province. One week later, the officials realised that the illness was caused by a novel coronavirus which would later be called SARS-COV-2, and the illness it causes, Covid-19. Over the following weeks, the virus spread throughout much of China, and then outside of that country with the first case reported in Thailand on 13 January 2020. On 30 January 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared Covid-19 a global emergency, and on 11 March 2020, WHO designated the illness as a pandemic, and since then, almost all countries in the world have reported cases. To date, over 197 million cases of Covid-19 have been officially reported with over 4.2 million deaths (WHO, 2021).

Zimbabwe's first case was confirmed on 21 March 2020 and on 23 March 2020, the first death related to the virus was recorded. As of 28 July 2021, the country has reported over 103,000 cases with 3,340 fatalities (WHO, 2021). Due to the high infection rate as well as the serious effects caused by the disease, social distancing, and lockdowns, have been a common method used by governments around the world to combat the pandemic. The use of lockdowns has been a policy in other modern health crises such as the 2014-2016 Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) epidemic which affected several countries in West Africa; but this is the first time that mass lockdowns have been placed in countries across all continents. Zimbabwe has been on lockdown since 30 March 2020 with strict restrictions between 30 March 2020 and 17 May 2020, and again between 2 January 2021 and 15 February 2021, and in July 2021 due to the surging cases. During the periods of strict lockdown, only businesses designated as essential were allowed to be open, and all other citizens confined to their homes except for trips to the grocery store, pharmacy and doctors' visits.

While lockdowns, and social distancing strategies have been effective in reducing the number of cases, the strategies have had significant impact on societies. Not only is the pandemic a health and economic event, it is also a societal crisis with women in particular suffering as policies enacted lack gender sensitivity. In a country with an already challenging economy, rising inflation, increasing food insecurity, and weak public health system, the lockdown, and social distancing measures, have exacerbated the social norms, and economic as well as social stress that make women vulnerable in Zimbabwe. Areas in which women are more affected relate to sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence, increased economic stress, and

lack of access to basic resources. All these issues make social distancing for women difficult, and place women in more vulnerable social conditions. Not only does Covid-19 and the methods to contain it present difficulties to women, but it also threatens to harm the progress made towards women's empowerment in the country.

Even with these indications, emerging empirical studies on Covid-19 in Zimbabwe remain vague, and run short of revealing the gendered effects of the pandemic. An attempt to cover the subject by organisations, and media reports, has benignly focused on acknowledging that women, and girls, are affected most by the pandemic without showing the extent, and the ways, in which they are impacted upon. This gap in empirical studies thus far, speaks to the need to reveal, and explain, the ways in which women and girls are disproportionately affected by the Covid-19 pandemic in Zimbabwe. A study of this nature adds to the calls by the United Nations (UN) for the urgent need to reach the disadvantaged groups, make their plight be heard during the pandemic, and to make governments #LeaveNoOneBehind in their Covid-19 response plans.

2. Methodology and theoretical approach

This study utilised a qualitative research approach rooted in descriptive design. Data for the study was collected through document review. The reviewed documents included government, media and non-stakeholder reports and communications regarding the Covid-19 pandemic. Based on review of extant literature, the study understood the past, and emerging vulnerabilities of women in pandemic situations. The study was rooted in intersectional thinking to understand the gendered nature of the pandemic in Zimbabwe. Intersectionality is primarily concerned with how the exercise of power affects individuals who face multiple social inequalities, and consequently, multiple intertwined and simultaneous experiences of privilege and marginalisation (Crenshaw, 1989). An intersectional approach helped researchers understand the complexity of identity beyond only gender and sex; the study recognises the ways that gender intersects with other historical social identities such as poverty, environment, rurality, religion, and class to affect the position of women during this pandemic (Davis, 2008). The study, therefore, recognises that there is diversity within the experience of being a Zimbabwean woman navigating the pandemic.

3. Results and discussion

This section presents and discusses findings that arose with regards to women and girls' vulnerabilities due to the Covid-19 pandemic in Zimbabwe. The results are presented and discussed in main themes which are: the economic impact, care roles and resources, limited access to pandemic information, sexual and reproductive rights, Gender Based Violence (GBV) and personal security challenges, and increased online sexual abuse.

Economic impact

Health crises caused by the Covid-19 pandemic's nature are often accompanied by economic crises, in which women bear the brunt. Globally, most countries fell into recession during the Covid-19 pandemic, with the global economy falling by 4.4 percent (Jones, Palumbo & Brown, 2021). Zimbabwe is not immune to the crisis. As a country that is dominated by an informal economy, the effects of a recession are felt deeply. Zimbabwe has been in the depths of an economic crisis for decades which has seen a massive spike in the women-dominated informal market as employment in the formal market has decreased. The Labour Force Survey of 2014, revealed that among those who are employed in Zimbabwe, 94% fall within the bracket of informal employment (Zimstats, 2014; UNICEF, 2014). Work in the female dominated informal market is insecure, lowly paid with little or no income security and social benefits (ILO, 2021). During the lockdown, informal markets were shut down, thereby affecting the majority of women who rely on it for their survival. The same scenario happened in West African nations during the EVD outbreak when many women who participated in informal trading were disproportionately affected by restrictions to combat the epidemic (UNDP, 2014).

When there is no income security in the informal sector, the time away from work is unpaid, which will exacerbate economic inequality between men and women during and after Covid-19. In addition, municipal councils across Zimbabwe took steps to remove the stalls in markets used by informal workers. In 2020, municipal councils in Harare, Chitungwiza, Mutare, and Gweru, among others, took advantage of the lockdown and removed vendor stalls within their city limits. In 2021, Harare, and other cities, continued the process of removing vendor stalls. This means that when informal markets are reopened, workers will need to find new places to sell their wares (ZCIEA, 2021).

The economic situation of informal traders is worsened by the difficulties in traveling during the lockdown. ZUPCO and commuter omnibuses are the only modes of public transport, and they are very few and do not travel with

enough frequency to provide reliable transport (Muronzi, 2020). Moreover, police roadblocks throughout cities made it difficult for people to travel into city centres or travel to different residential suburbs. Thus, with the pandemic lockdowns, women became destitute because of limited or no participation in the informal trading. More so, women make up the majority of cross-border traders, relying on sales in community markets. This has been heavily affected by the pandemic as borders remain closed to the public and informal traders (Mhetu, 2020).

The Covid-19 pandemic, and subsequent lockdowns, also resulted in many people losing their jobs. Anecdotal evidence shows that the Covid-19 pandemic primarily affects jobs performed by women in service sectors such as hospitality, food and beverage, and retail services. One of the industries affected most includes restaurants, which were shut down completely for a while before being allowed to open for take-away, and delivery services as such operating only with limited staff working for fewer hours per day. This has proved difficult for restaurants, and their suppliers, as many have not been able to cope under the restrictions as income from take-aways do not provide enough earnings to cover operational costs such as wages and licensing fees paid to the government (*The Herald*, 2021). In March 2021, the Restaurant Operators' Association of Zimbabwe (ROAZ) revealed that up to 100 restaurants had not been able to reopen since the introduction of the first lockdown. In addition, up to 2,000 people lost their jobs in the sector, of which the majority of them are women. Because the sector has not received any financial assistance, continued limitations of services provided by the industry could lead as many as 50 percent of restaurants, employing about 5,000 people, closing permanently (Kuyedzwa, 2021).

Women are also more likely to be employed at lower levels of a company with less power as such they are more likely to lose their jobs if companies retrench employees (Chuku et al., 2020). In addition, certain jobs in the formal sector which include tourism, are at risk of taking longer to recover since this disaster took away people's disposable income. The problems of those retrenched is exacerbated by high inflation in Zimbabwe, with food inflation being recorded at 700 percent in December 2019 (Nevill, 2020). This eroded the purchasing power making food insecurity a real problem for many Zimbabweans, especially women. The lockdown exacerbates survival challenges as people continue to lose their sources of income, impeding their ability to buy food, and other essentials, leading to missed meals.

Pregnant and breastfeeding women are vulnerable to malnutrition and those with weakened immune systems are more likely to succumb to infections (Korkoyah & Wreh, 2015). Inability to buy food also affects people's ability to take their medication. In Zimbabwe, 15 percent of the adult's population is HIV positive and the anti-retroviral drugs taken to manage the illness must be taken with food to prevent side effects (Molelekwa, 2020). The government and non-governmental organisations are providing aid relief for vulnerable people but only a fraction of those identified as needing aid have received it. During the pandemic, the government of Zimbabwe made some measures to alleviate the economic burden on families, one of which was providing monetary transfers to the needy. By October 2020, 202,077 households had benefited from the cash transfers of ZWL\$300 (approximately US\$4). However, this amount is small given that a family of six needed ZWL\$ 20,985 (approximately USD\$260) per month at the time (Chipenda & Tom, 2020).

Research has shown that one group of women worst affected by this situation include those dependent on payment of maintenance by co-parents. As the majority of people employed in informal sector, and non-essential companies, lost their jobs in lockdowns, many separated men have claimed that they cannot honour the maintenance obligations. In South Africa, attorneys have begun representing clients who say the fathers of their children are failing to pay maintenance for their children, claiming that the pandemic is affecting their pay (Versluis, 2020). This then means separated women with the custody of children had to bear the brunt of looking after these children on their own.

Care roles and resources

In addition to social distancing measures, one recommendation for preventing the spread of Covid-19 is washing hands with clean water and soap. This is a challenge for many Zimbabweans, in rural and urban areas, as they do not have regular access to clean tap water (Dziva, 2020). Over the past few years, Zimbabwe has seen decreased access to clean water. In 1998, WHO reported that 84 percent of Zimbabweans could access safe drinking water. Between 2000 and 2017, access to clean safe water decreased from 72 percent to 36 percent (HRW, 2020). Zimbabwe's water crisis has lasted for years due to crumbling infrastructure and shortages of materials. This was exacerbated by a drought which began in 2018. In Harare, two of the city's four reservoirs are 'empty', and a main water treatment plant has been idle

since 2019 when it ran out of chemicals to treat the water (Muronzi, 2020). In Harare and the surrounding areas, two million people do not have household access to safe drinking water or waste disposal services (HRW, 2020). In Bulawayo, the second largest city, three of the six supply dams were decommissioned, and the city is only able to provide water to residents twice per week (Tshili, 2020). These water shedding schedules mean that for people who receive water once or twice per week, they must supplement by using communal boreholes thereby limiting opportunities for social distancing.

As a result of the lack of water, women are the most affected as they are responsible for the welfare of the family. Women and children face the brunt of the water crisis as they are the ones who spend time in water queues at communal boreholes. In areas where people have to queue for water, it has increased tensions between married couples, who fight because one spouse accuses the other spouse of using water queues as an excuse to sleep outside the home (Muronzi, 2020). Queuing for water also exposes women to violence outside the home. Increased number of trips and distance travelled to communal boreholes expose women to risks of gendered and sexual violence. The police have issued warnings to women, encouraging them to walk in groups (Zimbabwe Republic Police, 2016). Walking in groups contradicts the advice for social distancing.

The extension of work for women extends to other household duties that are performed traditionally by women and girls. With everyone home, the amount of work in the home is increased. Women and girls are the ones who fetch water from wells, and communal boreholes for domestic use, and firewood for cooking. These communal activities make it difficult for social distancing, thereby increasing women's risk to contracting Covid-19. In cholera-hit Yemen, women and girls were more vulnerable because their household duties of preparing food, fetching water, and cleaning bathroom exposed them to the bacteria that causes the disease (UNFPA, 2017).

Care responsibilities also include looking after children, and the sick. As schools have been closed for much of the pandemic, women have been the primary caregivers for children, limiting time for other pursuits. With every school closed for in person learning, some schools were able to provide education materials for students to learn from home. Private schools have been providing materials to allow their students to continue learning from home. Home-schooling requires access to computers and the internet. Women are already doing the majority of the care work and educating children is also falling predominantly on them. Because level of education, and access to information, varies among women, some have had an easier experience

assuming the role of assisting their children with schoolwork. When schools reopened for in-person learning, they did so in stages, with those writing exams returning to school first, then secondly early childhood education learners. For middle- and upper-class women, this had a lesser impact on the care of their children as many of them employ live-in care for their children.

When schools reopened after the first lockdown, more vulnerable students were unable to return to the education system as some of the girls were either pregnant or married while for others it was lack of schools fees as their parents' income streams had been heavily affected by the pandemic lockdown. This will likely lower the long-term earning possibilities for them and their families, as well as reducing the overall human capital for the nation's economy (Guinea, 2014). Adolescent girls are particularly affected as the closure of schools increases their workload at homes, with older girls often assisting in the care of younger children. Many of those who were unable to return were girls. In Manicaland province, 415 girls in examination classes did not return to school, the majority of them due to having entered into an early marriage (Dzinamarira & Masuka, 2020).

The caregiving roles women do put them at risk for contracting Covid-19. The 2014 EVD epidemic in West Africa saw women accounting for more deaths in Liberia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone. This emanated from the fact that in homes, women took care of those who were sick from EVD disease or other illnesses. Women's care roles included feeding and washing patients and in burial rites that require handling bodies (Fawole et al., 2016). In hospitals and clinics, women were directly involved in the care of people who had been in contact with people infected with EVD. In Zimbabwe, women make up the majority of those in the nursing field and traditional birth attendance. They also tend, and look after the sick in homes including washing their clothing. It is this constant contact with people, often without protective gear, that places them at higher risk of contacting the illness.

Limited access to pandemic information

Lack of access to information also makes women more vulnerable to diseases. Throughout the world, women have lower levels of access to education, and information to access, read and act upon disaster warnings (UNDP, 2013). More women are illiterate, and when information is sent out in writing such as in print newspapers or text mobile messages, they are not able to read and understand as such miss out on warnings (Khan et al., 2017). In Zimbabwe,

the highest proportion of people who have never been to school are rural women (Zimstat, 2016). Announcements, and public addresses, and updates on the crisis by the President, the Ministries responsible for Health, and Information, as well as non-state actors have been in English. The national Covid-19 hotline is only available in three languages although the country recognises 16 official languages. For those who do understand English, poverty is a barrier to access information as impoverished people may not have access to the technology needed to access the updates on the pandemic.

Ownership of communication devices has been increasing in the country, but a large portion of the country still lacks access to these devices. In 2018, 73 percent of people lived in a home with a radio, 48 percent a television, 23 percent a computer, and 95 percent owned a cell phone or lived in a house with someone with access to one (Chingwete & Ndoma, 2020). A divide regarding ownership of communication devices has been recorded between men, urban residents; the youth and educated Zimbabweans; women, rural residents, and the elderly people who have less levels of education with the latter groups reporting lower levels of ownership (Chingwete & Ndoma, 2020). Econet Wireless, the nation's largest mobile service provider, reported in 2020 that only 52 percent of the population had smartphone and the number of people with active internet and data subscriptions declined as the year progressed (Econet, 2021). In addition to poor communication, distrust of the government was noted as a factor in people's reluctance to believe information (UNDP, 2014).

Another area with limited knowledge was vaccines. As Covid-19 vaccines became available, Zimbabweans faced a barrage of misinformation, and conspiracy theories which have been linked to vaccine hesitancy. Some religious groups were among the most affected with some popular faith leaders urging congregants to avoid vaccination. Like most countries with the majority Christian populations, women are more likely to be regular church members than their male counterparts, meaning that women were more likely to come under the influence of church leaders who doubted the efficacy of vaccines (Pew Research Centre, 2016). In May 2021, the Ministry of Health and Child Care, and UNICEF hosted a gathering with leaders from across the different religions to discuss the barriers which contribute to vaccination hesitancy wherein denominations stated their support of the vaccine strategy (UNICEF, 2021). Since this then, several religious leaders have supported vaccines, and have been urging their eligible congregants to get vaccinated.

Sexual and reproductive health

Previous crises have provided examples of the factors effecting sexual and reproductive health. For instance, during the EVD outbreak, resources for reproductive and sexual health were redirected to the emergency response, which resulted in increased maternal mortality (UNDP, 2014; Sochas et al., 2017). As a result, more people began to rely on traditional and home-made remedies for varied ailments (UNDP, 2014). With Covid-19, fear of the virus has led people to stay away from health facilities for professional care, including reproductive health care. Anticipated is higher infant and maternal mortality as well as more deaths from malaria, and other diseases (Zimfact, 2020).

In addition to fear and lockdown measures, the pandemic has lessened people's ability to seek medical attention in other ways. Due to the increased care work, it means women are unable to consult medical doctors as often as they need. Women also have less power than men, and as a result, their health needs, including sexual and reproductive health, may be unmet (UNFPA, 2020). Reduced use of health services can lead to the spread of HIV/AIDS and malaria. UNAIDS, dedicated to eradicating the disease by 2030, is already warnings nations not to be distracted from fighting AIDS as they focus on controlling Covid-19. In 2020, the agency projected that 500,000 more AIDS related deaths could take place in Africa between 2020-2021 if there was a six-month disruption in anti-retroviral therapy. In Zimbabwe, 1.2 million people are living with HIV and women are the majority of those affected, making up 60 percent of patients (UNAIDS, 2019). For people between 15 to 24 years, young women are twice as likely to be living with HIV than men in the same group (UNAIDS, 2021). Of the new infections, among them youths aged 15-19 in sub-Saharan Africa, six in seven new infections are among girls and women, and girls make up 63 percent of all new infections (UNAIDS, 2021). The majority of women and children living with HIV are receiving treatment, 93 percent and 76 percent respectively, but the number could decrease during the pandemic (UNAIDS, 2019). This is partly a result of the pandemic lockdowns that disrupted health service delivery including HIV diagnosis, and the anti-retroviral drug supply chain (UN, 2020).

Some countries have already taken steps to maintain health services by allowing patients to collect bulk packets of treatments as well as self-testing kits. Population Services International (PSI) along with its partners, attempted to supply up to 80 percent of their clients with three to six months' worth of medications, including ARVs and PrEP (Taruberekera, 2020). While

there has been a decrease in the number of infections in youths since 2010, the UN estimates that if services are disrupted for 6 months, new infections in children could rise by 78 percent (UN, 2020).

Gaps exist in providing comprehensive sexual education, limiting girls' knowledge on how to protect themselves from unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections. Fear of contracting Covid-19, and the lockdown measures, made it harder for sexual and reproductive health workers to move around educating women and girls. More so, the referral pathways for sexual and reproductive health services were largely disrupted during lockdown. Prior to lockdowns, young people could access services such as family planning and free HIV testing and they could get information on safe sex from school, but lockdowns have forced new thinking on ways to reach and engage young people. One method championed by UNFPA has been online engagement, but with limited access to the internet, particularly in rural areas, this limits the number of people who can access the services (UNFPA, 2020). In January and February 2021, a government report indicated that nearly 5,000 teenage girls became pregnant with 1,800 entering into early marriages (Mavhunga, 2021). Many of the pregnancies were recorded in impoverished neighbourhoods. While pregnant girls and mothers are allowed to continue their education after the passing of the Education Amendment Act, stigma prevents many from attending lessons.

Gender-based violence and personal security

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a social problem during normal times as well as during crisis periods. Pre-existing social norms and gender inequalities, increase violence against women and girls. Increased stress due to the financial hardships caused by the restricted movements has further contributed to the rise in the GBV. Hotlines created by service providers are reporting steep rises in calls about domestic violence. Globally, less than 40 percent of women who experience violence seek help of any kind, and less than 10 percent seek help from the police (UNWomen, 2021). Musasa Project, a social services organisation, reported that in the first 11 days of the lockdown, 764 cases of domestic violence were reported, significantly higher than the 500-600 cases reported each month before the lockdown (Sachiti, 2020). Confinement at home under increased stress levels, uncertainty, and fear, can create a stressful environment that contributes to violence against women in the home. While men are also victims of domestic violence, the majority of

victims in Zimbabwe are women while the perpetrators are men (Dziva 2018). In a study conducted by the Gender Links (2013) in Zimbabwe, one in every four women was found to be in an abusive sexual relationship, and at least one in every three women to have been repeatedly beaten or subjected to sexual abuse in her lifetime. For women who already live with abusive partners, they are now locked in homes with violent persons, separated from people and resources that can provide support. Thus, the victims have few opportunities to distance themselves from their abusers. As the crisis continues, the number of women who are victims of domestic violence is likely to grow, impacting on the wellbeing of women, their mental and physical health, as well as their ability to participate in the recovery of society and economy in the post Covid-19 world (Social Development Direct, 2020).

The increase in the domestic violence scourge is also linked to shifts in social safety nets and access to information. With lockdowns come limited access to phones and helplines, and disrupted public services like social services and police. Victims' inability to reach social services or family can fuel impunity for the perpetrators. As reported cases increase, it can overwhelm social systems, limiting their ability to adequately assist women in need (Care International, 2020; Social Development Direct, 2020). Similarly, increasing food insecurity heighten tensions in the household, resulting in increased intimate partner violence and other types of domestic violence. Some men in the informal sector feel emasculated as they are unable to fulfil their breadwinner role and lash out violently toward their spouses (Murozvi & Khosa, 2020). Economic stain and increasing insecurity make it harder for women in abusive relationships to escape as the women may be unable to care for their children without income from the abusive partner.

The additional time needed to perform tasks outside the home has also been linked to the rise in violence. Under the lockdowns, grocery stores are open for fewer hours each day, and social distancing limits the number of people who can be inside the shop at one time. Due to these restrictions, people are often queuing outside for hours waiting to enter the store and then queuing again at the till, and for transport. The overcrowding on public transport puts women at greater risk to street harassment. Women who depend on the Zimbabwe United Passenger Company (ZUPCO) transport have reported that they have been subjected to various types of sexual harassment with little means available for addressing it. Some women are afraid of reporting because they do not want to be ridiculed for reporting something viewed as a small crime. In 2019, when ZUPCO was reintroduced and harassment was reported, a police spokesperson said police are doing

their best but the congestion means that officers cannot monitor everyone (Phiri, 2019).

Girls are at risk of sexual exploitation when they are out of school. For many girls, school is a protective environment and being removed from that environment increases risk of violence. The distance that they walk to get water and firewood also puts them at risk of abuse. In Liberia, the most common type of GBV reported was child sexual assault, which was attributed to students being out of school during the EVD outbreak (Jackson-Garrett, 2016). In Sierra Leone, there was a noted rise in teenage pregnancies during the EVD epidemic. In some areas, teenage pregnancies increased by 65 percent during the EVD outbreaks (Jackson-Garrett, 2016). The pregnancies were attributed to the lower levels of return to school for girls once the epidemic was over. Pregnancies were also linked to child marriage as girls who were impregnated were sometimes sent to stay with their abusers (Plan International, 2014). This has also been the case in Zimbabwe. In January and February 2021, 5000 girls were impregnated in Zimbabwe (Mavhunga, 2021). The number of school-going girls who were impregnated is likely to increase due to the long period of time students are spending outside of school.

The plight of women was also worsened by the establishment of quarantine centres. Thousands of Zimbabweans returning from abroad are placed in quarantine centres across the country. By their nature, quarantine centres left women and girls vulnerable to coercion, exploitation and sexual violence. As noted by Jackson-Garrett (2016) during the EVD epidemic, women in quarantine centres were at greater risk of gendered attacks as they were in centres with strangers (Jackson-Garrett, 2016).

Rise in online violence

The pandemic, and subsequent lockdowns have seen increased reliance on virtual modes of communication due to the calls, such as #StayAtHome, as one way to observe social distancing and combat Covid-19. While this remains key during crisis time of Covid-19's nature, the use of technology has also increased gendered violence. While the majority of Zimbabwean women and girls are not online with great frequency, a sizeable population use the internet daily or weekly to study and work. Some reported types of cyber-violence include receiving unwanted, offensive messages via email, text or WhatsApp, and offensive advances on social media sites. For underage children, this

increases the risk of online grooming into exploitative situations (UNWomen, 2020). Another danger is video conferencing, whose use is becoming more frequent as people study and conducts work meetings. There have been rising reports of bullying and sexual harassment from people who dial into events through virtual chatrooms (UNWomen, 2020).

4. Conclusion

The study has shown the gendered nature of Covid-19 in Zimbabwe. While the global and national measures to combat Covid-19 including social distancing, quarantining and lockdowns remain key, they are reported to have exposed women and girls to vulnerabilities in the home, and public spaces. Intersecting with other vulnerabilities that subjugate women including poverty, patriarchy, religion, culture and location, the pandemic, and the subsequent measures to combat the pandemic, have compromised women's security, access to employment, social protection, sexual and reproductive health. Thus, the impacts of the Covid-19 crisis have exacerbated gender the pre-existing gender inequalities in Zimbabwean society.

The study vouches for gender-sensitive policy response that guide state and non-state actors to largely empower women, and above all mainstream gender needs in pandemic and epidemic response measures including social protection, sexual and reproductive knowledge and services. More so, there is need for empirical-gender disaggregated data generation on the impact of Covid-19 in Zimbabwe by government and non-state actors. State and non-state organisations engaged in pandemic response are also urged to largely mainstream women's needs and rights so as to continuously respond to women's inadequacies that further exacerbate their increased participation in unpaid labour, and vulnerability to GBV; restrictions in accessing social security, and other basic needs including sexual and reproductive services.

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The role of community participation in solid waste management in Zimbabwe: The case of Nyanga township

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Abstract

The study was conducted in Nyanga rural district council which has the mandate to run the affairs of Nyanga township. The research focused on the role of community participation in improving solid waste management in Nyanga township. The research was based on a descriptive survey with clusters and simple random sampling being used to come up with subjects for the study. Triangulation of data collection tools was also employed to ensure reliability and validity of the results, although aspect of literacy is a key assumption on the use of questionnaires amongst communities. Improper solid waste management is a public health disaster risk that has largely been attributed to the historical bubonic plague in the developed world as well as the recent epidemics of cholera and typhoid in Zimbabwean cities, including the study area. Involvement of NGOs and WASH Projects in Nyanga largely, led to the reduction of illegal dumpsites, with community and school health clubs having played a pivotal role in promoting responsible citizenry. It was noted that separation of waste particularly at the household level was not being done, thereby exacerbating waste generation. The enforcement of relevant legislation on solid waste management was fragmented, with Environmental Management Act being enforced partly by EMA officials mainly towards corporate, industries, and not individuals. Other relevant actors like the Ministry of Health administers, Public Health Act and urban councils Act, parallel to the EMA statutes. Nyanga Rural District Council has to come up with specific by laws on solid waste management and capacity building to



enhance sustainability of community health clubs and other community sustainable integrated solid waste management initiatives. The research focused on the role of community participation in solid waste management initiatives by individuals, community groups, or community-based organisations.

Keywords: Community participation, Sustainable Solid Waste Management, Community, Community Perception, Integrated Solid Waste Management.

1. Introduction

Community participation can be enhanced through solid waste management-sensitisation programmes giving various categories of the community the guidelines on how to participate in cleaning up the environment, (Mutuma, 1992). Municipal solid waste management (MSWM) is a multidisciplinary activity that includes administrative activities, and solid waste management practices such as the control of waste generation, storage, collection, transfer and transport, processing, and disposal of solid waste, submits, (Hirpe & Yeom, 2021). Poor and inadequate waste management decisions can affect daily health, cleanliness, and productivity, thereby affecting economic development at all levels of society (Cayumil, Khanna, Konyukhov, Burmistrov, Beisembekovich Kargin & Mukherjee, 2021). Of late, community participation has taken a significant role as a strategy in social development generally, especially in the field of human settlement (UN-Habitat, 2006). This has come about in developed and developing countries as well. Community participation means people's involvement in the identification of their felt needs, mobilisation of their resources, influencing direction, and execution of environmental programmes and projects (Nebiyu, 2020).

Through community participation in the solid waste management, the residents can significantly supplement the waste management efforts by council authorities which is already incapacitated by financial constraints (UNEP, 2021). Such a scenario holds great promise not only for meeting the basic human settlement needs but also for elaborating an active and cooperative mode of development (Saungweme, 2012).

The rapid increase in population coupled with the expansion of the industry is producing large volumes of waste, whose management demands greater infrastructure, institutional setup, and community participation (Umer, Shimelis, Ahmed, Sema, 2019). This massive generation of waste coupled with unbalanced waste management is a major challenge faced by developing countries, particularly the sub-Saharan African countries. Sub-Saharan countries are characterised by the least gross domestic product (GDP), and a large portion of their populations live below the poverty line. However, according to the recent World Bank (2021), the economic development of the majority of sub-Saharan African countries is growing at a fast rate, as well as the population growth and urbanisation in sub-Saharan African countries are increasing from time to time. As a result, the municipal solid waste management problems, such as an increasing generation rate of solid waste and open burning and dumping in sub-Saharan African countries, are found at an alarming rate (Sandra & Weghmann, 2021).

Community participation can comprise varying degrees of involvement of the local community, ranging from the contribution of cash, and labour to consultation, adaptation of behaviour, involvement in administration, management and decision-making (Ntakamulenga, 2010). To keep the service running, continuous participation of the community receiving the service, is required, for example, to store the garbage in a specific bag or bin, to bring it to an agreed point, to separate it in dry and wet waste (Jerie, 2005). Waste management should concern itself not only with final disposal of waste but also with the whole cycle of waste creation; transportation, storage, treatment, and recovery and does so to minimise pollution (Jerie & Tevera, 2014). Community involvement is the most vital integral component in the victory of any solid waste project, in assortment and design of facilities essential for sustainability, (World Bank, 2021). It is largely agreed that involving community in basic social amenities initially offered by town councils, and local authorities could be the panacea towards addressing solid waste management challenges (World Bank, 2012). These communities have embarked on composting activities, have had robust legal backing in place, and largely reduced the high prevalence of diarrheal diseases because of poor sanitation.

Improper solid waste management (SWM) is a major public health and environmental concern in the urban areas of many developing countries (Lema, Mesfun & Eshete, 2019). Nyanga township (Zimbabwe), is not spared from the myriad challenges associated with poor solid waste

management. Little research has been done on the impacts of community involvement, and participation in addressing solid waste management, in Nyanga. Therefore, Nyanga as one of the fast-growing ecotourism towns in Zimbabwe was selected as the case study of this systematic review because the author believed that Nyanga could represent the fast-expanding townships in Zimbabwe and even other developing countries in Africa. Partnership between groups in community, folks, and informal organisations such as Residents Associations (RA) and community clubs have been seen as the solution to tackle solid waste management dilemma (UN-Habitat, 2006).

Regardless of efforts made by government authorities over the past decades to attend to the predicament of waste management, many municipal authorities still have problems (Atienza, 2011). Solid waste management is an emerging and growing Safety, Health and Environmental (SHE) and financial problem in developing countries. Even with significant efforts between 2010 and 2020 to technically support town councils in terms of provision of machinery and waste collection vehicles, the majority of town councils in Zimbabwe fails to properly manage the mounting quantity of waste generated in cities and towns (Saungweme, 2012). What is evident is the requirement for a paradigm shift in the way solid waste is managed, hence, instead of a community being for mere rate payers, and pursuing the criticism agenda, there is need for them to be involved in the provision of such services. In January 2020, the President of Zimbabwe declared every first Friday of every month, a clean-up campaign day, which aids integrated solid waste management at national level.

2. Methodology

In order to solicit for the required information, the research adopted a descriptive research design. Descriptive research represents a broad category of techniques that need questioning as a strategy to elicit information (Merriam, 1998). It gives thick description of how things are, in their social context. The qualitative research method permitted the researcher to obtain data on the impacts of community participation and activities undertaken by the community. Judgmental or purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling method involving selective sampling was deliberately used to select community health club facilitators amongst community members. For the purpose of this research, cluster sampling,

and simple random sampling was adopted for use. These were generally probability types of sampling. A sample of 200 units or households were selected from the residential areas that make up the two urban wards in Nyanga township through cluster sampling, and simple random sampling.

The researcher determines the sample size by deciding the number of people to be involved in the research to ensure validity and reliability of the results obtained (Sekeran, 1992). Sample size determination, 10% of whole population under study, was chosen to represent the population. Validity and reliability of outcome representing the role of community involvement in solid waste management in Nyanga was attained.

For the purpose of this research, the researcher sought direct consent from the participants to appreciate the subjects under study, and acknowledging their constitutional rights. The consent was on the voluntary basis, meaning that an individual had the ability to choose whether to participate in the research or not. It is also imperative that the researcher avoided bias, which is an unethical practice. This was to ensure objective gathering, and reporting of the data. Appropriate research methodology, and correct reporting was also ensured as part of ethical considerations.

The researcher circulated questionnaires to chosen respondents in the sample frame. The questionnaires were hand delivered to relevant respondents to make sure that those who were selected by the researcher received them. Questionnaires contain list of questions the investigator intends to enquire from the subjects, and these had both open and closed ended questions.

An interview is a joint production of a researcher and a member. The interviewees are active participants whose feelings, cooperation, and insights are critical components of a discussion process that aims at bringing out qualitative meanings (Neuman, 2003). The interview allows probing for more explanation where information given is unclear (Chipato, 2012). Visits were done to observe accumulation of solid waste, strategies like reuse and recycling of solid waste by Community Health Clubs (CHCs). Field observations helped to validate information obtained from questionnaires and interviewees. Field observations technique was cheap compared to other techniques and unravelled other human behaviours and practices, particularly with reference to waste collection and sorting, which the general citizens do but do not yet appreciate. Focus group discussions (FGDs) are a tool for collecting qualitative data from group discussions. FGD allow for the shift in power from the researcher to the respondents as it gives room for open discussions. The FGD sessions

were difficult to assemble since the participants were busy with other socio-economic obligations. The data collected from household questionnaires, and interviews from the officials were then analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0. The views from the council officials were summarised for discussion.

3. Results and discussion

Scope of community participation in solid waste management

It was noted that 70% of the sampled households in Nyamhuka, Destiny, Bepe Park, Nyangani Park and Rochdale were females, whilst 30% were males. This could imply that females are generally closer to the environment than their male counterparts, hence interest in participating in environmental issues. Given their domestic roles, women are usually assigned to take care of their solid waste at household level, and are, therefore, more qualified to be environmental managers even at a community level than their male counterparts. Traditionally, men play technical roles, decision-making and labour-intensive menial jobs, and are unlikely to take part in such local environmental initiatives.

Age Interval	Female (%)	Male (%)	Total (%)
15-19	02	01	03
20-29	20	08	28
30-39	20	09	29
40-49	15	07	22
50-59	06	02	08
60-69	04	01	05
Above 70	03	02	05
Total	70	30	100

Table 1: Age and gender and of respondents *Source: Field Survey 2017*

Results from the sampled 200 subjects indicates a very youthful demographic distribution that has an economic active group with a low dependence ratio since 82% of the sampled population is below the age of 50. The economically active population such as the youth could be the most active people in terms of environmental issues and would, therefore, be more willing to participate in such issues. Above all, 59% of the sampled population were married, 28% were singles, 8% divorcees, whilst 5% was for widows.

Most interviewed participants were household heads, and as such, the relatively higher number of married participants could indicate that the participants were adults who could easily make informed choices once they were empowered to improve their environmental wellbeing through community participation in environmental safety and health. Besides that, 59% of the respondents indicated that they had reached secondary level of education, everyone had been at school, at least up to highest primary level. This translates to 100% literacy rate as all participants were able to read and write and they could easily appreciate the need for community participation in environmental issues that affect their life expectancy like solid waste management. Studies argue that knowledge is power, and if the community is literate on general environmental issues, it helps reduce morbidity and mortality due to poor solid waste management practices.

Gender	Marital Status				Total	Employment Status			Total
	Single	Married	Widowed	Divorced		Employed	Unemployed	Self Employed	
Male	12	42	2	4	60	18	26	16	60
Female	44	76	8	12	140	32	72	36	140
Total	56	118	10	16	200	50	98	52	200

Table 2: Cross tabulation of gender, marital and employment status of respondents*Source: Field Survey 2017*

Disparity in gender participation on solid waste management initiatives have been noted with more women participating more than their male counterparts in the five locations sampled in Nyanga. This could imply that females are generally closer to the environment than their male counterparts, hence, their interest in participating in such environmental issues. They are usually assigned to take care of their solid waste at household level and are therefore more qualified to be environmental managers even at social community level than their male counterparts. In most cases, men play a technical and decision-making role at household level since they would be the budget holders (payment of bills), hence their involvement in such community initiatives. Possibly, males are mostly involved in labour intensive menial jobs and are unlikely to take part in such local environmental initiatives including research questionnaires Table 2 indicates a very youthful demographic distribution that has an economic active group with a low dependence ratio since 82% of the sampled population is below the age of 50. The economically active population such as the youth could be the most active people in terms of environmental issues and would therefore be more willing to participate in such issues. They are the childbearing group with the responsibility of looking after children, hence their concern of environmental safety including proper solid waste management to reduce diseases epidemic. Most of the participants interviewed were households' heads and as such, the relatively higher number of married participants could indicate that the participants were adults who could easily make informed choices once they are empowered to improve their environmental wellbeing through community participation in environmental safety and health.

Waste generation, handling, collection and disposal.

Solid waste generated in Nyanga varies and differs in type and form depending on socio-economic activity practised in the residential area apart from household waste generation. Of the sampled population in Nyanga township, 37% produce plastics as waste, 20% produce organic waste of which wood sawdust makes up 8%, green waste 5% and food waste 7%. Furthermore, 16% generate paper waste, 1% generates wood waste, 26% generate all forms of waste which encompass rubber, cloth, glass and leather. Generation of (37%) plastics which comprises of food wrappers (10%), plastic bags (8%), beverage bottles (7%), and take out containers (12%) waste is worrisome because plastics are not environmentally bio degradable. However, the community can still adopt the order of waste hierarchy to sustainably manage the plastics such as reduce, reuse, recycle and recovery of waste. Moreover, 64% of the respondents do not separate waste at household level. They mix all forms of waste, including the organic and inorganic waste, thereby increasing the amount of waste generated, as well as the risk of diseases transmission and bad smell. However, 36% indicated that they separate waste at household level. This is an indication that the community health clubs established by Caritas and Nyanga Municipal Council are playing a vital role in educating the community on solid waste sorting. Above all, 46% of the sampled population resort to indiscriminate disposal of solid waste at undesignated dumpsites, thereby attracting the flies, fires and polluting the environment.

Illegal dumps were mostly found at Nyangani Park, a new housing scheme that, however, was not properly serviced in terms of road network, sewer and water, making collection of solid waste a challenge since the area is inaccessible. This was observed through transect walks to Nyangani Park, and is a typical example of bad development, and a public health threat that could actually increase the people's vulnerability to diseases. In spite of that, 2% of the households just wrap the organic waste in materials like newspapers for latter disposal. This may be an indication of unreliability of collection frequency by the municipal council, and lack of knowledge on proper solid waste storage management. Likewise, 50% of the respondents use waste receptacles they purchased for themselves. This is exacerbated by the NIMBY (not in my backyard) syndrome whereby no one wants the dumpsite in his or her backyard, but all the same want the waste removed, and dumped somewhere else (Jerie, 2006; Ray, 2008). This shows that the community has a sense of

environmental consciousness though it seems to be a mammoth task for the council to provide the receptacles to the bulging urban population. However, 32% of the respondents used receptacles provided by the municipal council. These receptacles have been donated by local non-governmental organisation (NGO), Caritas to Nyanga local municipality. The active involvement of the community in solid waste management issues is a step in the right direction insuring community citizenry and responsibility.

The Housing and Community Services Director (Nyanga Municipality) also indicated that receptacles are given to residents who pay their rates on time. The community had 8% of the respondents without receptacles. The receptacles provision is a sign that the council has been unable to provide solid waste collection facilities as enshrined in the Urban Councils Act. Additionally, 25% of the respondents indicated that they improvised mealie meal bags, sacks and cardboard boxes for waste collection and storage, and this validates the assertion by the Housing Director that council has been unable to provide waste receptacle to residents. The respondents indicated that Nyanga town council has been able to collect solid waste for at least 72% coverage on weekly basis. Odour attracts flies and rodents and this is why collection should be frequent and regular (Tchobanoglous, Theisen & Vigil, 1993; Tevera, 1991). The collection frequency could be a result of a new fleet of refuse compacter truck that was acquired by the council with the assistance by Caritas to replace an aging inefficient tractor. Collection of solid waste is negligibly very low or non-existent in low-income areas (Saungweme, 2012; Senner, 2000).

Community involvement and participation in solid waste management.

The Nyanga community participates in integrated solid waste management through various initiatives such as community, and school health clubs. Minimising solid waste generation is one of the key strategies aimed at managing solid waste using the integrated approach. In Nyangatownship, 7% of the respondents practice recycling through community-based organisations such as Kuwirirana and Mangondoza. Separation and sorting are possible at household level but coming up with a new product seems to be a challenge for many communities (Manyanhaire, 2009).

Community Participation	Nyamhuka	Bepe Park	Nyangani Park	Destiny	Rochdale	Total	Total Percentage
Reduction	37	11	13	26	09	96	48
Recycle	05	03	01	04	01	14	07
Reuse	09	05	03	07	02	26	13
Composting	28	10	08	14	04	64	32
Total	79	29	25	51	16	200	100

Table 4: Cross tabulation of community participation and spatial area.

Source: Field Survey 2017

The economic and operational costs of recycling can be solved if small to medium corporates with the capacity to incur the operational costs are roped in to create market linkages with the locals who can be tasked to do the primary tasks. However, 13% of the respondents indicated that they are involved in the reusing of solid waste both at community and household level. Of the respondents, 32% resort to composting to get manure for costing. The compost is used for gardening that further promotes nutrition amongst the households, thereby increasing their resilience and coping capacities to food shortages, now equally prevalent in urban settings (Saungweme, 2012). Landfilling provides the cheapest and most convenient method of waste disposal today when operated efficiently (Krook, Stevenson & Eklund, 2012; Morris & Barlaz, 2011). Conversely, 48% indicated that they have adopted other ways of minimising solid waste generation like burning. It implies that there is need to continuously educate the communities so that they appreciate the sustainable ways of handling solid waste like recycling and reusing that can actually turn trash to cash for survival.

The depletion of the ozone layer has been attributed to increased release of greenhouse gases like methane, which comes out of the burning solid waste. Increased greenhouse gas emissions including methane have been partly blamed for the change in climatic conditions, mostly felt in developing states due to differential coping and adaptive capacities cross the globe.

It has been discovered that, 15%, 21% and 4% of those involved in community solid waste management activities participate in community health clubs, clean-up campaigns and recycling venture respectively. Clean-up campaigns were launched by the council in partnership with Caritas and residents cascading to all wards in the small township. These are regularly done, and could be the reason for reduced illegal dumpsites in

the high-density suburbs. Community health clubs, besides raising awareness through clean-up campaigns, continuous drive behavioural change approaches through health and hygiene sessions done on regular basis. It was further noted that 40% of the respondents are involved in solid waste management initiatives at community level in different ways. Nonetheless, 60% are not in any way involved in community solid waste management initiatives. This means the partnership existing between council, residents and government departments could be bringing the much-needed change in terms of community participation.

The Community Health Clubs (CHCs) were formed to promote health and hygiene practices to reduce the high burden of diseases. Chief among the key result areas of the CHCs is Participatory Health and Hygiene Promotion (PHHP) approach that equally focuses on sustainable solid waste management strategies. The understanding of local hazards through education is also an important aspect of the framework, and this has been done at local level through PHHE sessions with the five clubs established in two wards of the five locations studied. The Housing Director also overstressed the importance of partnerships in solid waste management, and gave an example of the partnership that exists between council and Chibuku breweries on the transportation of segregated waste and recycled products for market.

Community Perceptions to solid waste management

Community Perceptions	Nyamhuka		Bepe Park		Nyangani Park		Destiny		Rochdale		Total
	O	E	O	E	O	E	O	E	O	E	
Not good	06	6.56	02	1.68	02	2.08	04	3.6	02	2.08	16
Improve environment	57	55.76	14	14.28	17	17.68	27	30.6	21	17.68	136
Costly	03	2.46	00	0.63	01	0.78	02	1.35	00	0.78	06
Scornful	02	1.64	00	0.42	00	0.52	02	0.9	00	0.52	04
Generate Income	11	12.3	04	3.15	05	3.9	07	6.45	03	3.9	30
Not Sure	03	3.28	01	0.84	01	1.04	03	1.8	00	1.04	08
Total	82		21		26		45		26		200

Table 4: Community perceptions towards recycling initiatives.

Source: Field Survey 2017.

Community Perceptions	Nyamhuka		Bepe Park		Nyangani Park		Destiny		Rochdale		Total
	O-E	(O-E) ² /E	O-E	(O-E) ² /E	O-E	(O-E) ² /E	O-E	(O-E) ² /E	O-E	(O-E) ² /E	
Not good	0.314	0.048	0.32	0.061	-0.08	0.003	0.4	0.044	-0.08	0.003	
Improve environment	1.24	0.027	-0.28	0.005	-0.68	0.03	-3.6	0.424	3.32	0.623	
Costly	0.54	0.119	-0.63	0.397	0.22	0.062	0.65	0.313	-0.78	0.608	
Scornful	0.36	0.079	-0.42	0.176	-0.52	0.270	1.1	1.344	-0.52	0.270	
Generate Income	-1.3	0.137	0.85	0.229	1.1	0.310	0.55	0.047	-0.9	0.208	
Not Sure	-0.28	0.024	0.16	0.030	-0.04	0.002	1.2	0.8	-1.04	1.082	
Total		0.434		0.898		0.677		2.972		2.794	7.775

Table 5: Chi Square test on community perceptions towards recycling initiatives. Source: Field Survey 2017.

Null Hypothesis, (H_0): There is no association between community perceptions and recycling initiatives.

Alternative Hypothesis, (H_1): There is an association between community perceptions and recycling initiatives.

$df = (r-1)(K-1)$: where r is the number of rows and k is the number of columns

$df = (5-1)(6-1)$,

$(4)(5) = 20$

$20 = 31.4$

$X^2_{cal}(7.775) < df(31.4)$, hence, acceptance of the null hypothesis, therefore there is no association between community perceptions and recycling initiatives.

The people's attitudes and perceptions towards integrated solid waste management, illustrated that 8% viewed solid waste management as a bad idea, whilst 68% opined that it improves environmental sustainability. Furthermore, 15% views that recycling initiatives can be an income-generating project. However, 3%, 2% and 4% views recycling as costly, scornful initiative and not so sure about recycling consequences respectively. Above all, 47% of the respondents concur that the poor management of solid waste can result in disease outbreaks.

Zimbabwe is vulnerable to communicable diseases outbreaks like cholera, typhoid, and other forms of diseases, and these have been

attributed to poor sanitation including solid waste. They also largely appreciate that dumpsites, besides being sources of diseases outbreaks, can affect the aesthetic value of the environment. The EHT looked at solid waste management as a public health issue that requires an all-stakeholder's approach to guarantee community wellbeing. Council, the Environmental Management Agency (EMA) and other local players, organise clean-up campaigns where awareness on solid waste management is intensified, as illustrated by 24% of the respondents appreciating the move. School children are also capable conveyers of environmental education, with 45% getting knowledge of solid waste management information from children and awareness campaigns. The Housing Director confirmed that school health clubs have been formed with support from Caritas and these have played a key role in disseminating of integrated solid waste management information through solid waste sessions, songs, and quiz questions.

Community attitudes and perceptions can adversely affect the efforts done through waste recovery. Scavenging for solid waste is a menial job that people discriminate against, either legally or illegally. Field visits done reflect that very few people from the community were seen picking and sorting waste at the dumpsite in Nyanga. Of the respondents studied, 27% argued that discrimination is a big threat towards solid waste collection. More women were seen participating much in solid waste management initiatives than their male counterparts. This implies that more awareness is needed to change community perception on solid waste picking to encourage solid waste recycling and recovery. As has been demonstrated by the Chi square test above, there is no association between community perceptions and recycling initiatives. From the data, 48% argued that the council has not been supportive in such ventures, leading to apathy; 4% confirmed that lack of motivation whereas 15% postulated that, they are yet to realise the monetary gains associated with solid waste recycling. Hence, the Nyanga council should embark on promoting the few community recycling initiatives through sourcing of market linkages for their products and marketing to enhance visibility.

Institutional frameworks governing integrated solid waste management in Nyanga

Environmental legal Instrument	Governing Ministry/ Department
Environmental Management Act Chapter 20:27	Environment, Climate and Water
Public Health Act Chapter 15:09	Ministry of Health and Child Welfare
Urban Council Act Chapter 29:15	Ministry of Local Government and National Housing
Water Act Chapter 20:22	Ministry of Water Resources
Rural District Councils Act Chapter 29:13	Ministry of Local Government and National Housing
Regional Town and Country Planning Act Chapter 29:12	Ministry Local Government and National Housing

Table 6: Environmental Legislation and Governing Institutions in Zimbabwe
Source: Primary Data 2014

It was noted that 60% admitted that they were aware of the Environmental Management Act that is administered by EMA in managing solid waste. This means that EMA has been commendably doing well in selling the legal tool that supports their operations on solid waste management. The Public Health Act is known by 15% when it comes to solid waste management, despite it being a much older act than the EMA Act. The Urban Councils Act is known by 15% that means there could be adequate legal tools to enforce integrated solid waste management regulations with community participation. What could be a sticking point might be the fragmented nature of environmental laws in terms of enforcement. An overarching legal tool to oversee the enforcement of environmental issues would be ideal. Public Health and EMA acts could be repeating issues but with different implementing institutions. The majority of the respondents argued that Environmental Management Agency has been effective to corporates in terms of compliance and have been pivotal in calling for the formation of community-based organisations to partner local authorities to manage the local hazards like solid waste. The agency makes use of the print, electronic and social media to disseminate environmental education. They have also been offensive in putting punitive measures against corporates who do not comply with requirements like waste management plans. However, this has been mainly focused on corporates who are able

to pay fines, and not individuals, hence, questioning the effectiveness of EMA in controlling poor solid waste management.

Public Health Act, though administered by the Ministry of Health and Child Care, it has been generally misunderstood with many people arguing that the Act is used in private, and public health institutions to guard the medical health of the public. This is quite contrary to the multidisciplinary nature of public health. Increased life expectancy and reduced infant mortality is only possible with participation of all players, including the community. This further justifies the notion that solid waste management is a public health issue that demands the participation of all the players to get the required results. Of the respondents 45% pointed out that legislation could be the best tool towards solving solid waste management issues. They concur with many scholars such as Manyanhaire (2009) who argue that the enforcement and implementation of appropriate coordinated legislation would go a long way in solving the problem. Enforcement has been the biggest challenge, particularly to individual offenders. However, 55% countered that legislation alone cannot be the best tool to achieve cleaner, habitable and safe towns. They argued that education and awareness campaigns could be helpful especially if the efforts are sustained over a long period so that the messages are cultured into people to gradually promote environmentally responsible citizenry, where people would be compelled to practice safe hygiene even without the punitive demands of legislation. Sustained health and hygiene promotion on solid waste was equally echoed by the EHT as an alternative way to reduce solid waste challenges as well as roping in other players through Private Public Partnerships (PPPs) that have potential.

4. Conclusion

As illustrated, 20% of the respondents from the community members highlighted that they participated in waste collection for reusing, recycling and other initiatives. Collection of waste can fetch income for club members, whilst at the same time ensures a cleaner and safer environment. An affiliation has been established between Nyanga Waste Recyclers and community health clubs to collect and sort waste for further recycling in Nyanga. It was shown that part of the CHCs are involved in waste sorting and separation for recycling. They are under the auspices of NGOs like

Caritas and CAFOD which assist in identifying and managing local sanitation risks like solid waste in small townships like Nyanga.

Household competitions and school quiz sessions were noted as bringing about the excitement to school children, and community health clubs so that the key messages on proper solid waste management issues are enjoyable and easily internalised. Progress on environmental cleanliness, and safeness were visible with a marked decline in the quantity of illegal dumpsites at household and community level. Private players like Delta, ZimParks and Nyanga Residents Association (NRA) have been supportive of initiatives meant to reduce the disaster risks associated with poor solid waste management through their involvement and participation in integrated solid waste management programmes. NGOs such as Caritas and CAFOD play a fundamental role in abetting sustainable integrated solid waste management through technical and financial support like the purchase of new fleet of refuse compactor, and being part of a Project Steering Committee running WASH matters in the township.

The paper also noted that current legal frameworks are not useful in combating solid waste management problems bedevilling the Nyanga populace. The laws on solid waste management are fragmented and there is no legal instrument that purposely deals with solid waste management at national level. EMA remains vocal to corporates, mainly being focused on reactive and passive enforcements that promote fines to offenders. Legal and institutional provisions should be reinforced to sufficiently deal with solid waste management matters. It is necessary to come up with definite solid waste management policies at national level that should be cascaded to local authorities for implementation and guidance. Nyanga Council should also come up with specific township level byelaws to govern solid waste management. The township, for instance, does not have by-laws to deal with illegal vending and that kind of a dilemma may further aggravate the efforts to organise vending, and reduce haphazard disposal of solid waste. Reinforcing the collaboration of Ministry of Health, EMA and Nyanga Municipal Council could be a mid-term resolution meant to attend to the legal and institutional shortfalls in the township. Having pieces of legislation may not be adequate but would also advocate the insistent enforcement of the appropriate legislation to create safer and healthy township. Pieces of legislation should take into consideration the importance of involving community participation in sustainable integrated solid waste management as a holistic approach to environmental problems bedevilling

Nyanga society emanating from unsustainable management of solid waste practices.

Largely, Nyanga Rural District Council has made great strides in ensuring community participation and involvement in integrated sustainable solid waste management to decrease morbidity and mortality due to diseases. Empirical evidence includes the abridged number of illegal dumps, limited littering in town, health and hygiene information shown by the society and schools. Community participation can be improved by incorporating health education on sanitation with income generating projects to sustain the community health initiatives like clubs. Community Health Clubs (CHCs) have demonstrated to be effectual in ensuring the participation and involvement of the society in solid waste management. The sustainability of the CHCs ahead of the lifespan of NGOs has been the obstruction for persistent community participation. Nyanga council should improve solid waste management enabling amenities like provision of receptacles so that the superlative theoretical practices are sustained by readily accessible hardware components.

There has to be an incorporation of hardware and software apparatus to sustain solid waste management initiatives. Market linkages should sustain the waste collection and sorting ventures so that in the long term, they are capable to recycle and sell the trash at local township level. The socio-economic, environmental and public health benefits significant from the impacts of community participation should be documented, and sold to other community members with most important human-interest stories. Societies have been involved in beneficial community initiatives but what has been missing is the documentation of benefits and good practices that can incessantly improve.

The general public has not simply treasured community participation since some citizens still consider it as the responsibility of local authorities to administer solid waste. Awareness campaigns should be fortified in all communities so that citizens welcome the collective duty of keeping Nyanga clean. Nyanga Council should support community-based organisations like Nyanga Recyclers by offering waste storage sites, exempting them from paying licenses, and sustaining them with other operational costs like transport. Scotch carts and wheelbarrows could be supplied to waste collection groups to enhance efficiency.

There is need for a paradigm shift of thoughts, and approaches of solid waste management not to be seen as a responsibility for the poor or mentally challenged citizens but everyone's obligation in the society. Waste

picking should be taken as a source of income that can be done by everyone in the community. The knowledge, attitudes and perceptions of the community can be altered through the community health clubs. The higher number of female participants in Community Health Clubs validates the assertion that women participate more in solid waste management initiatives than their male counterparts. The smaller number of males participating in solid waste management can be improved by coming up with male forums where the awareness campaigns for appropriate solid waste management can be taken where men frequent, generally in sporting gatherings, workplaces during lunch hours and in churches.

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Civil 'disobedience' and images of war: The military and police in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

Following the detection of the first Covid-19 cases in early 2020, the Zimbabwe government, like other countries, implemented response strategies to manage the unfolding pandemic. This was mostly through lockdowns, closure of borders, and promulgation of health protocols. An important component of this response framework was the outright deployment of the police force, and armed military personnel to enforce strict civil compliance with the lockdowns, curfews, business operations and health guidelines. This resulted in the heavy presence of the police, and soldiers, in public spaces to deal with civil 'disobedience'. This engagement further culminated in reports of alleged human rights violations and shrinking of the democratic space, while at the same time portraying 'images of war'. Citizens responded to the 'war' through a web of strategies that included outright defiant actions like demonstrations, unauthorised movements and unsanctioned business operations. Reports of bribery, extortion, and other corrupt acts, permeated the interface between the law enforcement agencies and the general public. What was termed 'disobedience' by law enforcement agencies in the face of the pandemic were actually survival strategies by the people in the 'new normal' period which threatened their sources of livelihoods, and freedom. Even in the face of severe restrictions, citizens 'somehow' found their way into the cities, vending positions or getting to their intended travelling destinations, and in the process playing a 'cat and mouse game' with the police and soldiers.



Keywords: lockdown, pandemic, war images, civil disobedience, survival strategies

1. Introduction

The outbreak of coronavirus in 2019 in China greatly affected communities globally, with Zimbabwe not being spared. This resulted in the World Health Organization (WHO) declaring the outbreak, a public health emergency of international concern and a global pandemic which required governments to take measures against its existential threat in early 2020 (Moyo & Phulu, 2021). The adoption of a myriad of responses by governments to the unfolding pandemic should, partly, be understood against this background. National responses demonstrated variations, with some drastic or draconian measures being implemented (*The Herald*, 18 March 2020).

The Zimbabwean government, like other governments, responded to the pandemic by taking on board the WHO guidelines to curtail the spread of the virus. These included the introduction of lockdowns, closure of borders, health measures such as wearing of face masks, sanitization and maintenance of social distance. This was buttressed by strict enforcement, and dealing with perceived civil 'disobedience'. It is the focus of this paper to express that the otherwise genuine deployment of the police, and the soldiers, into the public spaces created 'images of war' during the pandemic mostly in the form of running battles between law enforcement agencies and the civilians. The battles left many questioning the level of force with which the police, and soldiers, dealt with scenarios surrounding the enforcement of Covid-19 pandemic protocols.

The discussion illustrates that civil 'disobedience' and the involvement of the law enforcement agents resulted in the arrest or imprisonment of many people, with others sustaining bruises or serious injuries. The loud calls to stay at home, while justified, could not easily be followed by people in a country where the majority are in the informal sector, which implies the need to be out on a daily basis to work for the sustenance of their families. The necessity to earn a living even during such a health set-back resulted in people across the economic spectrum devising survival strategies which, in most cases, led to illicit transactions or confrontations with the police unfolding.

The pandemic set in a lot of contestations, including opposition political voices raising issues around human rights, and corruption, against the government, which has used lockdowns to stifle some constitutional rights.

Some attempted to use the pandemic to raise such national voices through demonstrations. The 31st July 2020 goes into memory lane with heavy presence of the police, and military personnel, manning strategic access points into [state cities/towns]. The timing of the planned demonstrations, however, ended up with organisers, and participants, being labeled violators of the Covid-19 health protocols, culminating in ugly scenes of arrests, alleged abductions and beatings. The reaction of the international community was a response to what they viewed as human rights abuses in the face of a health pandemic.

2. Theoretical framework

This paper is premised on the predation theory, with a focus on the predatory state, in its quest to explain the images of war that developed in Zimbabwe during the Covid-19 pandemic. The theory implies the capacity of predators to prey on their targets (Shumba, 2018). In the context of the current study, the state becomes the predator that preys upon its citizens (Evans, 1995). The predatory state, therefore aims at promoting the interests of dominant groups within the state, which include politicians, the army and bureaucrats or influential private groups as a way of surrounding themselves with protection against the citizens (Vahabi, 2020). Under worst circumstances, and when need arises, the predatory state uses its apparatus such as the party, the security forces and state-business relations to dominate civilians and to silence them, mostly through coercion. The end result of this “game” is that state-society relations are characterized by violence (Shumba, 2018) as the host feeds on its prey. This theory also brings to the fore how such a state ends up undermining human rights while at the same time narrowing the democratic space. The predation theory is used in this context to illuminate on the relations of the state and the civilians during the Covid-19 pandemic in Zimbabwe.

Pursuant to the enforcement of Covid-19 guidelines and compliance by citizens, the Zimbabwean government unleashed security forces into public spaces. It also silenced critical opposition voices and dissents in the process, with images of war appearing across the country.

The philosophy of civil disobedience is anchored on refusal to obey certain commands or demands of a government or occupying power with the aim of securing concessions from that government. In some contexts it is a public symbolic violation of the law rather than a rejection of the system as a whole (britanica.com/topic/civil-disobedience). It is a form of resistance characterized

by actions of the citizens such as refusing to obey laws or regulations deemed unjust but without violence (youmatter.world/en/definition/civil-disobedience-definition). According to Rawls (1971), the peaceful actions are undertaken to bring about change in those laws or policies. The concept can help shed light on the manner of reaction of the public to Zimbabwean's policy and legal pronouncements on the pandemic.

3. Covid-19 in Zimbabwe

The dawning of the Covid-19 pandemic in Zimbabwe occurred at a time when the country was ill-prepared for such a challenge. This was due to a deteriorating health infrastructure and facilities, compounded by a serious brain drain of health and other professionals in the country (Dandara, et al, 2020). The high unemployment rate, poor infrastructure, compromised water and sanitation facilities, shortage of personal protective equipment (PPEs) and a struggling economy, all posed a challenge to the level of efficiency with which the government approached the pandemic (Chitsamatanga & Malianga, 2021). Such a scenario greatly affected even the relations between the state and its civilians when it came to the implementation of major alternatives meant to flatten the Covid-19 curve, mainly the lockdowns, maintenance of social distance, curfews and the wearing of face masks. This was compounded by the highly charged political atmosphere pitting the governing and opposition parties.

On 21 March 2020 government announced the first Covid-19 positive case in the country (Maulani et al; 2020). The country also reported its first death in Harare on 22 March 2020. This was a journalist who was also a second person to have tested positive in the country (Chitsamatanga & Malianga 2021). Since then, positive cases increased partly due to new variants of the disease, non-compliance with protocols and inadequacies of the response strategies. From 22 July 2020, cases of new infections rose drastically with a 65,6% rise in a week from 1 034 to 1 734, while the cumulative figure of confirmed local cases jumped by 204,9% from 286 to 872 (Herald, 22 July 2020). As of 11 February 2021 the country had recorded 34 949 cases and 1 382 deaths (Hove; 2021). On 17 March 2020 the government declared Covid-19 a National Disaster, which facilitated the mobilization of resources and adoption of necessary measures in dealing with the pandemic (Herald; 18 March 2). A National Covid-19 Taskforce mandated to advise, lead and manage the response to the pandemic was set up (The Herald, 2 May 2020). In one of his early addresses concerning the pandemic, the President highlighted the need to limit, suspend or forego certain social,

economic or recreational activities since the pandemic called for 'a new social culture' (Herald, 23 March 2020).

The rising infections and deaths from 2020 over to 2021 necessitated the government to introduce a number of measures to contain the pandemic. Of significance is the declaration of the first 21-day 'total' lockdown which came into effect on 30 March 2020. Statutory Instrument 83 of 2020 detailed the regulations of the lockdown which included prohibition of movements or travel except for workers in essential service sectors and going to buy medicines and food, banning or limiting gatherings, shutting of most shops and businesses except supermarkets and food retailers and closure of borders (Herald, 28 March 2020). The outstanding feature of these measures was that it translated into a 'stay-at-home' order which the President indefinitely extended in May 2020 with reviews at two-week intervals (Herald, 16 May 20). Schools and tertiary institutions of education were also shut down. The raft of measures in mitigating Covid-19 encompassed the setting up of testing facilities, designated hospitals, quarantine and isolation centers, imposition of curfews, cash transfers to the vulnerable, financial assistance and mobilization of stimulus packages for supporting businesses (Price, 2020). WHO recommendations such as social-distancing, wearing of face masks in public spaces, sanitizing or frequent hand-washing were adopted. Vaccination was ratcheted up in 2021 (Sunday Mail, 25 July 2021). Noteworthy is the government's deployment of state security forces to ensure these measures were religiously followed.

4. The deployment of state security apparatus

The government deployed security agents in full force in all public spaces, including designated road points, markets and business centers. This was also done amidst what government termed a general laxity and carelessness among some citizens in their adherence to the announced protocols (VOA News, 3 January 2021). The government emphasized that the forces would curtail crowding at water points, bus termini, grinding mills, supermarkets and shopping complexes as well as curb unnecessary movements. They would ensure that people observe social distancing and proper wearing of masks, among other measures (VOA News, 3 January 2021). In a way the government intended to deal with civil 'disobedience' in the face of the pandemic. It has been argued that many of these measures have 'not been fully implemented except for lockdown,' and therefore have not adequately mitigated the impact of Covid-19 on the socio-economic livelihoods and well-being of many (Zimbabwe Peace Project, 2021).

In March 2020, President E.D. Mnangagwa emphasized 'decisive measures' and directed the National Command Element of the security arms to deploy 'as appropriate in support of civilian authority' to ensure compliance, peace, law and order (Herald, 28 March 2020). In January 2021 he couched the pandemic management discourse in war rhetoric as a 'war we will win', even reminiscing the sacrifices of the liberation struggle. He declared;

'We face a new kind of war, but a war nevertheless. We face a new enemy, but a new enemy nevertheless' (Sunday Mail, 24 January 2021).

The military commander also regarded Covid-19 pandemic as a 'public health war' which security forces joined (myzimbabwe.co.zw 29 July 2021). Vice President, Kembo Mohadi, supported the idea that security forces were to enforce compliance with strictness and toughness (VOA News, 6 January 2021). Such was the thinking of national leadership underpinning the deployment. The army was deployed to help the police in the enforcement of the lockdown on 4 April 2020, and by mid-July, the two departments were mounting joint roadblocks and holding joint patrols to ensure compliance by the public (Afrobarometer, 2020). The laws of the country allow the government to call any security institution if need arises and for the defence forces to assist the police as well as other quasi-government departments in times of emergencies (The Sunday Mail, 27 June 2021 & *all Africa*, 4 July 2021). The Defence Minister asserted that combating Covid-19 was 'strengthened' by the army's involvement as they became part of the frontline against the scourge and assisted in managing cases through the Medical Corps (The Sunday Mail, 27 June 2021). Though difficult to ascertain the number of state security officers seconded for Covid-19 duties in Zimbabwe it is hardly surprising that armed security forces were prominently deployed as the government has more soldiers and police than professional health workers (Moyo & Phulu, 2021).

The heavy deployment of the military and or police is not without precedence in Zimbabwe as they have been deployed during the *Gukurahundi* era, *Operation Chikorokoza Chapera*, August 2018 post-election violence and 2019 demonstrations, *Operation Hakudzokwi*, *Operation Murambatsvina*, *Operation Restore Legacy* and public protests since independence. Human rights violations and violence has permeated these interventions, the most disturbing of which is the reported killing of 20 000 innocent civilians in the 1983-87 *Gukurahundi* (CCJP, 1997).

5. Militarisation and images of war

The early days of the initial lockdown in Zimbabwe set the tone of the interface between the public and security forces. On the first day police mounted check points on routes to the Harare's CBD, stopping cars and turning away unauthorized pedestrians while truckloads of metropolitan and national police, wielding baton sticks and riot gear dispersed people from the usually-busy places like Copacabana terminus (Africa Research Bulletin, 2020). A policewoman moved around with a loud hailer declaring in a threatening tone:

'We don't want to see people here on the streets. We don't want to see people who have no business in town, just loitering. Everyone to their homes!' (Africa Research Bulletin, 2020)

In Bulawayo, police on horse-back and bicycles dispersed people from markets at a time when some informal traders grumbled about the short period they had to procure food to last the 21-day lockdown, considering they lived from hand to mouth and there was a shortage of money (ARB, 2020). In Zvishavane, smaller grocery shops and vegetable markets were ordered to close in spite of the operators' understanding to the contrary, leaving only bigger supermarkets and wholesalers operating (Personal Communication). Right from the start, security forces demanded total compliance without deviations, a 'no-nonsense, no-excuses' kind of approach which was still evident from second day as detailed in a monitoring report by the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum. Harare was 'calm' around the CBD while police activity was heightened around the opposition party, Movement for Democratic Change's offices in anticipation of a court judgment concerning a leadership dispute in the party (Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum Covid-19 Monitoring Report, 31 March 2020). At Glen View 3 shopping center, increased security personnel presence was notable. Grocery shops were forced to close and people forced to go indoors. In Chitungwiza/Seke, police reportedly refused residents permission to go and fetch water at a church, yet in many areas citizens struggled to access portable water. (Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Covid-19 Report, 31 March 2020). The report further notes that roadblocks were prevalent in Mutare, Marondera, Chegutu and those without exemption letters were turned away. The same occurred in Gweru where those without clearance letters were forced to disembark from buses and sent back home (Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Covid-19 Report, 31 March 2020). In Masvingo, 4 newspaper vendors were briefly arrested for violating lockdown, while across town at Aphiri and Sisk business centers police assaulted 11 people

who were drinking alcohol at bars selling clandestinely. In Zvishavane police assaulted 7 people queuing at ZB Bank with sjamboks and button sticks (Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Covid-19 Report).

Over the first two days of the lockdown, three scenarios emerged as deduced from the above report. Reports of assault by police rose from 3 to 18 within 24 hours. Most major cities became 'deserted' and the volume of traffic significantly became lower. Lastly, in high-density residential areas like Mkoba, Dangamvura and Chitungwiza some people whoever still loitered in groups disregarding the lockdown and social distancing. This general pattern across the country was experienced for the better part of lockdowns subsequently.

Throughout the first phase of the lockdown, there were allegations of the heavy-handedness of the police and army, with cases of some people having been prevented from going out to procure essential services and medicines (Obasa et al, 2020). Soldiers allegedly tortured ordinary citizens for minor transgressions in the name of enforcing Covid-19 guidelines. Between March and September 2020 plain clothes soldiers and police 'systematically used clubs to beat civilians' in the CBD and suburbs for violating curfews, failure to wear masks or maintain social distance (US Embassy Human Rights Report for Zimbabwe, 2020). A respondent claimed in an interview for this research that he witnessed a group of young men being forced to jump, do press-ups and frog-jumping and rolling on the dust by soldiers but was terrified to get closer to verify their 'crime' (Personal Communication, 12 July 2021). A security guard narrated how they would also see people being humiliated, harassed or kicked and clapped on numerous occasions during the night while at his work-post (Personal Communication, 13 July 2021). In February 2021 alone, the army contributed to 12,12% while the police to 59,66% of the human rights violations, mainly revolving around the enforcement of Covid-19 protocols (Zimbabwe Peace Project, February 2021). Such running battles between the security forces and civilians during the pandemic mirrored 'images of war'.

Though there is lack of data on how Covid-19 have impacted on cases of violence against sex workers during lockdown, there have been reports of sexual violence against them by security officers after accusing them of breaking restrictions. Gender based violence have also been reported at quarantine centers and around ports of entry (Martin & Ahlenback, 2020). A case landed in the High Court of a Karoi woman, who was assaulted and police unleashed a dog on her for violating curfew rules while she was cooking outside her home, but within her yard (VOA News, 10 April 2020). A 28 year old man also sued for compensation after his arm and leg broke while wrestling with the security forces who were forcing him to stay indoors (VOA News, 15 April 2020). In a case of high degree

of insensitivity, police arrested and detained a woman along with two very young kids at Rhodesville in Harare for not wearing masks, resulting in the issue going viral (Herald, 14 February 2021).

On 9 February 2021 an anti-riot contingent raided vendors at Chigovanyika in Chitungwiza, vandalized their stalls, destroyed farm produce and reportedly confiscated a vendor's cash and goods (Zimbabwe Peace Project Monthly Report, February 2021). About five months later they randomly threw teargas to scare away informal traders in Mbare and videos of them struggling to run away with their wares circulated (Newsday Zimbabwe, 21 July 2021). The streets and suburbs were transformed into 'feared war-zones'. So prevalent were such cases that the High Court ruled that police should not beat up people and subject them to inhuman treatment during lockdown enforcement (Herald, 14 April 2020).

6. Numbers don't lie

Apart from those frequently 'forwarded' on social and print media, 'politicization, militarization' and conceptualization of 'war images' is also illustrated by astronomical figures of arrests. About 2 000 people were arrested in the first week for defying lockdown laws across the country, while in Bulawayo many were 'rounded up and crammed into police trucks and were held' at the police station. The Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights also received individual complaints for alleged harassment by security agents (Aljazeera, 6 April 2020). By 9 April 2020 the figures of arrests had hit 3 251 resulting in the Minister of Information expressing how disheartening it was that some citizens were willing to put themselves and those around them at risk by flouting the lockdown regulations' (Herald, 10 April 2020). During the first two phases police arrested 19 317 lockdown regulation offenders between 30 March and 2 May 2020 (The Herald, 4 May 2020). More than 105 000 people were arrested between 30 March and September 2020 for alleged Covid-19 lockdown violations or alleged involvement in demonstrations across major cities, among them political activists, civil society members, journalists, trade unionists and ordinary citizens (US Embassy Report, 2020). Human rights organizations recorded 'worrying figures of human rights violations', with the Zimbabwe Human Rights Forum verifying almost 170 arrests, 160 assaults, and 10 attacks on journalists (NPRC Watch: 10th Edition, 2020).

A June 2020 report indicated that 1 312 people were arrested over a 24-hour period, mostly for violating ban on gatherings and failing to wear masks (Anadolu Agency, 5 June 2020). With about 1 000 arrested over two days for

'unnecessary movement' around 19 July 2020, critics argued that opposition and anti-government activists were being targeted in the build-up to the proposed 31 July protests (BBC News, 19 July 2020). From 28 July 2020 government intensified the deployment of the military in Harare which was followed by 'disturbing scenes of unchecked violence' against unarmed civilians as the security forces allegedly used live ammunition, with over 100 000 people being arrested over a span of four months (Maulani et al, 2020). Around 20 November 2020 the police said that, thus far the cumulative 'Covid-19 arrests' had hit 224 037, complaining that people were no longer valuing the wearing of masks and other protocols. They announced 'intensified patrols, surveillance and checks' (Xinhuanet, 20 November 2020).

The levels of defiance picked up around the festive season, late 2020 and early 2021. This may be due to citizens being used to crowded gatherings, celebrations and pronounced movements during that period. Parties and New Year celebrations were held in Mbare suburb in Harare and in many venues across the capital, which attracted thousands of revelers. Some of the organizers of the gatherings were later taken to court or into detention and 52 other people arrested for 'openly defying' the restrictions. Across the nation 2 321 were arrested on New Year's Day, including 200 teenagers crammed at a house party in Westgate (The Guardian, 5 January 2021). The arrests were spread throughout the country such that by early July 2021, of the cumulative 800 000 arrests since March 2020, Harare accounted for 236 000, Bulawayo 121 168, Manicaland 98 379, Masvingo 71 263, Mashonaland East 73 861, Mashonaland Central 56 218, Midlands 38 644 and Matebeleland North 16 123 for offences related to liquor sales, business operating hours, unnecessary movements, gatherings and not wearing masks (VOA News, 12 July 2021).

Numerous statements by police or government officials emphasized that the arrests were due to outright disobedience or complacency, in response to which they issued threats, intensified deployments, accused citizens of a regime change agenda and increased fines. This view does not take cognizance of socio-economic realities. The analysis by Dr. Norman Matara of Zimbabwe Association of Doctors for Human Rights appreciates the centrality of survival strategies as shaping the response of citizens to Covid-19 regulations. He argued that although people were arrested for breaching regulations, on the ground, most of them had genuine cases. He asserted that people travel because they want to earn a living since about 95% of the people are self-employed, hence will always be travelling and looking for food or jobs among other necessities (The World, 21 July 2020). Yet the police and the state termed this 'unnecessary movements' and hence the arrests.

To a greater extent, what authorities deemed willful non-compliance is actually a struggle for survival by citizens. It is this (mis-)conception that partly explains government's prioritization of heavy policing. In comparison to 105 000 people arrested, only 101 375 tested for coronavirus as of 19 July 2020 indicating that 'the regime has deployed at least equal, if not more, resources to arrest and intimidate citizens than to fund the public healthcare system' (GardaWorld, 1 August 2020).

7. Covid-19 and Political Activism

On 13 May 2020, youths from the main opposition political formation, Movement for Democratic Change-Alliance, held a flash demonstration in Warren Park suburb of Harare to protest against corruption, poverty, economic malaise, the state's failure to provide care and social safety nets to the vulnerable during lockdown (Mawere, 2020 & Ndhlovu, 2020). Following this, three female participants and leaders in the protest, namely Joana Mamombe (a Member of Parliament), Cecilia Chimбири and Netsai Marova were reportedly arrested and taken into police custody for breaking Covid-19 regulations. The case generated serious controversy and debate locally and internationally when police later denied having taken them into custody (The Herald, 14 May 2020) and they could not be located until after about two days in Bindura, kilometers away from Harare. The women alleged being dumped there after having been abducted by suspected state security agents followed by intense physical, emotional and sexual abuse. In their interviews from hospital beds they claimed that their abductors beat them with sticks or gun, commanded them to sing, chant slogans, drink each other's urine as well as sexually abusing them (The Guardian, 17 May 2020).

Ndhlovu (2020) opines that the protest was 'misconstrued as anti-government.' From the standpoint of authorities, it translated into 'disobedience' and opposition seeking to tarnish the government. It amplified that the country was indeed at "war", as their widely circulated video images show them struggling to walk, heavily bandaged, crying and detained in hospital under heavy guard. Social media went into an overdrive while embassies of the United States and European Union commented on the trio's case giving it further prominence (Herald, 16 May 2020). A state-owned newspaper editorial commented on the name of the place they were found, stressing: '*Muchapondwa*' Shopping Centre which translates to 'You are going to be murdered' (Herald, 16 May 2020). The state later charged and remanded the trio at a hospital where they were admitted for disregarding Covid-19 laws during the demonstration, faking their abduction and

tarnishing the country's image (Mawere, 2020 & Herald, 27 May 2020). Even Political Actors Dialogue members met the President about 'the very crucial issue' of alleged abductions which they wanted thoroughly investigated (Herald, 28 May 2020). The government denied being involved in the alleged abductions and produced a video purporting to prove the opposition and the trio's 'fake' narratives (facebook.com/zanupfparty/videos/fake-abductions-unmasked-877057786429104). Their case dragged on and on at the courts.

The case fits into the narrative of civil 'disobedience' in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic. By accusing them of faking abductions to tarnish the country's reputation and interests, the state was intimating that they had 'declared war'. The trio's case generated intense debate and culminated in a 'war of words' pitting the ruling party and the opposition, and by extension, politicization of the Covid-19 pandemic and the human rights perspective setting in.

8. Images of war amplified: 31 July 2020 protests and 'digital discourses'

The Covid-19 pandemic had cases of violations of the mitigating guidelines being dealt with by the country's security forces. Some cases assumed political undertones. At the end, scenes witnessed on the ground reflected more 'images of war'. In July 2020 Jacob Ngaruvhume, leader of opposition Transform Zimbabwe, made an announcement galvanizing support in preparation for a demonstration against corruption which was to be held on the 31st July. This came in the aftermath of earlier reports of widespread corruption scandals exposed by investigative award-winning journalist, Hopewell Chin'ono. Among others, he accused government of corruptly awarding a US\$60 million tender to Drax International Company to supply coronavirus requirements without going to tender and charging highly inflated prices (ZPP, July 2020 Report, Kademaunga & Saki, 2020).

The stunning revelations by Chin'ono triggered 'physical, verbal and online war,' with the public, civil society, opposition politicians, independent media and the international community on one hand while generating hostile reaction from the government, ruling party and their agents on the other. What followed was an escalation of this 'contest'. An 'online anti-corruption protest' which morphed into a 'protest movement', featuring radical collaborative efforts among civic voices, Zimbabwe National Students Union, Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions, the church, progressive media and political activists who mobilized support for the planned 31 July demonstrations took center-stage. Much of the mobilization

was done on social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp, culminating in the *#31July* and *#ZimbabweanLivesMatter* campaigns (Kademaunga & Saki, 2020).

Faced by such intended 'politically motivated' Covid-19 protocols violations, the government and its agents, intensified their repressive approach against perceived 'disobedience' as fronted by these organizers and supporters. Although the government eventually arrested (and later fired) the Minister of Health, the Drax company representative and some officials and cancelled the tenders following revelations, the 'war' was not over. On 20 July Ngaruvhume and Chin'ono were arrested for 'inciting violence' and were forced to stay in remand prison for an extended period (Moyo & Phulu, 2021). The two in particular, along with others, became the 'faces of civil disobedience' according to the state but could be viewed as 'faces of the struggles of the citizens' amidst corruption, lack of accountability, economic challenges and the debilitating impact of Covid-19. As if to buttress the images of war Chin'ono videotaped and streamed live his arrest on Facebook enabling people to see it online, as security agents besieged his house and caused some damage without a search warrant (VOA News, 12 July 2020). Other prominent personalities linked to the planned demonstrations alleged that they faced harassment, abductions and intimidation or arrests of their family members (ZPP, July 2020 Report).

By the end of July the state's paranoia had reached 'unprecedented levels' in their dealing with offenders, which saw 'dozens' arrested, 'hundreds' brutalized and security agents deployed across the entire country (ZPP, July 2020 Report). Judging by statistics July marked the peak of state's violence on its citizens, with the army and police accounting for 80,66% of human rights violations distributed as 48 cases of unlawful detention, 68 of assault, 168 of harassment and intimidation as well as alleged 15 cases of abduction and torture (ZPP, July 2020 Report).

The verbal dimension of the 'war' remained present from the cornered government. As if to set citizens against each other the ruling party's spokesperson, Chinamasa, 'unambiguously' encouraged people to defend themselves (against the 31 July protesters) by 'any means' at their disposal' (ZPP, July 2020 Report). The Home Affairs Minister, declared that the 'reckless demonstrations' of 31 July were banned and was quoted saying; 'anyone who disregards this warning and proceeds to join the planned insurrection to steal power will be met by the full wrath of the law' (ZPP, July 2020 Report). The President himself described protest supporters as 'bad apples' who were to be 'flushed out' (Amnesty International, 2020). He announced that security departments would 'appropriately respond to

[the] shenanigans' of 'these malcontents' who had a 'divisive and ruinous plan' (Burke & Chingono, 2020).

Few days before 31 July, police published a list of 14 'wanted persons', mainly government critics like trade unionist Peter Mutasa, opposition Member of Parliament Job Sikhala and former ruling party youth executives whom they wanted the public to assist in locating and arresting. These were primarily the organizers, opposition members and prominent supporters of the protests. The list took the battle to another level as many reportedly went into hiding and the atmosphere became tense. As if to prepare for 'war' there emerged reports that a ruling party Member of Parliament was allegedly training youths for retaliation against protestors in Harare South. (ZPP, July 2020 Report). On the eve of the planned protests suspected secret police raided the home of an online journalist, Mduduzi Mathuthu in his absence and arrested 3 of his relatives, with one of these, Tawanda Mucheiwa, later found on 2 August severely tortured and dumped (ZPP, July 2020 & Amnesty International, 2020). They reported that they were pressured to reveal the whereabouts of Mathuthu. Similar to the 'MDC trio's scenario, Mucheiwa's video images from a hospital showing him struggling to narrate his ordeal invoked images of war. From 30-31 July police and soldiers, armed to teeth, were strategically and menacingly deployed at street corners, intersections and junctions to crush the Covid-19 violators through the planned demonstrations. Furthermore, videos were widely circulated showing soldiers beating people, bundling them into trucks, haranguing motorists as well as assaulting shoppers and vendors in places like Gazaland in the capital (ZPP, July 2020 & AI 2020). By the end of 31 July, over 60 people were either arrested, brutalized or bundled into vehicles for attempting to demonstrate, including an internationally-acclaimed author, Tsvitsi Dangarembwa, main opposition party spokesperson, Fadzai Mahere, student Panashe Sivindani and disability issues activist, Henry Chivhanga (ZPP, July 2020). Some ordinary citizens were arrested and later bailed during this period for 'public nuisance', 'intention to incite public violence' and Covid-19 transgressions (Amnesty International, 2020).

Although they failed to attract a massive turnout, primarily due to the government's intimidation the 31 July protests, in particular, and many events since the beginning of the first lockdown in March in general, placed the unfolding 'war' between the citizens and state security forces on the international radar. This was mainly as result of the questionable timing of the events, which occurred at a time when the world in general and the country in particular was grappling with the Covid-19 pandemic. The government was accused of hiding behind the pandemic in dealing with opposition forces (United States Institute of Peace, 24 June 2020). The government also politicized the protests equating them to an

insurrection and resorted to its often-used rhetoric of this being sponsored by external forces. Its long-standing 'war-like' political contest with the opposition, Movement for Democratic Change, loomed large in this 'Covid-19 war'.

9. 'Internationalisation of the war'

As events unfolded in Zimbabwe following civil 'disobedience' and the government's response through brute force, this attracted the attention of the international community over human rights abuses. A report claimed that the excessive use of force and crackdowns on protestors during the Covid-19 lockdown resulted in the death of at least 10 people (Amnesty International Zimbabwe 2020 Report). Three men were reported to have sued the police for injuries sustained from beatings by the security forces (AfroBarometer, 2020). Such developments and the suppression of the *#ZimbabweLivesMatter* campaign attracted scrutiny by the regional and international community. International celebrities like Ice Cube also spoke out against the human rights violations, while the Director of Amnesty International for Southern Africa characterized the scenario as a 'witch-hunt' and 'blatant abuse of the criminal justice system' (Jobson, 2020). In the aftermath of the crackdown of the July protests, South Africa's ruling party sent a high-powered delegation to assist Zimbabwe in crafting solutions to the unfolding economic and political crisis. In August 2020 South Africa's President appointed two special envoys to Zimbabwe with a similar mission while the African Union Chairperson also expressed deep concern over the use of excessive force by officers enforcing Covid-19 regulations (Human Rights Watch World Report 2021). On 24 July 2020 The United Nations High Commission for Human Rights further commented on allegations of suppression of rights to freedom of peaceful assembly, expression and association under the pretext of lockdown restrictions, including dispersing and arresting of health professionals protesting poor conditions of service (UN News, 24 July 2020). Similar concerns were issued at different times by embassies of the European Union, United Kingdom and United States of America (Human Rights Watch, 2021). Locally, Zimbabwe Human Rights Association had also raised alarm over police crackdown during the Covid-19 induced lockdown (Obasa et al, 2020).

The Paris-based Reporters, Sens Frontières, a press freedom organization, considered the arrests of journalists during the lockdown as the 'largest total press freedom violations' in sub-Saharan Africa (Rivers & Ndhlovu, 2020). The combination of online video footage, shrinking of the democratic space, heavy-handedness of officers enforcing Covid-19 guidelines and a

sustained social and print media campaign resulted in Zimbabwe's 'war' being placed on the international arena, attracting heavy criticism

10. Covid-19 and misinterpretation of the law

In some instances, the police displayed either over-zealousness or misinterpretation of the Covid-19 regulations in their dealing with civilians, resulting in heavy losses on the part of the latter. More often police exhibited outright heavy-handedness and insensitivity. A case in point is the confiscation of 3 tonnes of vegetables and fruits in an early morning raid of Sakubva Market Place in Mutare on 3 April 2020 for disregarding lockdown rules. The officers and council officials ambushed about 300 farmers who had brought tomatoes, cabbages, lemons and green vegetables from all over Manicaland Province to supply 'hundreds of vendors'. The farmers fled from the police, who then loaded the confiscated farm produce into trucks and burnt them, triggering a 'public outcry' (The Herald, 3 April 2020; Manica Post, 10 April 2020 &, 3 Kubvumbi 2020).

A government spokesperson claimed that the President had exempted farmers from initial lockdown but that had not been implemented by police (news.trust.org/item, 8 April 2020). Vendors' Initiative for Social and Economic Transformation condemned the burning the farm produce which was meant to alleviate the plight of the poor. The anomaly was straightened up after the President issued an order directing security arms to ensure that food supply chains remained functional and for agricultural activities to proceed without disturbances throughout the lockdown. They were to allow farmers to deliver produce to markets after it was also noted that they had misinterpreted certain regulations (ZimLive.com, 3 April 2020). Government even pledged monetary compensation for the 'unfortunate' incident (Herald, 8 April 2020). Nevertheless, the wide circulation of images of the burning in the presence of heavily armed officers underlined that the poor were victims of security forces brutality even in circumstances to pursue economic survival which was not deliberate disobedience of government orders. The images generated in such scenarios would make one equate this to war situations.

11. Survival strategies in the 'New Normal'

The pandemic set in a 'new normal' by way of stringent measures, which either banned or restricted peoples' socio-economic and political activities and rights.

In order to continue earning a living during the challenging times of the pandemic, people in different economic domains devised their own survival strategies. This, however, was not easy in view of the high level of repression alluded to earlier. In so many cases running battles with the security forces became the order of the day as people tried to make ends meet. In the transport sector Government banned commuter omnibuses and pirate taxis as a way to alleviate the spread of the virus. It directed those who wanted to continue in the transport business to join the Zimbabwe United Passenger Company (ZUPCO) franchise urban transport system (The Sunday Mail, 27 June 2021). This would put many out of business considering that the majority did not have operating documents while many buses would not pass the fitness tests to be done before their resumption of operations. Thus many of the omnibuses, cargo trucks, pirate taxis (*mushikashika*) and private vehicles continued to operate by hook or crook despite threats of arrests, fines or vehicle impounding (Herald, 28 April 2021 & 3 June 2020 & Nyathi, 2021). To beat the system some '*mushikashikas*' removed vehicle number plates to disguise themselves or used 'side routes' that avoided police road blocks. They would even dump passengers few hundred metres before a roadblock or where diversion was not possible or start operations very early before setting up of checkpoints (Herald, 26 May 2020). In another cases the illegal kombi operators adopted a confrontational route, a case in point being their barricading and attacking ZUPCO buses or barring them from loading in Bulawayo (sundaynews.co.zw 30 July 2021). Payment of bribes to security officers to facilitate passage became widespread during lockdown (Personal Communication). Citizens had to 'buy' the cooperation of security forces at roadblocks and borders, thereby making lockdown implementation difficult (Matthew et al, 2020). Reports of officers accepting bribery and abusing their power to extort permeated the media (Herald, 16 May 2020).

Regular commuters, including street vendors, employees, small business operators as well as long-distance travelers had to devise strategies to ameliorate the lockdown and feed their families. Covid-19 mitigation strategies translated more into executive orders without the input of people or communities affected, leading to resistance and even politicization. Most people would wear masks for fear of the police and military rather than their own safety (Matthew et al, 2020). The communities also devised codes for alerting each other when security officers approach and they 'would scatter in different directions' (Matthew et al, 2020). Resilience and courage have been the hallmarks of navigating the lockdown restrictions. John Kwaramba, a vendor selling mobile phone accessories, persistently boarded buses into town although not an exempted essential service

provider. He risked arrests and fines but had no other option to survive (Al Jazeera, 2021).

Since the beginning of lockdowns, there have been accusations against soldiers and police officers pressuring people to pay bribes to avoid arrests or be allowed to travel. In May 2020 police spokesperson urged citizens to refuse to pay officers demanding payments to be allowed to travel whether exempted or not (Herald, 4 May 2020). One commentator declared '*unobhadhara 5USD pa roadblock worovapasi*', meaning one had to corruptly pay USD\$5 to quickly go past a roadblock (Herald, 26 May 2020). In places like Zvishavane and Masvingo, liquor retailers, vendors and illegal foreign currency dealers were also pressured to pay money to operate or be allowed to travel to major cities for orders or for any other errands for which one could not secure a clearance letter (Personal Communication). By February 2021 police were taking advantage of government increase of fines to a maximum of ZW\$5 000 as penalty on defaulters to abuse people without travel letters or masks during intensified patrols (ZPP, February 2021). Vendors complained about the police behavior after the extension of the lockdown in July 2021. A second-hand clothes vendor, Lucia Mtetwa said;

I only see corruption increasing because of these letters because everyone wants to go somewhere, with exemption letters or not. This gives police an advantage. They will start demanding bribes as they were doing last time during Lockdown (The Zimbabwean, 17 July 2021).

At one point, there was an outcry when a pregnant Chitungwiza woman was allegedly forced to pay a bribe to get past a roadblock when she was in labour, while some 106 maternal deaths from March to June 2020 were attributed to movement restrictions which hindered women to access services (Amnesty International, 2020).

Those selling liquor also faced operational restrictions such as closure of bars, bottle stores and beer-halls or shortened opening times for off-the-premises consumption and serving fully vaccinated clients for the better part of the long lockdown. Many bars and shops in the townships continued to sell beer through the back-door with communication and coordination being done through WhatsApp. A number of houses turned into shabeens and liquor distribution centers (Matthew et al, 2020). Some soldiers would reportedly demand free beer or cash for an operator to sell well into the night but with music playing at low volume and front doors locked (Personal Communication). By mid-2021 it was noted that some were defiantly opening beer-halls and night clubs despite bans (*all Africa*, 4 July 2021). The President expressly warned defiant beer drinkers in January 2021 to desist from the culture (Sunday Mail, 24 January 2021).

Some methods to navigate lockdowns were included 'illegal technological innovativeness'. According to Matthew et al (2020) citizens used information communication technology to expose corruption but also manufactured 'fake exemption letters' and coordinated ways of circumventing lockdown rules relating to the sale of liquor and church gatherings, among others. This included the use of WhatsApp group platforms to communicate by those selling from homes or beer-halls secretly or smuggling bodies and merchandise at the borders. Those deploying ICT to manufacture 'fake exemption letters' sold them to people from non-essential service category at as much as USD\$50 to enable them to go into town or travel (Matthew et al, 2020). In one extreme case, there was a not-so-easy to authenticate story of a Harare woman from Kuwadzana who resorted to black magic bees to prevent security agents enforce lockdown measures (Matthew et al, 2020). Reports are similarly abound of 'fake Covid-19 free certificates and fake sanitizers' sold in cities as well as kombis with 'fake ZUPCO' stickers'. A bar-coding system was later devised to eliminate fake Covid-19 certificates (Sunday Mail, 14 February 2021).

Government designated universities, polytechnics, colleges and other institutions as quarantine and isolation centres, particularly for returning citizens and deportees in an effort to slow down the spread of coronavirus. From 1 April to 19 August 2020, 15 776 Zimbabweans returned from other countries with over 1 457 quarantined (OCHA, 2020). However, citizens protested the poor and crowded conditions at such centres and were unwilling to stay for the entire duration of their quarantine while some even escaped, giving government logistical nightmares. Police had to pursue those who had escaped. A July 2020 report stated that 276 fled, 30 of whom were arrested and taken to court for exposing others including their families to the virus (bbc.com/news/world-africa-53462259). During the initial phases, returnees from the UK complained publicly about the appalling conditions and shanty facilities at their Belvedere Teachers College quarantine centre, including the absence of running water. One actually wrote to a publication exposing the inhospitable conditions and thus exposing the government in the process (University News, 6 May 2020). This forced Minister of Social Welfare to visit the centre for assessment (Herald, 22 April 2020).

Challenges like poor management, lack of operational guidelines, lax safety measures, poor conditions and food shortages pushed some people to escape, or government releasing them from quarantine before the scheduled time (ZPP, April 2021). Government was forced to react by enhancing security to stop people from escaping while police would work in liaison with traditional leaders to report the escapees. Some returnees claimed not to have identity documents on admission which made tracing difficult once they escaped (Herald,

28 May, 2021). Others bribed police to escape from the holding institutions (Personal Communication). Cabinet had ordered that travel or identity documents be collected until the end of the quarantine period and that names of those absconding be published. In addition traditional leaders were trained on the dangers of accommodating escapees without reporting them (Herald, 3 & 10 June 2020).

A number of studies have noted an increase in smuggling of goods and illegal entry along the country's borders. These activities were a response to the closure of borders and the restrictions on the repatriation of bodies of the dead. Using the case study of Honde Valley in Manicaland, Mwatara (2021) highlighted an increase in smuggling as people tried to make ends meet amid restrictions while local residents continued to cross the border as they had done in the past. Smuggling syndicates bringing merchandise and dead bodies arranged illegal entries into the country, often aided by corrupt police and soldiers, along borders with Mozambique, Botswana and South Africa, posing threats to efforts to contain coronavirus (Matthew et al, 2020). Second hand clothes vendors were in an 'emphatic second coming' to 'earn a living' in Harare by end of June 2020 (Sunday Mail, 28 June 2020). This points to smuggling as the source. At Spillway and Dulivhadzimu illegal crossing points smugglers avoided quarantine and police arrested as much as 30 people at those points during the lockdown period. (Herald, 14 September 2020). Government was forced to consider procurement of drones and related technical equipment to patrol borders effectively. During lockdown, second hand clothes vendors were in 'an emphatic second coming' which pointed to smuggling and survival strategies by the vendors (Sunday Mail, 28 June 2020). Smuggling of bales of second hand clothes was also reported through the Mt Selinda border post, a situation which was brought to an end when government fired warning shots against the perpetrators (Mangiza & Chakawa, 2021). All these were survival strategies by the public who viewed the lockdown as a hindrance.

Negotiating the Covid-19 induced restrictions was, however, not been an easy undertaking for the ordinary citizen and informal worker. Practicing social distancing at crowded queues at supermarkets for subsidized meal-mealie emerged one such challenge (Personal Communication). Many people ended up engaging in persistent 'cat and mouse' battles with the police who at times disregarded the reasons why people were thronging the town centres. People queued for farm produce at market places under the watch of the police and military (Al Jazeera, 6 April 2020). Yet some vendors resorted to taking wares to neighbourhoods in the face of tight security and transport controls (Al Jazeera, 6 April 2020). Similar scenarios of alleged 'diabolic treatment' of the ordinary people

by security forces were observed in areas such as Nyanga, including assaults, harassment of elderly women, soliciting for sexual favours from women to be allowed to sell their wares or travel (Nyahunda et al, 2021).

12. Conclusion

With regards to the deployment of police and soldiers, Zimbabwe seems to fit into the pattern of over 60 countries profiled by the Amnesty International (2020) where it concluded, *inter alia*, that law enforcement often played a far too prominent role in what otherwise should have been fundamentally health matters. The security officers became far more visible in public spaces in the implementation of Covid-19 mitigation measures than health professionals doing mass testing, screening and educating. The country gravitated more towards the 'hard lockdown' and a militarized route with unnecessary use of force to clamp down on non-compliance and as counter-action against political critics, human rights campaigners, ordinary citizens and women. The so-called disobedience by government and security personnel was to a greater extent an attempt to negotiate processes, laws and actions that had put the citizens' daily survival activities on the rope. This was mainly experienced in the informal economic pursuits, resulting in civil liberties under serious threat. This could also be attributed to the inadequate, if not, outright lack of social safety nets for the people, culminating in citizens making confrontations with soldiers in an endeavour to survive. Indeed it is undisputable that it is difficult for people to stay at home when there is need to look for food (Samutereko, 2020). This pushed many people to disregard movement restrictions thereby picking conflicts with the law enforcement agents. At the end of the day, there has been a loud cry from the government in relation to civil "disobedience" at a time when people were called upon to stay at home for safety. Although there are variations in terms of levels of compliance, there are certain patterns that emerged which point to a militarization, politicization and creation of images of war in Zimbabwe's Covid-19 response framework and its implementation as has been revealed in this study.

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[Youmatter.world/en/definition/civil-disobedience-definition](https://youmatter.world/en/definition/civil-disobedience-definition)

Benice Farai Nkomo and Owen Mangiza

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ZimLive.com 3 April 2020 'Mhangagwa Rebukes Police for Seizing & Burning Farm Produce'

Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum *Covid Monitoring Report*, 31 March 2020

Zimbabwe Peace Project Reports: July 2020, February 2021, April 2021

About the Journal

The Dyke is a refereed journal that publishes original articles from the fields of Social Sciences, Business Sciences, Humanities and Education.

Submission information

<https://thedyke.msu.ac.zw>

Notes to Authors

Format and organisation

Types of manuscripts

Original research articles from the empirical investigation, high-quality review articles, case studies, expository essays and first-hand experiences in the fields of social sciences, arts, humanities and commerce may be considered. Short communication or preliminary results of important research and news items may be submitted.

Manuscripts should normally be 6000-8000 words including references and appendices. Book reviews, preliminary results of important research, and news items should not normally exceed 1000 words.

Reviews

Submitted articles shall be independently reviewed by three expert reviewers. Authors bear sole responsibility for the factual accuracy of their articles.

Article structure

The title should be bolded and centred. It should be short, concise, accurate and informative bearing the name(s) of the author(s), affiliation(s) and e-mail address. The abstract should be one paragraph of not more than 300 words. At least four keywords that describe the subject matter of the article should accompany the abstract.



The following structure will normally be preferred with clear heading denoting:

Introduction (Including literature review) - State the objectives of the work and provide an adequate background and a review of the literature. Authors are expected to confine this section to the title and objectives of the paper and avoid the inclusion of irrelevant information.

Materials & Methods (Methodology) – This section should be as detailed as possible.

Results & Discussions: The results should be clear and concise. Sub-headings are encouraged in this section.

Conclusion & Recommendations -Main conclusions and recommendations of the study should be presented in a short section that stands alone.

References-Provide a detailed list of the literature cited in the text. Ensure that all references cited in the text are listed in the references section and that any reference not cited in the text should not be listed. Use the APA style of referencing.

English (British) e.g. /-ise/ instead of /-ize/

NB: Use Arial Font Size 12, Spacing 1.5