

MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY



FACULTY OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

**PARTICIPATION OF ZIMBABWEAN YOUTHS IN ELECTORAL PROCESSES: A CASE OF HARARE CENTRAL
CONSTITUENCY 2008 TO 2013"**

A RESEARCH PROJECT

BY

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**SUBMITTED TO MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF
THE BACHELOR OF ARTS HONOURS DEGREE IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES**

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NOVEMBER 2016

APPROVAL FORM

The undersigned certify that they have read and recommended to Midlands State University for acceptance of the dissertation entitled “Youth Participation in Electoral Processes : A case of Harare Central Constituency, 2008 to 2013” submitted by Vimbayi Chikowore R131891M in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Bachelor of Arts Honors Degree in Development Studies.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my beloved mother Mrs. E Chikowore and my father Mr J Chikowore for all the love and support through my educational journey and showed me love, care and prosperity, for giving me strength to carry on and above all the lord almighty for seeing me through the four years.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to register my indebtedness to a number of people for their contributions without which the study would not have been completed. I would like to express my immense gratitude to my dedicated supervisor Ms T Mkuhlani for her inexorable guidance throughout the entire study period. Indeed without her academic excellence and diligence the study might not have seen the light of the day. Her dedication to her work and commitment gave me the urge to keep going on. I would like to thank her for her patience. I am extremely grateful to the chairperson. Dr J. Matunhu and all my lecturers in the department especially Mr R Sillah for their time, guidance and various contributions directly or indirectly during my study time at Midlands State University

Great acknowledgement to my family; always urged me to keep on going, and are always there for me. Special thanks go to my mother for her priceless assistance throughout the most difficult times of this study, love you. Uncle Bryn thanks a lot for chipping in with finance when the going got tough. To the Midzi, Chademana, Chikowore and Tomu families, I would like to say you are stars indeed keep on shining. I am proud of you. My brother Trinity, thank you very much for all the technical support. May the good Lord greatly reward you. I would also like to express my gratitude to my friends Susan, Munashe, Takudzwa, and Tatenda for the sleepless nights and all the emotional support.

I further extend my gratitude to my fellow workmates and the management at the Ministry of Women Affairs Gender and Community Development for the contributions made in making this dissertation a reality and for always opening their arms for me to work with them.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the personnel at Midlands State University library for their patience and assistance. Most importantly, my honor goes to the Lord my Creator and Provider for making everything possible.

ABSTRACT

Contemporary global trends show a growing international anxiety for youth empowerment. Since independence Zimbabwe has incessantly experienced a decline in youth electoral participation. In Zimbabwe, youths represent 67 % of the country's population; according to the new constitution youth fall in between the ages of 16 and 35 years. Compared to older citizens, youth especially females have increasingly preferred to stay away from participating in electoral processes and their participation from legal framework crafting to the pre electoral period, the actual electoral period and the post electoral period has been considerably low. The period between the years 2008 to 2013 brought its own challenges ranging from economic, social and political factors which have negative impact on youth participation in electoral processes. The participation of youth in electoral processes has become a major concern in the political development of many countries in the developing world. Participation of youth is declining fast and much needs to be done to ensure youth participation in the electoral processes. Be that as it may, this study seeks to examine the participation of youth in electoral processes in a bid help come up with solutions to this problem.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

In this study, the terms listed below are defined as follows:

- Youth- Any person in the 18 to 35 years age cohort.
- Participation- A process through which every member of a community is involved in and influences decisions that are related to every development activity that affects them.
- Youth Participation- is the active engagement of youth in community activities that affect them
- Electoral processes- the process from looking for candidates to be elected into public office ,campaigning, voter education, voter registration to the taking and counting of votes

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CSOs: Civil Society Organisations

COTRAD: Community Tolerance Reconciliation and Development

GOZ: Government of Zimbabwe

HIV/AIDS: Human Immune Virus / Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

MDC: Movement for Democratic Change

MDGs: Millennium Development Goals

MSU: Midlands State University

NGO: Non Governmental Organisation

UNDP: United Nations Development Programme

YETT: Youth Empowerment and Transformation Trust

ZANU-PF: Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front

ZYC: Zimbabwe Youth Council

ZESN: Zimbabwe Electoral Support Network

ZEC: Zimbabwe Electoral Commission

1.0 CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION

Youth play a vital role in the development of every country. It has however been controversial and a different story in Zimbabwe as the youth have not been participating in electoral processes as highlighted by the 2008-2013 harmonised elections. Elections mark the highest level of decision making in a country thus postulating that the Zimbabwean youth have not been fully involved in the decision making processes of the nation. In most African countries 35 is the upper age range of youth, the constitution of Zimbabwe identify youth as people between 15 and 35 years of age. For the purposes of this study, the 18-35 age-groups will be used to define youth. There is need for young people to be at the forefront in ensuring the attainment of democratic institutions that are accountable to its citizens as supported by Community Tolerance Reconciliation and Development (2008). True democracy is only achieved when a country exercises free and fair elections. Democratic values can come to life through active participation by young people thereby creating way for overcoming dictatorial rule. Youth centred organisations are emerging in Zimbabwe, and they are driven by the fact that youth have not been playing their role in political development. This indicates that youth are not participating in electoral processes when compared to the older citizens and this brings out a reason for one to worry and raise a lot of questions. The electoral process does not comprise the election date or period only but it entails the legal framework, the pre- electoral period, the election period and post election period. Youth must participate throughout the above mentioned stages hence, a youth- friendly legal framework is crucial so as to enable participation of youth in electoral processes.

It is a leading primary principle that all citizens participate in electoral processes so that fundamentals of democracy including representativeness and accountability are protected. Everyone with the right to vote must vote in order to take part in decision making processes. According to the 2012 Census report, the youth in Zimbabwe constitute 67% of the population. However, most of the youth are not engaging in voting and their political participation is lukewarm Mahaja (2014). According to Ndebele and Billing(2009),engaging with young people to promote their participation in decision making in Zimbabwe is problematic, over the past 30 years, youths have periodically been recruited into quasi- military groups or ‘youth wings’ of political parties often to perpetrate politically motivated acts of violence.

Nefarious politicians have also gone on to drug these youth and coercing them to perpetrate gruesome acts of violence against real and perceived antagonists and rivals of these politicians. Most youths in the country are also enforced into military camps such as Boarder Gezi Training Centre giving them a different on how they view the politics of their country. There is a need for the young generation to ensure that there is attainment of democratic institutions this is according to COTRAD (2008)

Both formal and informal engagement can be understood as political participation, and both are beneficial for a vivid and resilient democracy and should be supported. There is strong evidence that the participation of young people in formal, institutional political processes is relatively low when compared to older citizens across the globe. This challenges the representativeness of the political system and leads to the disenfranchisement of young people. During the 2008 elections most districts in the country were affected by violence. Public and state actors perceive any form of institution linked to youth as serving political agendas. It is from this background that youth

find it difficult for them to significantly participate in processes of democracy, governance and development work. It is also difficult for Voluntary Organisations to support youth participation.

Participation is a general democratic right; the right to vote should be exercised and enjoyed without discrimination. Chingore (2007) postulates that everyone must have the right to free and equal access to participation as well as the effective opportunity to participate in electoral processes without any form of discrimination. Participation is a fundamental democratic right and should be an end to the removal of existing barriers to youth participation in politics. If youth perceive that formal political processes are not accessible or attractive for the youth, this can shape lifetime attitudes characterized by a potentially long-lasting negative impact on the political culture of a country. Research has found out that in new and emerging democracies youth inclusion in formal politics is significant from the start. Through youth's active contributions democracy can come to life thereby paving way for the overcoming of dictatorial rule. In countries where youth led protests have forced authoritarian regimes from power, significant frustration is likely to arise if youth are not included in new formal decision-making procedures. This might have a destabilizing effect on democratization.

1.1 Background to the Study

Elections are of great importance in the day to day running of a country's governance. Zimbabwe however has had a bad and poor reputation when it comes to participation of citizens in election. In 2008 there was a massive report against the corrupt of the electoral system this is according to the Zimbabwe Election Support Network this was in reference to 2008 elections which were characterized by political violence and social unrest.

The country has also been accused of suppression of other political parties this is according to the Youth Alliance for Democracy (2013). In most developing countries including Zimbabwe youth have been left out in formal political participation and mostly engaged in informal politics. Most Zimbabwean youths have participated in campaigns and protests which mean they have been informally participating in the politics of their country instead of participating formally through voting clearly proving that voter’s education has not been attracting the young people in the country. In Zimbabwe, the youth fall between 16 and 35 years of age. Statistically the youth comprise the biggest percentage of Zimbabwe’s population and one would expect them to be at the forefront of participation in any political decisions that affect the country. However, despite their high numbers, the past experience indicates that the level of youth participation in the country’s political processes has been dismal.

The programme, entitled “Zimbabwe Anti-Voter Apathy Project was targeting to youths from areas from Domboshava, Budiro and Glen View in 2013 just as a way to improve youth participation. Civil societies have took it as an issue of concern that they urge youths to participate in elections because of late they haven’t been active and involved with issues to do with the governance of the country.

Figure 1: Comparison of youth voter registration between African countries

Country	Year	Age Range	Per cent of Registered Voters
South Africa	2009	18 to 25	16.50%

Zambia	2011	18 to 24	20.61%
Kenya	2013	18 to 25	16.86%
Zimbabwe	2013	18 to 25	4.51%

The registration of young people in Zimbabwe is not only well below 2012 Census estimates; it is significantly lower than registration rates in other African countries for recent elections (see figure 2). Registration of young voters (under 25) is more than 10 per cent less in Zimbabwe than comparable countries. Even with immigration to other countries, the figure for youths' registrants is still significantly low as compared to other countries where voter registration is also not compulsory.

Elections are important to representative democracy as they serve as the instrument with which to implement accepted sovereignty. According to UNDP (2013), youth constitute about two fifths of the global voting population and it is sad that their participation in electoral processes is poor, apathetic and disengaged.

Globally, youth participation is minimal during elections. In the European Union countries voter turnout has been decreasing with time. The poor turnout is more severe if one pays particular concentration on the youth population. More than two-thirds of voters in the age cohort 18 to 24 did not vote; this is according to the post European Election 2004 survey. Youth participated at a rate of 33% whilst the overall European average was 46%. The rate of participation of voters aged 18 – 24 even decreased to 29% in 2009 results (ibid).

The low numbers of youth voting in the European Parliamentary elections in Western Europe or in the local elections in Central and Eastern Europe, the decline in youth membership in political parties, youth organisations and trade unions in North-West or South-East Europe in comparison with fifteen to twenty years ago show signs of accumulating challenges in the sphere of political participation of youth. Forbrig (2005) cited that the problems are often interpreted as “youth disenfranchisement” according to Adsett (2003), “decline of social capital” (Putnam 2000), social vulnerability Tivadar & Mrvar (2002), young people’s de-politisation as postulated by Vrcan(2002) “marginalisation” according to Svyrenko(2001), and “anomie” Adnanes(2000).

A current report on political engagement of the youth in UK prepared by the Hansard Society reveals that 24% of the 18-24 year-old cohort is interested in political issues. With regards to the Annual Democracy Forum 2013 the survey highlights a general misunderstanding among this age group about current politics and the work of the Parliament.

Africa presents a worrying scenario, about 65% of the total population of Africa is below 35 years and over 35% are between ages of 15 and 35 (African Union Commission). A study by Afro Barometer (2011) on the political participation of Youth in Africa is consistent with results from other regions of the world; it confirms that regardless of their overwhelming numerical significance in Africa’s electoral districts, youth in Africa vote less than youth in other regions; their levels of affiliation to political parties are also lower. At the moment, as Africa faces an increasing “youth bulge” that is excessively burdened by unemployment and underemployment, capturing the votes of this significant demographic group is becoming more vital than ever as posited by the Annual Democracy Forum (2013).

In Zimbabwe the registration of young people is not only well below the 2012 Census estimates. However, it is much lower than registration rates in other countries in African for recent elections. Registration of youth under the age of 25 years is over 10% less in Zimbabwe than in comparable countries. Even with youth migrating to other countries, the number for registered youths is low as compared to other African countries where voter registration is not compulsory.

In most developing countries, including Zimbabwe youth have been left out in formal political participation and mostly engaged in informal politics. Through activism, campaigns and protests youth have informally participated in politics. According to the Constitution of Zimbabwe the youth fall between 15 and 35 years of age. Statistically the youth comprise the biggest percentage of Zimbabwe's population, that is 8,692,541 (ZIMSTAT 2013) and are expected to be at the forefront of participation in any political decisions affecting the nation. On the contrary, despite their high demographic numbers, past experience in electoral processes show that the level of youth participation is miserable.

According to Zimstat (2012) the total ratio of youths registered as voters (18-30) in Harare Central Constituency is a dismal 17% of all 40,000 Harare Central Constituency voters; this is disturbing considering the ratio of youths in general to the total population which lies at 67%.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

67% of the Zimbabwean populace is the young generation, the youth. As have been highlighted by the table above only 4, 51 % of the young people who are supposed to vote are registered to vote contrary to the older citizens taking the other 96+/- of the voters roll. This indicates that the

voter's education in Zimbabwe has been largely attracting older citizens than the youth. Only 18 % of the youth according to the 2008 records of the elections participated.

Despite youth constituting 67% of the voting population in Zimbabwe, young people participate less in electoral processes compared to older citizens. Youth electoral participation has been low as depicted by the 18% that voted during the 2008 harmonized elections. Voter education has been attracting adults mostly as can be observed in the low participation in the 2008 and 2013 harmonized elections. The failure to grant the right to vote to the youth have led to the poor representation of young people in key decision making of the politics of their country, automatically young people have faced discrimination in running of the day to day governance, meaning that their rights have been suppressed and there is an element of dictatorial rule as they have nothing to say.

1.3 Research Objectives

The objectives of the study were:

- ❖ To critically analyze the participation of youth in electoral processes in Harare
- ❖ To identify challenges and problems which hinder participation of youths in elections, using Harare Central District as a case study
- ❖ To determine the prospects of youth electoral participation .

1.4 Research Questions

- ❖ What prevents effective, meaningful and free electoral participation of youth in Harare Central District?
- ❖ What is the importance of youth participation in electoral processes?
- ❖ What are the characteristics of meaningful and effective youth political participation?
- ❖ What should be done to promote meaningful youth participation in Harare Central District?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This research is of great importance to communities in Harare and the country at large as it aims at unearthing reasons behind low youth electoral participation. The study is a revelation to the importance of young people to participate in processes of decision making. It also seeks to motivate electoral participation which is one of the chief principles of democracy. To improve the country's political development through fresh ideas from youth that facilitates political development of the country is also encouraged in the study. The research seeks to educate the youth on the importance of their vote as this has a strong impact on their participation in decision making processes, hence politicians will not be answerable or accountable to the youth as citizens of the Zimbabwe. In short, this study seeks to uphold the principles of democracy; accountability, responsiveness and participation of all citizens.

Elections are the core of a democratic government. If the active population participate more in democratic decision making processes, decision making happen to be more representative and

hence acceptable. It is of great importance that we are able to identify those that are not participating in the electoral process; if we seek to understand what discourages them we can be able to know areas that need attention so as to improve participation.

1.6 Conceptual Framework

According to UNESCO (2009) youth is best understood as a period of transition from dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence and awareness of our interdependence as members of a community it is a more fluid category than a fixed age group. But however, age is the easiest way to define this group. The new constitution of Zimbabwe defines a youth as any person between the ages of 15 to 35 years. However, in this study youth will be classified as anyone between the ages of 18 to 35 years, this is because 18 is the age which one is suitable and in the right condition to vote and participate in electoral process.

Youth participation is plainly referred to as youth involvement. According to the National Commission on Resources for youth in the United States (1975) Youth participation is the involvement of youth in responsible, challenging action that meets genuine needs, with opportunities for planning and/or decision-making affecting others in an activity whose impact or consequence is extended to others; outside or beyond the youth participants themselves. Provision for critical reflection on the participatory activity and the opportunity for group effort toward a common goal are other desirable features of youth participation.

Active participation makes young people become empowered to play a vital role in their own development as well as in that of their communities. Effective and meaningful youth political

participation has one of the following attributes. First, it can be consultative, where young people's voices are heard in an adult-assigned consultation process, where they have capacities, a mandate and information to fully perform their roles, or through a youth-led advocacy initiative. Second, it can entail youth-led participation, where young people have a direct impact on decision-making within their own youth communities, such as through youth-led NGOs, student councils, youth parliaments with competencies and budgets, etc. Third, it can involve youth collaborative participation, where young people effectively take part in regular political decision making processes, including as voters, or as members of parliament, political parties or advocacy groups. This is according to UNDP (2013).

Electoral processes are the procedural and regulatory frameworks through which elections are undertaken. They provide details on the conduct of delimitation of boundaries, voter registration, voter education, nomination of candidates, media coverage, accreditation of observers, conflict management, polling, postal voting, counting of votes and tabulation of results. In short, they explain how elections are actually conducted. One has to be firmly grounded in electoral processes in order to identify unfolding electoral malpractices. ZESN (2008)

These are methods by which voters make a decision between options often in an election or a referendum process. It is also a formal decision making process by which a population chooses an individual to hold a particular office or position. An electoral process refers to much more than the actual voting day, however, this process encompasses the entire electoral cycle.

This study is going to examine the participation of youth in the electoral processes in Goromonzi South Constituency, Mashonaland East Province Zimbabwe. Major focus will be put on the

challenges faced by youth which hinder their participation in electoral processes as well as to determine the prospects of youth participation on the political development of the country.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

Democracy is a complex concept centred on ensuring freedom for all citizens within a nation. According to Meier (2001), there are four theories of democracy which include Protective democratic theory, Pluralist democratic theory, developmental democratic theory and participatory democratic theory. For the purposes of this study the participatory democratic theory was used. Participatory democracy emerged in the 1960s and focuses on retooling government to encourage more citizen involvement. At this time student activism was common and issues such as the Vietnam War and civil rights provided an avenue for engagement. Advocates for participatory government believe that non-governmental agencies such as corporations have too much control over the welfare of their employees. The main idea of this theory is to provide more involvement and control over all governmental laws and non-governmental rules pertaining to citizens Meier (2001). Democracy or rule by the people is an egalitarian form of government in which all citizens of a nation determine public policy, laws, and actions of their state together. Democracy entails that all citizens have equal opportunity to express their opinion. In practice, democracy is the extent to which a given system approximates this ideal and a given political system is referred to as a democracy if it allows a certain approximation to ideal democracy. Participation is a basic democratic right; the right to vote must be exercised and enjoyed without discrimination.

1.8 Delineation of the Study (scope of the study)

This research focused on Harare Central District which is under Harare Province of Zimbabwe. According to the 2012 National Census Harare has a population of 1 542 813. Until 1999 the economy of the area was flourishing and many of the local residents were employed on local commercial farms that were growing flowers and vegetables in greenhouses for export to Europe. These commercial farms are no longer operational due to the land reform policy which drove white born Zimbabweans off commercial farms. Local unemployment is now standing at 80% according to Surveyor General, Zimbabwe. Traditional families are now basing their livelihoods on subsistence farming methods growing corn, pumpkins and other crops that depend on rainfall. The study will look at the barriers that limit youth participation in electoral processes in Harare.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Youth Participation in Electoral Processes in Zimbabwe

This research seeks to bring to light causes and reasons why the majority of youth in Zimbabwe do not participate in decision making processes particularly electoral processes and the significance and the impact of their participation. The researcher will also bring to light what the Zimbabwean government has done in trying to influence youth participation, it will also point out possible solutions or measure which can be used in trying to promote the youth in electoral processes. This chapter will try to identify previous researchers and to review books and writings of researchers who studied on the same field of electoral participation of youth in Zimbabwe with reference to other international actors and one is also including the girl child as a youth.

Today's world marks two different types of youth that is, those from the developed world and the other group from the developing world. Those from the developed world are facing an unprecedented demographic trend, though they are a small group which will be forced to support the older generation socially and economically in the few years to come. However on the other side there is the youth from the developing world who have increasingly come up to make up the majority of the population, yet they are still politically marginalised and disempowered and economically abandoned by the municipal society. In this research one would note that in the Zimbabwean scenario, though the youth occupy the majority position socially they are however the most vulnerable group. In the international arena the young generation group has been facing problems of drug and human trafficking, use of child soldiers, especially in the developing world they are being affected by both child labour and high unemployment rates mainly triggered by

climate change this is according to current research on climate change. This debate claims that youth today are being largely affected by two unique global issues which are globalisation and global warming. It is also of fundamental mind for one to also note that the young generation has also been affected by an interconnected world transformed by technology advancement, though this advancement has not been of full impact worldwide as most developing countries are still lagging behind technologically.

In Western democracies, researches on youth electoral participation have shown that the youth are detached from political participation. According to Milan (2005) young people in Canada are most likely to vote for the reason that they are excluded from the political process and they lack the ability and motivation to be involved. Also, Levin and Lopez (2002) noted a considerable decrease in youth electoral participation among young Americans. Nevertheless, Bristow (2004) noted that attempting to defy youth apathy implies recognising it as a problem, find out why it is a problem and also that immediate solutions are not the most suitable ways in addressing the problem.

According to Breytenbach (1996) without participation there is no democracy postulating that the vote alone is not an indicator of democracy, preferable course would be the creation of institutions for public participation. In addition Tohbi (2013) feels that youth should largely participate in the whole electoral process. An electoral process in this view means the complete electoral cycle involving the legal framework, electoral reviews and every reform.

In response to the why part of the research, opportunities for youth to engage in governance and participate in political and decision-making processes depend largely on the political, socioeconomic, and cultural contexts where social norms in many parts of the world result in multiple forms of discrimination against young women and this is according to the UN article on youth participation and decision making, in line with this view one can also note that most Zimbabwean women have been suppressed due to the patriarchal nature of its societies. It is also important for one to note that the Zimbabwean youth have been facing certain problems such as poverty, barriers to education, multiple forms of discrimination and limited employment prospects and opportunities, these are largely credited for the reasons why most Zimbabwean youths have been lagging behind in the running of the day to day running of the country's politics. Mkwanzani (2013) noted that unemployment has been another major factor influencing poor participation of youth as they have been migrating to other countries in search of greener pastures says the MDC-T Youth Assembly Secretary General. Efforts should also be made to focus on the most vulnerable of young people, including via specific actions targeting young women UN article on Youth, Political participation and decision making. The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (2008) asserted that consequences for youth nonparticipation can be serious, as the feeling of disempowerment and isolation can leave youth susceptible to delinquency and radicalism. Schmidt et al (2006) claims that youth must not only participate only in the voting process but the youth being involved in every major social, economic or political structural development that is involving them in decision making processes.

In Zimbabwe youth are not given a platform to participate because of the perception that they do not have the know-how to actively participate in the governance of the country. This view is valid considering the continuous control of major political parties in Zimbabwe by old leaders. Chikwari (2012) avers that in Zimbabwe, a nation where the largest population is below forty years elects a majority of people above sixty years to power; citizens below the age of fifty years are considered as political kids that is why most young adults and youth do not participate in political processes, he concluded that the older citizens should consider the fact that the only way towards effective development can happen if and only they make way for younger people to have monopoly over political development activities.

The initial approach measures youth participation in the institutional forms of political participation, what Bennett (2007) referred to as 'dutiful citizenship'. In theory, this approach conceives the idea of political individuality as either consenting to state authority or struggling against state authority as postulated by Bang (2005). The theory assumes that youth can be socialized to develop traditional devotions to particular institutions like political parties and democratic processes like elections. Investigations in this tradition also assess youth participation in volunteering and attachment in civic organizations according to Putnam (1995) Hugo Lopez et.al. (2006), in addition to their sympathy in political institutions as well as processes with a major focus on literacy and civic education as speculated by Torney-Purta et.al. (2001).

It is very uncommon in Zimbabwe to find in formal political leadership positions citizens of 35 years and below. In a third of countries, eligibility for the national parliament starts at 25 years or higher and it is common practice to refer to politicians as 'young' if they are below 35-40 years

of age. The Zimbabwean youths make up the majority of the population but they still feel politically disempowered and economically abandoned. The youth are not being adequately represented in formal political institutions and processes such as Parliaments, political parties, elections, and public administrations. The situation is even more difficult for both young women as well as women at mid-level and decision-making/leadership positions.

One can also note that there is a positive and negative impact of youth participation on electoral processes. The negative impact falls under poor participation and the positive under good accountable and transparency youth participation. If the youth participate we see the fall of authoritarian regimes and countries' political trajectories may shift, guaranteed basic human rights are recognized and enforced, youths are active and meaningful in their societies, we see the evolution of democratic practices, meaningful youth participation and leadership, young people have opportunities capacities and benefits from an enabling environment. Due to effective participation there is also greater trust between the youth and institutions this enables greater capacity for development, youth in this case can engage in peace building, leading in non-violent revolutions and using new technologies to mobilize societies to bring about change.

Nevertheless, African youth and in this case Zimbabwean youth have been less involved in the aftermath of such crucial engagements. Perception of exclusion is resulting in the youth seeking alternative ways to express their dissatisfaction. When frustration reaches high levels, especially in transitional and fragile states, youth may turn to civil disobedience and violence as being exemplified by the current situation of Zimbabwean youth engaging in protests against the government (Tajamuka #thisflag). Therefore, the inclusion of youth in political processes is

crucial to longer-term stability and peace. This largely highlights that it is of great importance to educate the youth on the importance of participation before they feel like they are being suppressed.

In trying to curb in the impact of youth participation in electoral process, one can note that though the Zimbabwean government has not been generally successful it has been trying. These have been highlighted by the promotion of civil societies which help in improving youth participation such as the Zimbabwe Electoral Support Network, the Youth Forum and the Mass Public Opinion Institute . Harare youth and registered voter, Victor Matanda said democratic polls will bring jobs to the youths. Opportunities for the participation of youth in the public sphere and politics in particular emerge to be more frequent now than in the previous years.

It is a fallacy for one to credit the Zimbabwean government's efforts as perfect in trying to promote youth participation in electoral processes. Many factors act as a barrier towards youth participation in Zimbabwe, despite the fact that much has been done to encourage the involvement of youth. Many challenges have influenced the low participation of youth in political decision making processes. One of the reasons of poor Zimbabwean politics is that the youth are not motivated and impressed about participating in the political arena, their focus is on what they themselves are engaged in and how the government of the country is being managed. However, this cause holds no water seeing the dissatisfaction shown by the young people in response to cases of reservation and murder cases. Given the opportunity youth of modern day

Zimbabwe can be game changers in political issues because they are very much aware of the problems Zimbabwe is facing.

It is common among the African youth that they lack public involvement and interest in the political arena. This is valid as the youth occupy fewer posts in politics of the country. Due to problems such as poverty, unemployment, poor education and simply the ignorance as a culture of African youth, they will continuously become less active in in the political development of their countries.

From observations, it is true for one to note that that youth in Zimbabwe are reluctant in participating in political and electoral processes. Youth want change but they are lacking action probably motivation hope is all they have, this is so because of the fact that they see themselves as victims of political exclusion. There are a lot of protests towards youth inclusion, youth participation and youth voter registration but taking a look at the existing political situation in the country, there has not been a great deal of change. According to Chikwari (2012), Zimbabwe is in desperate need of several young leaders who exemplify diligence, liveliness, enthusiasm and integrity as it is evident that the country has not achieved much developmental progress since independence. Be that as it may, the rate of development would have been absolutely poles apart if a number of young leaders had led the process.

Zimbabwean youth have diverted their focus towards negative contributions to electoral processes; youth have become less active to violence that has typified previous elections in

Zimbabwe this is according to Sokwanele (2011). It is the struggle of the Youth Forum that participation of youth in previous elections has been miserably low and very negative. According to a study commissioned by ZESN in 2010 only 18% of current voters' roll can be classified as youth 18 to 30 years. This number is shocking especially considering that Zimbabwe is commonly viewed as a youthful population with 67% of the country's population under the age of 35 years according to 2012 Census.

Below is a table with source from the Gender Audit of the June 2013 Voters' Roll which indicates how registration rates of both men and women increase with age. The table reveals the poor participation of young adults in electoral processes in Zimbabwe

Figure: Men and Women by Age group

Age groups	18-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65+	Total
Registration rate of men	8%	23%	62%	118%	142%	166%	149%	137%	125%	116%	150%	94%
Registration rate of women	8%	18%	47%	98%	124%	153%	118%	132%	123%	121%	158%	98%

Source: Gender Audit of June 2013 Voter's Roll

According to Okolo (2000) cited by Odion (2012) the electoral system of any country play an important role in maintaining and molding citizen's political behavior. Odion (2012) believes that the way in which an election is conducted in a given country determines the level of political culture and participation not forgetting good governance in that country. Differing electoral systems is enough evidence to show that researches that have been carried out in other countries cannot be used to give details of the disengagement of youth in politics in Harare Central thus the need to discover the political behavior of youth in Harare in line with the Zimbabwean electoral system.

Current experience in most Southern African countries indicates that political apathy and low levels of civic involvement remains a leading feature among youth. Anecdotal facts seem to show that participation of youth in political processes is declining. This is reflected in the low proportion of newly eligible voters who register and/or cast their ballot, and the widespread attitude among political elites that young people do not have sufficient political knowledge to be included in national planning and decision making processes Mavhika (2014). Many youth are less likely to vote so their interests are also less likely to be embodied. Opting out of the democratic process indicates the cynicism that youth feel about politics and the people involved in politics EISA and SADC Youth Movement (2005)

Youth Forum Zimbabwe (2013) contend that in order to drive the country into a proper democracy there is great need to engage additional people in elections and much focus must be put on the marginalized groups of society that including youths, women, the disabled indicating that young people among other groups do not completely participate in electoral processes. Be that as it may, this study intends to focus on the youth so as to bring out a better understanding concerning why there has been poor participation.

2.1 Overview of Political Situation of youth internationally

Internationally however, just like the Zimbabwean situation only a few would claim that these opportunities have led to extensive and effective youth participation in politics. Regardless of the significance in democracy of the explorations and by scholars in the Western nations concerning participation of youth in electoral processes, the reasons to youth detachment from politics in Europe for example are differs from those in Africa. However, little research has been done in Africa's case so there is need to reveal the challenges faced by youth and find the reasons why there is low participation of youth in nearly all African countries as far as political development is concerned. According to Forbrig (2005), many grieve over a vivid turn down in the political involvement of younger generations; diminishing levels of youth participation in elections, political parties and traditional social organisations are seen to provide ample evidence of this. In Africa lack of public involvement and lack of interest in politics is famous among young people. The youth are living at the limits of the social order and they are choosing to disengage in politics. This is true because the youth are occupying fewer posts in the political arena, due to a

number of reasons they are continuously becoming less concerned about the political development of their respective countries.

The youth constituency in Africa is too large to remain on the margins of the democratic process. EMBs must engage in multifaceted programmes and start thinking more creatively about how to bring youth on board. Specifically, EMBs need to start taking a more proactive approach to engaging with youth as voters, electoral candidates and electoral managers. This, in turn, requires EMBs to engage more effectively with key partners on youth-related issues. Two actors of particular importance are political parties and civil society organizations. Political parties remain a significant barrier to youth participation in decision-making structures through their control over the submission of the lists of electoral candidates. EMBs should therefore consider facilitating interparty dialogue to foster broader agreements on the need for the advancement of youth as electoral contestants.

Furthermore, by working with youth-led or youth-focused civil society groups, EMBs are more likely to achieve their goals when it comes to promoting youth as voters. EMBs also need to look at their own internal structures and policies to promote youth participation in the management of electoral processes. Regional organizations and networks can provide a good platform for promoting the work carried out by EMBs in this field. Building on existing platforms of exchange, EMBs should be given the space to share experiences and explore new and innovative ways of engaging younger cohorts. Through the documentation of these exchanges and the development of resources, the results may serve as an important source of inspiration for other EMBs in Africa and beyond.

Several governments and community sectors have been currently working towards increasing the participation of youth in decision-making through dignified youth participation Okwechime (2015). For further clarification, electoral process registration of voters, identification of the parties to be voted for, voting, and declaration of the correct results which have not been interfered with. This process serves as the foundation and bedrock of all civil societies. There is the role of management bodies (EMB) which have been working towards the promotion of youth participation in electoral processes. The tasks of an EMB include determining voter eligibility; receiving and validating the nomination of electoral contestants (including political parties and candidates); conducting the actual polling; and counting and tabulating the votes.

In addition, EMBs may also engage in activities related to voter registration, civic and voter education, and dispute resolution. In this context, EMBs have either a formal or an informal mandate to promote youth participation (International IDEA 2014a).

Literature has it all that education is strongly related to political engagement and scholars supports this notion saying that Individuals who have more educational attainment vote more. According to Niemi et al (1996) educational attainment to some extent may be a substitute for social status, personal motivation and ability. However, some studies find that education in fact boosts participation. Niemi and Junn (2005) supports this notion saying that, schools can improve informed voting through courses and programs. Bachner (2010) posits that civic and government classes also increase knowledge. Such courses have important positive effects on voting especially after graduation. Thomas & McFarland (2010) participation in extracurricular

activities in high school excluding sporting is positively related to voting. Every state has civic standards; most states have course or testing requirements. According to Lopez et al (2009) state laws concerning civic education differ but there is no evidence that variations in state laws affect student knowledge and behavior.

It is the youths who have the responsibility and right to mold their future that they will inherit and the standard of life they will experience. The truth is that the participation and place of youth participation in political processes cannot be undermined or over emphasized. For democracy to be functional and stable the youth must be part of the shaping process. Having grown up in a time of transformation related to the increased use of information and communications technologies, young people bring new visions and ideas to the political sphere. They are, therefore, key democratic stakeholders, a sentiment expressed in the African Youth Charter: 'Africa's greatest resource is its youthful population and through their active and full participation, Africans can surmount the difficulties that lie ahead' (African Union Commission 2006: 1). The majority of research on official processes has been carried out in the United Kingdom and there is an extensive amount of proof that there is youth participation in the community as well as non-governmental sectors according to Cavet & Sloper, (2004)). Even as youth participation has been entrenched in the review performances of local, devolved as well as national U.K governments, there is a trend of conflating adult led and youth led participation. Tisdall and Davis (2004) note that there is little proof on the types or quality of decisions made or informed by youth. However, in different situations research on the impact of participation of youth in decision making discover that it advance youth's social inclusion along with citizenship plus program or service efficacy as suggested by Kirby et.al. (2003).

CHAPTER 3 : RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the methodology used by the researcher for data collection. According to (Peter and Cathy ,2000) methodology is a detailed research method which is applied to collect data as well as general principle on which the collection and analysis of data is based. According to Waltz and Bausell (1981), research is a systematic process Questionnaires, observations, interviews and desk research were used in this used to solve or gather new information about a certain study. This chapter will show how these methods were thoroughly used in the research process.

3.1 Research Methodology

The researcher mainly used qualitative research. Qualitative research is the major form of research of the social sciences. Creswell (2008) defines qualitative researcher as process where the researcher physically visits the site within the study for evidence that answers to the research questions. It is descriptive and non-numerical information. According to Charmaz (1995) notes that it is highly contextual; collected in a natural real life setting, goes beyond giving a mere snapshot or cross-section of events showing how and why things happen. Qualitative research goes deeper into issues of interest to solve the problem at hand. It is the most appropriate technique in case of this study as it aims at getting the lived experiences of the local community in Harare. It is more explanatory and hypothesis generating. The qualitative method will allow the researcher to get at the inner experience of participants, to discover rather than to test.

Qualitative methods pay attention to finer details. The research topic needed a real payment of attention to detail and not just give numerical values and statistics which do not give specific importance to the lived experiences of the people as well as that there is no room for generalization as different people have different experiences . Qualitative research provided an approach which reflects and pays attention to the lived experiences of people and what they think should be done to solve their problems. (Michael Mora; 2010) noted that focus groups, triads, dyads, in- depth interviews, uninterrupted observation, bulletin boards, and ethnographic participation/ observation are the common data collection methods used in qualitative research.

3.2 Research Design

As mentioned in the first chapter research design refers to where, when and where the data is to be collected and that is according to Bush (2010). Tailor (2009) defines it as plan that shows how the study is going to be carried out, selecting relevant data. In other words it guides the collection of data and analysis. This research basically aimed to analyse the relationship between employee motivation and organizational performance. The researcher used both the qualitative and the quantitative approach where the former is going to be used to describe and analyse issues whilst

3.3 Population

The target population deprived from the following people:

- ❖ Ministry of Local Government- the researcher will sought permission to carry out surveys in different organizations and the researcher was granted permission to

choose youth for interviews and questionnaires. There were interviews with officials from this Ministry aimed at capturing what adult civil servants think about youth participation in Harare Central Constituency.

- ❖ 3 officials from the Ministry of Women Affairs Gender and Community Development Harare Province
- ❖ 3 officials from youth organizations in Harare including the Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN) and Practical Empowerment and Networking Youth Association (PENYA).
- ❖ 3 members from the Ministry of Youth Development, Indigenization and Empowerment (District level) – for the purpose of networking with youth who are partially participating with the government
- ❖ 1 Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) official
- ❖ 1 Zimbabwe Electoral Support Network (ZESN) official
- ❖ Youth and adults - mostly youth from communities around Harare Central Province and not affiliated to any of the organizations listed above

3.3.1 Purposive and Snowball Sampling

The researcher also used purposive sampling. With purposive sampling, there are chances that a particular sampling unit will be selected for the sample depending on the subjective judgment of the researcher. Purposive sampling was defined by Marshal (1996) as judgmental sampling and Saunders (2009) defined it as a technique where the researcher uses personal judgment to select respondents. The sampling units were selected by the researcher who attempts to obtain a sample

that appears to him or her to be the representative of the population. It is also referred to as judgment sample; purposive sampling seeks for information-rich cases of maximum variations. Normal application is for small samples from a population that is well understood and there is a clear method for picking the sample. The technique is used to provide illustrative examples or case studies. Purposive sampling will be used in this study as the first line of determining the overall sample for the research. This method was used in choosing the 3 Ministry officials, 3 Harare Central District council members, 1 councilor, 2 members from selected youth organizations, 2 ZEC and 3 ZESN officials were selected and these are the only ones to be interviewed.

Purposive sampling was also used to select 40 youths from the community; the researcher used this method and selected youths who were fully versed with the topic in research. This was a planned method to get the necessary and required data on what really drives low participation of youth in electoral processes in the constituency. This method had a positive impact to the researcher as it saved her time and enabled her to acquire the most relevant information.

Snowball sampling was also used. Snowball sample is a non-probability sampling technique it was appropriate to use in this research as most members of population were difficult to locate. Snowball sampling is one in which the researcher collects data on the few members of the target population he or she can locate, those individuals will be asked to provide information needed to locate other members of that population whom they know this is according to Babbie (2001). This sampling technique was therefore used by the researcher to locate respondents mainly the

youth, this technique was used because the chain referral process allowed the researcher to reach populations that were difficult to sample when using other methods. The process was an advantage to the researcher as it was cheap, simple as well as cost-efficient. Snowball technique required less planning and fewer workforces compared to other techniques.

3.4 Research Instruments

The researcher also embarked on social methods to develop the findings of the research

3.4.1 Questionnaire

This method was advantageous as it was easily distributed to different types of people and gave them time to answer the questions at their own pace and time, this method was very effective as respondents stay and work at different areas on different times. This is an organized technique which is used to collect data through a series of questions on paper verbally to produce primary and this according to Malhtra 2010. Since some respondents could not be reached in fixed areas due to certain conditions such as unemployment and school dropping out the questionnaire was ideal as it was an easy method to reach these respondents and collect sufficient data. the researcher will use both open-ended and close-ended questions. The questionnaire method is generally cheaper as the researcher did not have to commute to some areas but rather used new technological techniques such as email, facebook, whatsapp and even sent some via instagram thus it saved time in terms of easy distribution were completed by 40 youths from Harare Central completed the questionnaire. In this case the researcher used criteria of people who had been

employed by the organizations so as to find core results on the background of youth participation in Harare Central constituency. Most respondents were supposed to have been citizens who have been Harare based for more than 7 years, so as to get more information about the 2008 harmonised elections in Zimbabwe.

To guarantee correct question interpretation the questions were personally molded by the researcher, which is significant to the accuracy of research findings. Together with the above advantages, the questionnaire had its vast advantages which gave the researcher time to meet face to face with the respondents, they maintained a high level of privacy and respondents were open with their responds as their security was ensured. It is however important for one to note that the researcher faced certain challenges such as questionnaires that were not returned or replied. It is important to acknowledge that the response rate was remarkably impressive because all the proposed respondents filled the questionnaire.

3.4.2. Interviews

Interviews are direct or face to face conversations between the researcher and the respondent this is according to Robertson (2009). This technique was used for the development of the questions and be administered so as to gather the most fundamental information from the participants, for instance, the ministry officials, councillors and members of youth organisations and the youth at large. The researcher also used structured interviews however unstructured interviews and telephone interviews in the event of failure to interview top officials and other key informants were used. Direct questioning and personal interviews facilitated capturing data from the

illiterate groups of the community who cannot fill in the questionnaires. The researcher embarked on face to face interviews with the various respondents mentioned above. Ethnography was used during face to face interviews. According to Markhan(2004) ethnographic interviewing is an elaborated sequence of interviews structured to derive cultural knowledge of an insider.

Phenomenological interviewing was also used. Muller and Slater (2000) stated that, phenomenological interviewing is a specific type of an indepth interviewing which is grounded in a philosophical tradition. Phenomenology can be defined as the study of lived experiences and the ways in which people invested those experiences to develop a worldview. In this case both past and present experiences were asked. Respondents were asked about their lived experiences during election periods in 2008 and 2013.

Interviews were used because they gave the room to control the research environment there by creating a rather more confidential environment, they ensure that all questions are responded to and the researcher could read facial expressions and gestures showing the respondents emotions on the issue especially when they expressed the fear on how they were treated during the 2008 elections some showed fear as they claimed that they were directly violated and some claimed that close family members were violated, it gave room for further questions between the researcher and respondent. Interviews also helped to keep the interviewer in check. They are most likely to be taken seriously due to the presence of the interviewer, this is according to Charles(1998). Wilkinson and Birmingham (2003) noted that they allow respondents to give their opinions. Interviews demanded more time in expense of the researcher.

3.4.3 Observation

Observation technique was used so as to get on the spot feedback through the study of behavior approach. This method was used to observe the youths' behaviors that prevent them from participating in electoral processes in this case with reference to Harare. The researcher when she was attached at the Ministry of Women had a great experience in observation as they worked hand in hand with the Ministry of youth and gained more information about youth behavior in Harare, that is how the researcher applied the observation theory. During some techniques such as interviews the researcher also observed many signs where she got information on how and why most youth have not been participating in electoral process, the researcher observed that most youths were scared to engage in political activities assuming that it's a dangerous and dirty game. Observations played an important role in the research as it helped the researcher to find information and further understand main reasons why youth do not participate in electoral processes. Unknown important information which was not clear before commencement of the research were put to light through observation. It allowed for less Hawthorne effect (behavior alteration of by subjects of a research owing to the subjects' awareness of being observed) allowing the researcher to use personal assumption making the research broader and deeper.

3.4.4 Desk research

This approach was used in order to gather background knowledge about youth electoral participation. The researcher sourced data from documents, books, journals, internet, newspapers and development agents' reports. Judd et al (1999), notes that the use of primary and secondary

sources. Saunders et al 2009 said that secondary sources. Primary sources is data attained directly from the field to meet the researcher's questions and in this context the researcher used secondary sources. This produced greater knowledge which would have not been imagined by those who produce the primary sources in the first place.

3.5 Data analysis and presentation

Interpretational approach was also used as a data analysis method. Patterns within the data were looked for so as to explain the phenomenon. The study was qualitative in nature so data analysis was mainly by means of verbal descriptions. However, other techniques were used to present certain data through the use of tables.

3.6 Research Ethics

The researcher had to stick to a number of ethics that are involved in any research. The aspect of confidentiality was very important since the research was based on people's rights to privacy and confidentiality. The researcher had to dress in a way that would make the respondent comfortable thus the researcher had to make dates with certain groups of people per time. High level of voluntarism was mainstreamed during the course of the research therefore every response was given on the basis of voluntarism, the researcher did not promise any reward to the respondents. Respondents participated as an outcome of their own will to contribute in this critical research.

Informed approval was also used as a way to keep the respondents well informed by the issue at hand. Respondents were well posted about the purpose of the research so that they would participate knowing what was taking place. For security reasons, identities of most respondents were protected. Also, the researcher adhered to the standards of beneficence, thus benefits of the research to the community were explained. The research was largely political but however the researcher remained apolitical.

3.7 Limitations of the Study

The researcher faced a number of limitations during the research period. One would largely point out the issue of limited time, the researcher only got a one week semester break to go and research. This research was largely political and the researcher faced problems of fear among the respondents, some of them were unwilling to openly put what they had in mind saying that the political sphere was a dangerous zone you can never know who to trust these days. Some people especially important members of some organizations were not reachable claiming to be occupied with other things so the researcher had to interview some people who were not fully informed with what really transpired the questions. Due to massive retrenchments by most organizations in the country it was hard for the researcher to find more qualified people on the ground. The researcher also had the problem of financial shortage because the researcher had to travel from Zvishavane to Harare which demanded a lot of money and the University did not in any way try to help. Respondents lacked willingness to point out some of the reasons why young people are not politically engaged due to fears of being victims of politically motivated violence. Over and above all, since the research was kind of political the researcher had to seek permission from

local authorities and the road was not easy but the study was accomplished despite the challenges mentioned above.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher will be trying to make an analysis of youth participation electoral processes in Zimbabwe with the case study of Harare Central Province Constituency. In this chapter one will be examining the actual findings from the research that she did. The researcher will go on to explain the factors which are causing youth in Harare to have a lower percentage in electoral participation compared to that of the elderly populace. The researcher will go deep into analyzing the real reasons which were understood during her research on what exactly prevents meaningful youth participation in electoral processes, what are the importance of youth participation, the characteristics of meaningful participation and the solutions of what could be done to enhance youth participation in Zimbabwe using reference to Harare Central Province. This chapter seeks to review different views between the youth and the elderly populace. The information in this chapter was obtained through interviews, observations and desktop researches that were carried out.

4.1 Youth socio-economic exclusion and stability in the context of electoral participation

For a normal system to survive and maintain its going a certain degree of order and stability is required, this is according to Almond's structural functionalism. Kasukuwere (2012) assessed that the government must empower youth to take a central role in the socio-economic development of their nations then there is likely to be a development of socio-economic and political stability. In his theories, Almond claims that each and every functional part of a social system ought to execute its role. Haralambos (2001) highlighted that the "social system has certain basic needs which must be met if it is to survive." Societies are working towards their contribution to the maintenance of the society and this is according to Uhumwungu and Oghator (2013). Societies should put into consideration the fact that youths are an important part of the society with specific duties and roles to perform. A political system is a specific system within the social system to which one can relate the functional pre-requisite of the as cited by ibid (2013). Though the youth are a very important part of societies they are being excluded from decision making processes.

"Young people must be included from birth. A society that cuts itself off from its youth severs its lifeline; it is condemned to bleed to death."

These are the words of Kofi Annan, Former Secretary-General of the United Nations (UNDP 2013)

Youths in Zimbabwe are however for a long time been marginalized in the socio-economic and political mainstream, and this situation was further worsened by the 2000-2009 economic, political and social meltdown. Male adults especially have been accused in several ways for marginalizing youths from processes of decision making, faced with the panorama of mass deaths by the HIV and AIDS endemic, denial of employment and the blame for causing crime and violence. Abuse of youth by the elders in Zimbabwe has become rampant because most

youths are from very poor backgrounds; they have a lower social status compared to the older citizens. Zimbabwean youths are prone to different types of abuse and discrimination which include child labor, physical and sexual abuse, exclusion from decision making processes on issues that affect them this view is supported by Ntsabane and Ntau (2000). Nefarious Zimbabwean politicians have a bad habit of using young people for their personal interest this is an International crime through international law, politicians such as Bosco Tanganda and Charles Taylor are facing trial by the ICC for the use of civilian citizens for their personal political interests. This manipulation of youths will eventually lead to an end result of poverty and youth unemployment.

Zimbabwe will continue to face political breakdown if the current situation of youth manipulation and exploitation continues without the government, youth and other organizations come together in trying to solve this problem.

4.2 Electoral Participation of youth in Harare

Poor participation of youth like has been discussed over and over in this research is the only key towards political development in Harare, Zimbabwe. Through many policies such as that of the revised National Youth Policy (2013) which emphasizes that the right of youths should be involved through meaningful and peaceful participation in the socio-economic and political processes of the nation. Harare has continuously faced marginalization and discrimination of youths in political issues which is contrary to what has been promised by many politicians. Despite all the promises that the government has made that they will try to work with youth in

most Zimbabwean Constituencies including Harare Central the participation of youth in electoral processes has been declining continuously.

Many barriers are blocking many youths as they try to participate in electoral processes. Youths in Harare are lacking voter's education, motivation, resources, technical skills and they are being violated through use of violence these are the major hindrances towards youth participation in Harare when reduced individual level. Corrupt and politically influenced organizations which should be youth-led are lacking know-how on how to run these organizations as they end up being politicized and directed by self-centered politicians who are claiming to be helping these organizations. These organizations are facing economic challenges which largely limits their power because once a donor is associated there tends to be bias politics in organizations. This view is exemplified by donations made by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, once they offer you help it comes with its terms and usually this is for the benefit of the donor. In this case one can note that youth led organizations face economic challenges when it comes to issues to do with electoral participation.

Harare youths are claiming that the parliament of Zimbabwe has regulations and procedures that do not support the participation of youths in their management, youths are not being allowed to take leadership positions and even if they do their effectiveness and say are not given much attention to and results are not visible. Elderly officials, youths claim that they are still basing on old fashioned way of politics which contradicts to what the youth expect hence there is usually communication breakdown between youths and the older generation in politics in Harare.

According to one's research, that is the same problem faced by the Movement for Democratic Change party in Zimbabwe led by Morgan Tsvangirai which is a party attracting most youths in the country especially Harare Central. The member of Parliament for Harare Central, Mister Murisi Zwizwai when the researcher got a chance to Interview him at a small rally in Harare town which was hosted by the MDC party said that, there only problem being faced by the ruling party ZANU-PF IS that it is failing to adapt to the changes as it is a revolutionary party it is not willing to open up for the new generation thus the communication breakdown and political disaster". In this view one can be of the view that the Zimbabwean politics is scaring away most youths to participate in political processes.

UNDP (2013) noted that the political environment contributes also as another major barrier towards youth participation itself, as there are traits of structural constraints including the requirement of a high eligibility age to be able to contest for elections as well as cultural or social norms tends to hamper youth participation.

In the 2008 harmonized elections, a very small percentage was able to vote and this is according to one's findings from the research. One observed that the voter's education as it mainly attracted the elderly populace, it only attracted a very low young population and this was at the expense of all the youth country wide. In Harare Central the voter's education attracted only 27% of the youth and the other 73% was left out, as they tried to attract more youths in electoral processes however, in 2013 the XIG campaign was introduced encouraging youths to participate in elections but it was also not very successful as there is evidence that not a large number of youth complied, a very small number of youths in Harare Central voted in the 2013 harmonized elections.

In trying to promote youth participation also, COPAC carried out a campaign on voter education hoping to attract more youth including in Harare Central, but according to Youth Alliance for Democracy (2010) less than 20% of youth nationwide participated. When the researcher interviewed one of the officials for COPAC there was evidence that there seemed to be zero attendance by youth on the outreach. In this case one can note that the outreach was a total failure as it failed to reach its main goal.

The researcher also observed that there are differences in participation between youths in urban Harare and those in the rural part of Harare because these two groups of youths face different challenges.

Below is a table of suburbs in Harare Central Constituency

Ward	Ward Name	Setup
3	Mbare	Urban
6	Belvedere	Urban
12	Belgravia	Urban
4	Rugare	Urban
5	Avondale	Urban
8	St Martins	Urban
11	Town	Urban
7	Msasa	Urban
13	Industrial Site	Urban
14	Southerton	Urban

The researcher in her interviews found out that youths in urban Harare Central are participating in the registration and voting process but they are however not participating in other processes such as running for office, observing and campaigning or even attending voter's education rallies. In rural Harare however, a larger percent up to 80% of youth attend rallies, but a very low percentage of 40% of these manage to vote due to challenges such as that they do not have identification or simply do not know that they have to register for them to vote.

4.3 Barriers to youth electoral participation in Harare Central Constituency

Participation comes in many roles such as voting, observing, running for office, registering to vote, attending voter elections workshops and outreaches and taking part in party campaigns. Scholars devote to voter turnout when explaining youth barrier. Harare youths from the researcher's point of view are lacking the knowledge, support, information and opportunities and this is largely limiting them from participation in electoral processes. Political violence from this research's thinking is the major reason why youth in Harare and all over the country are not participating. From the interviews youths from Harare Central emphasized that there is poor voter education in the area. More barriers will be thoroughly discussed in the following discussion with regard to view from Harare citizen youths.

4.3.1 Socio-economic Challenges

Most youths in Harare claimed that it is of no use to participate in electoral processes. They claimed that the current economic situation of young people in Harare cannot waste more time

on going for party meetings, campaigns and voting instead of doing beneficial activities that will improve their livelihoods. High levels of unemployment have channeled a larger percentage of youths to concentrate more on economic activities rather than political activities. Electoral participation for them is just a secondary agenda. This is what one youth had to say when he was interviewed

“What do I benefit from going to vote and going for political rallies? for a long time we have been praying that the government provides jobs for us I’d rather stick to vending in the streets where I can get a dollar to survive than wait in long queues voting for someone who does not care whether I am fine or not”

This point of view therefore proves that Harare youth citizens are not willing to participate in electoral processes due to economic hardships and this takes us to the next point.

When one interviewed an official at the immigration offices in Harare, he supported the economic instability view saying according to their records most youths are the ones migrating to other countries and according to their own research it was also for the search of greener pastures. Most youths currently in Zimbabwe do not watch the Zimbabwe Broadcast claiming that its biased and full of propaganda and one concluded that youths are missing important information about such things such as voter’s education, campaigns because they think that the national broadcast is one-sided.

The researcher also noticed from the interviews that naturally most youths are ignorant about the politics of their country, most of them have never made an attempt to vote. When the researcher

asked some youths in Belvedere if they were going to participate in the oncoming 2018 elections this is what one 30 year old had to say

“ I have never in my whole life voted, I have no solid reasons why I do not vote but I have no intensions of voting in the future, it is just not my thing ”

Chikwari (2012) argues that when they get a chance to vote once, youths will automatically integrate their voting habit into their customary system it is hard for one to just adapt to the system if they have never tried it

4.3.2 Voter registration, Political awareness and Civic Education

One can describe the voter registration in Zimbabwe as upsetting and tedious. Authorities put in place measures that are barriers for youth participation. The issue of the requirement of proof of residence is another issue limiting youths in registration processes. Mbare youths do not have a permanent place of residence and getting a proof of residence is a struggle. (Youth Forum 2014)

Complaints about the Registrar General’s Office playing truant by turning away youth who want to register has been a point of concern from the research. They claimed that the officials are anti-youths. The registrar’s office is alleged for turning away youths who came to register claiming that the government has not called for elections yet, this has been largely demotivating youths who would have been turned away. The researcher found out that youth are willing to participate in electoral processes but the process is rather frustrating.

In Zimbabwe there are few Civil Society Organizations operating towards improvement of youths in electoral participation. Mavhika (2014) alludes that political and civic education as an empowering tool is lacking in Harare and this highlights that the whole country is probably the same. Due to the tense political atmosphere it is difficult to get police clearance to conduct civic education programmes. ZEC in trying to promote civic education held a campaign in July 2016 in preparation of the 2018 elections.



Fig; A campaign by the Zimbabwe Electoral Process held in Harare CBD in trying to promote youth participation through Civic education.

Low participation of youth in electoral processes has less to do with lack of interest and more to do with lack of voter education. (NYDT 2013) noted that the only solution towards improving youth turn out is via improved voter education system. It is the aim of ZEC to provide civic education but however the Commission is failing to facilitate comprehensive civic education.

4.3.3 Party System, Political Environment and Institutions

When one interviewed an official from Practical Empowerment and Networking Youth Association (PENYA) a youth centered organization, name has been withheld had this to say

“The degree to which the voting public identify strongly with one political party over other existing alternatives has influence on the low participation of youth in electoral processes, youth in Harare have weaker ties to political parties as compared to older citizens.”

Unlike youths, older citizens are likely to view parties as representing their and this is according to Anderson (2011). Contrary to older people who concentrate more on economic security, law and order as well as religious ethics, youths focus more on goals like quality of life, social impartiality and personal autonomy. Youth stay away from politics in Harare because they believe it is characterized by violence, chaos and disorder. Chikwari (2012) supports this line of thinking as he noted that the 2008 elections in Zimbabwe were characterized by massive violence and intimidation.

In addition, the Zimbabwean political system is also characterized by corruption and illegalities by politicians. ZANU PF during the 2008 elections was accused of rigging to win. This kind of actions make youth their interest in voting feeling that it does not matter if they vote or not as their votes will not count. It is also because of the economic instabilities that youth do not participate as candidates in elections, youths in Zimbabwe are poor this demotivates them as some politicians in 2008 were alleged of buying votes. Youths in Harare according to the research are lacking resources and support for logistics during elections thus the reason they would rather not participate.

4.4 Conclusion

A number of issues are stumbling blocks towards youth participation in Harare. These vary according to location, age, social, economic and political reasons. In short poor civic education that is poor dissemination of information, violence, corruption, ignorance, poor law enforcement and lack of support and the natural disorder of the political system are the major barriers towards youth participation in electoral processes in Harare. There is need therefore for the government and Civil Society Organizations to work together in trying to promote youth participation as it is the major key towards political development hence economic and social development in Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter seeks to breakdown chapter 2 and 4 and show how successful this research has been. Elections are an important element in trying to prove democracy but this paper shows and proves that youth though they contribute 67% of the country's population they have not been involved in electoral processes in Zimbabwe, and this has been highlighted by the 2008- 2013 harmonized elections and in this case one uses the case study of Harare Central District and its surrounding suburbs. It is important to note that in this study electoral participation does not only involve voting but rather the whole process of observation, campaigns, youth also participating as candidates and competing, having positions in the parliament and mainly having a say in the decision making of the country. This chapter seeks to summarize the reason why youth are not politically active, how the government can solve this problem; it seeks to come up with solutions on how Zimbabwean politics can be developed. This chapter will give concluding remarks and recommendations which made this research a success.

5.1 Summary

This paper was aimed to seek the challenges faced by the Zimbabwean political arena through poor participation of youth in electoral process. The researcher highlighted the effects of poor youth participation in electoral processes, the effects and possible solutions of what should be done to promote youth participation. It is also important that the researcher also highlighted the major causes limiting youth participation in Zimbabwe with reference to Harare Central Province.

The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) requires that every eligible person who can vote is supposed to participate in electoral processes. According to this view there is need therefore for ZEC to work hard in trying to teach most youths about the importance of their participation in electoral process. The organization is supposed to work thoroughly in trying to eliminate ghost voter and create a clean voter's roll where people are participating with the full knowledge of the importance of their vote not just to vote for the sake of just voting, and the government must be responsible for providing the required resource. The government should be fully aware of the fact that it is the government for the people and thus respect and fully respect elections.

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The office of the Registrar General should be warned against turning away people who are willing to vote just like any other form of registrations, electoral registration is every citizen's

right. With the help of Civil Society Organizations (CSO's) and the Zimbabwe Electoral Support Network (ZESN), (ZEC) should try to work on improving its operations. Voter registration must not be delayed and campaigns and mobile registration must also directly be targeted on the youths.

According to MPOI survey (2007), Zimbabwe's voter education is biased as it is unplanned, informal and a seasonal exercise of which most youths in the country are not well informed about it. Voter education is the most important tool that shapes a civic minded nation. MPOI 2007 claims that 68% of the active population in Zimbabwe did not receive civic education but of the 88% that did receive they claim that they benefitted a lot and they noted that it should not be seasonal but a continuous exercise.

Political parties should stop ignoring youths and making them like they are a marginalized group when in full fact they are the core of the politics in the country. To avoid political clashes political parties should know that if youths feel like they are being violated their rights this will lead to the rise in protest and havoc in the country. Young people should be able to feel that they are part of the decision making process to ensure peace and harmony within a country. ‘

Civil Society Organizations should also participate and try to cater for the need of the youths in Zimbabwe. The government should try to promote CSO's that support youths especially in the political sphere. Youth based organizations must focus more on the things that give youth a vibe to participate in national events even national events such as heroes, independence even the 21st movement if there is need to.

In addition CSO's should try to incorporate marginalized groups such as the disabled and women in politics of the country. They should act as the voice of the voiceless. It is important for one to also note that it is the duty of these CSO to protect youth that have HIV/AIDS in the society. CSO's should try to thoroughly work with ZEC in trying to yield better results that include youth participation, it is also the duty of CSO's to protect the rights of youth in the diaspora and involve them in electoral processes.

The Social-economic welfare in the country has been largely affecting youth participation in the country. The clarity of this is that the government should try to improve the social sphere by investing in social sectors such as education, health, employment and these must have their first priorities on youths as they are the backbone of a strong economy and a stable economy is the only way to a better stable political arena. The government especially in the education sector should try to protect the girl child s she is mostly exposed to the harmful of poor education currently in Zimbabwe. According to Mahruk Cheema 2014 there is an important bond between political participation and political development, the girl child must be protected through participation so that girls can also be influential in the decision making processes.

5.2 CONCLUSION

Zimbabwe for a long time has been experiencing poor youth participation in electoral processes as the reasons have been thoroughly discussed in the research. As it is their right Zimbabwean

youths are demanding political equality, social and economic inclusion and opportunities be it economic, social or political opportunities. They are also demanding leaders who understand them and will represent them on issues of decision making within the government. Politicians with selfish interests have been for a long time misleading the Zimbabwean youths and sleepwalking them into fulfilling their personal agenda's because the youth have been a marginalized and vulnerable group. The political environment has for a long time not been youth friendly in most cases it has been showing signs of being anti-youth except when they want to manipulate them.

There have been many barriers toward youth participation in the country and these are represented by the lack of general succession, lack of information, politically motivated violence, this is proved by the politics of Zimbabwe which clearly show that violence the key to solve political differences in the country is violence and this has been the sequence since independence. There is need therefore for the government, civil societies and Zimbabweans at large to openly address these issues to improve the political structure in the country and to a greater extent improve youth participation. This is the only way to achieve political development in the country. In this line of thinking one can safely note that youths are an important group that curb in for the economic and political development in a country.

This research therefore aimed to bring out the main ideas that can help to solve the participation problem for political development to be enhanced. The internet has currently been pin pointed as a tool which is being used for the the development of politics but however some sources are claiming that the internet is being abused in expense of political development in Zimbabwe. Poor

transformation of information is one of the major barriers towards poor participation; however social networking can also be credited for improving communication in the country hence promoting participation. Social networking provides a cheap way of information dissemination and this is according to Martin and Schmeisser (2008). The country however needs to improve on its economic sector and include youth in the mainstream of production or else the youth will be occupied with survival issues and electoral participation will not be as important as it should be to them.

In a nutshell Zimbabwe should realize that youth are an important asset not just a tool used by politicians for personal interests if political development is to be attained. If not tempered with, youths have potential to elevate political development in Zimbabwe and other countries or this issue will never be a success no matter how many people will ever research on this topic.

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