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**TABOO SYSTEMS AS A CONFLICT RESTRAINT IN THE POLITICAL
FEUD IN ZIMBABWE. AN EXPLORATION OF MAZOWE AND
SHAMVA DISTRICTS, POST INDEPENDENCE**

**BY
OBEDIAH DODO
PHD6831008**

SUPERVISORS:

**PROFESSOR SICHALWE KASANDA
PROFESSOR EVERISTO NSENDULUKA**

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the Doctor of
Philosophy Degree (PhD) in Governance and Conflict Resolution at the
University of Lusaka, Zambia.

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DECLARATION

I do hereby declare that the thesis being submitted to the University of Lusaka, for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Governance and Conflict Resolution; *Taboo systems as a conflict restraint in the political feud in Zimbabwe: An exploration of Mazowe and Shamva districts post-independence*, has not been previously submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university; that it is my original work, and that all the material contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

Signed on this day of at the University of Lusaka.

Obediah Dodo:

RELEASE FORM

NAME OF AUTHOR : Obediah Dodo

REG NUMBER : PhD6831008

SUPERVISORS : Professor Sichelwe Kasanda
Professor Everisto Nsenduluka

THESIS : *Taboo Systems as a Conflict Restraint in the Political Feud in Zimbabwe. An Exploration of Mazowe and Shamva Districts, Post-Independence.*

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Obediah Dodo

DEDICATION

To Gloria, Takudzwa, Paidaishe, Arnold, Nokutenda and Paidamoyo.

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ABSTRACT

Following a realisation that during each plebiscite in Zimbabwe, scores of people are injured, killed and displaced due to the intensity of political violence, this research was carried out to focus on the possible role of traditional taboos in restraining the behaviours of the conflict perpetrators. This is against the fact that traditionally, taboos were used as a policing mechanism in respective communities. However, due to the advent of globalisation, modernity and other influences, some of these taboos seem to have been washed to the periphery and lost relevance. The study carried out in Mazowe and Shamva districts, was primarily exploratory being applied within the qualitative paradigm. The study, employing formal interviews, focus group discussions and archival material drew a total sample of 135 participants from across the divide through snowball and emergent sampling. The analysis and interpretation of data was achieved through the use of NVIVO software and Content Analysis method, which provided for the analysis of written and audio material. To ensure near objectivity and total acceptability of the results, the research instituted some measures like; depth in research, objective interpretation of the world by all concerned stakeholders, appropriate sampling mode, method triangulation, data triangulation, timing and duration of the study. The study found out that while the taboo concept was an old-fashioned mechanism of restraining conflicts in society, it still had its place for as long as there were deliberate efforts towards sustaining its importance. It was also established that indeed, there were some volatile situations that were addressed by the fear of the effects of the taboos. Some conflicts were also averted by the fears created by some taboos that have since been swallowed by other 'cultures' and religions. To ensure that the preventative role is sustained, the study has also recommended that there be some deliberate inculcation of the belief system in the young ones in society over a period through all the socialisation systems like schools, churches and the family. The retention of the practice is purely to regulate childrens behaviours.

ACRONYMS

DAPP – Development Aid from People to People

FGD – Focus Group Discussion

JMC – Johane Masowe Chishanu

JMCM - Johane Masowe Chishanu Madzimbabwe

JMCNT - Johane Masowe Chishanu Nguo Tsvuku

MDC – Movement for Democratic Change

MDC-T- Movement for Democratic Change- Tsvangirai

MDG – Millennium Development Goals

NCA – National Constitutional Assembly

NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation

PRSP - Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper

RENAMO – Mozambique National Resistance Movement

SADC- Southern Africa Development Community

ZANU PF – Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front

ZRP - Zimbabwe Republic Police

ZIMSTATS- Zimbabwe National Statistical Agency

DEFINITION OF TERMS

While the discussion sounds familiar to many, to some, it is a completely alien arena with new terms and concepts which probably need to be defined and clearly elucidated. This explanation has to be strictly contextual to the study in question so that relevance is maintained throughout.

Taboo- this is a traditional regulatory and system design mechanism that is culturally embedded in a community primarily meant to set apart a person, an object, or a place as sacred to achieve conservation, respect and continuity. In the African society, taboos are created by particular societies to fit specific situations and times. It is no wonder why a taboo in one area may not be in another. In this study, taboos are treated as socially-embedded pronouncements by elders as a way of instilling order in society over everything; natural resource, people, discipline, and ideology. In the absence of a clearly written down law, communities only resorted to taboos which did not require a third person to police or intervene; there is self-regulation as people believed that the unseen ‘gods’ and spirits will be seeing and hearing from the atmosphere.

Conflict- A conflict is an activity that has traditionally been regarded as retrogressive, destructive and unnecessary in society though there are some quarters which view it as catalysts for development. In this study, conflict is considered as an activity whereby two or more individuals have clashed and have developed some degree of hostility against each other. However, precisely, conflict refers to misunderstandings particularly over land, ideology and ethnicity in the areas under study. It takes any number to be involved in a conflict from personal, group, inter-group and inter-personal.

Traditional- In this research traditional is defined as the systems that are embedded in the people of the area called indigenous. It will be realised in the study that the term is used differently in different situations. Traditional leadership are those political, social and religious structures that are embedded in the pre-colonial period and are culture sensitive. However, common to all its use is the fact that it is culture-born, local systems oriented and people-friendly.

Conflict restraint- This is a measure or system of deterring or pre-empting a potential misunderstanding between parties. Conflict restraint may be achieved in a variety of ways; economic, social or legal and should be long-term oriented so that the same conflict does not recur again. A conflict restraint is a system on the ground which is supposed to regulate and control conflicts in society. These systems do not necessarily require the physical intervention of other beings; rather, there is self-regulation due to the level of belief in the minds of the society. People involved in unwanted acts are deterred by a mere feeling that something unusual happens at the instigation of the unseen spirits moving around the atmosphere. In this study, 'restraint' will be interchanged with 'prevention'.

Peace-building -are long-term efforts at reconciliation, capacity building and societal transformation that take place after fierce conflict has reduced or ceased. These peace-building efforts may be political, economic, social and military and primarily designed to reinforce political settlements, in a bid to remedy the causes of conflict. These measures are instituted in society to benefit everyone with an ultimate intention to keep potential hostilities down. In this study, typical peace-building measures could involve establishment of education institutions so that young people could benefit intellectually, establishment of

health centres and employment facilities so that there will not be idle people who are exposed to violence and possible recruitment for sinister motives.

Conflict resolution – After experiencing destructive conflicts, there comes some need for an end to it and this can only be through some sustainable and community appreciated means. Conflict resolution is more than the realisation of an accord and seeking to re-establishing relations between stakeholders as it seeks to get to the core causes of conflict and not simply treat its intervallic or symptomatic manifestation. Conflict resolution implies attending to a problem by deeply exploratory measures where the participants voluntarily outline their relationships before settling for anything new.

In conflict resolution, it is imperative that the root and main causes of the conflict be looked at objectively so that whatever conclusion or resolution is reached, all the parties are satisfied. Failure to please all the parties literally leads to recidivism of the conflicts and become cyclical in nature. In this study, conflict resolution is basically a means through which hostilities are ended amicably in a sustainable and long-lasting manner to the satisfaction of all concerned parties.

Culture - Since the study is primarily focussing on concepts and issues to do with peoples' ways of doing things and leading lives, it becomes important to look at culture and understand what it really entails. It has been generally acknowledged by various scholars the world-over that culture is one area that presents challenges in clearly understanding in view of the associated dynamism. There are some anthropologists and sociologists who consider culture as a discussion that produces chain of command, unity, and homogenization of individuals under study. Culture has been known to shape and build people's characters

largely based on their lived experiences. Put simply, culture expresses and defines assemblage identities, is group indoctrination and a socially transferable philosophy of a people.

This definition highlights one aspect of identifying a group from another through systems that are learned over period. Therefore, culture is a way that a defined community of people chooses to follow as it executes its daily chores. These may be various in one individual but the most prominent one finally defines one's culture.

Conflict management- This is a process whereby a conflict is under control by relevant stakeholders so that it does not produce disastrous effects to the intended and unintended people around. Conflict management is said to be a skill of coming up with suitable institutions to steer the unavoidable conflict into suitable channels for peace. Ideally, this is supposed to be a deliberately planned and regulated process and not ad-hoc or impromptu.

Participants- these are the people or respondents who provided with the data during the research interviews, discussions and through other means as outlined in the methodology section. They are being referred as participants because they participated in the research and not only served as respondents.

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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

A taboo is a system or an act of setting apart a person, an object, or a place as sacred to achieve conservation, respect and continuity. Since time immemorial, in the African traditional set-ups, people have always respected and adhered to these taboos. Taboos were meant to regulate the behaviours of people, help conserve natural resources and environment and respect the existence of other creatures. The study therefore seeks to explore the role that the taboo systems play in political conflicts in Zimbabwe. Precisely, the two districts under study are known to be ardent believers in traditional practices; the purpose of this study becomes therefore to establish their roles and whether the traditional practices are still relevant especially in view of the advent of contemporary approaches. Most of the political conflicts are experienced during election periods: pre, during and post-election phases. The pre-election period is defined by the presidential pronouncement of the election campaign and when the Nomination Court accepts names of all contestants. The study specifically focuses on Mazowe and Shamva districts in Mashonaland Central province post-independence.

Globalisation effects generally point to a gradual shift of cultures and traditions to a more diluted end. It is against this belief that most traditional beliefs and norms have been eroded by modernity and therefore no-longer effective that the research seeks to establish how much of the effect of taboos was eroded that people were no-longer afraid of committing crimes including killing, raping, robbing and maiming and going against societal norms.

Every district the world-over seeks to develop for the betterment of its residents. This is achievable through the cooperation of various stakeholders, governments included. In that regard, in September 2000, over 189 member states of the United Nations, Zimbabwe included endorsed the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). MDGs are an international pledge towards the reduction of poverty and to promoting human development across the globe (Igwe, 2011). Besides, there are several other commitments that have been either ratified or formulated which include the 2004 Malawi Declaration on Election, the 1997 SADC Gender and Development Protocol, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conventions 100 and 111 on Equal Remuneration and Prohibition of Occupational Discrimination, Children's' Rights Convention (CRC), the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) (UNDP, 2005) that monitor progress towards the attainment of MDGs, United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1889 and 1820 focussing on the avoidance of aggression against women and involvement of women in peace-building (ZUNDAF, 2011). On the protection of women, Zimbabwe has also ratified the Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Prevention and the Eradication of Violence against Women and Children (Chipaziwa, undated). Good governance and value for human rights are fundamentals for sustainable human growth. In view of the above, Zimbabwe appended to the Millennium Declaration, which acknowledges the significance of good governance in establishing a playing field that is conducive to development and to the eradication of poverty.

1.2 Background to the Study

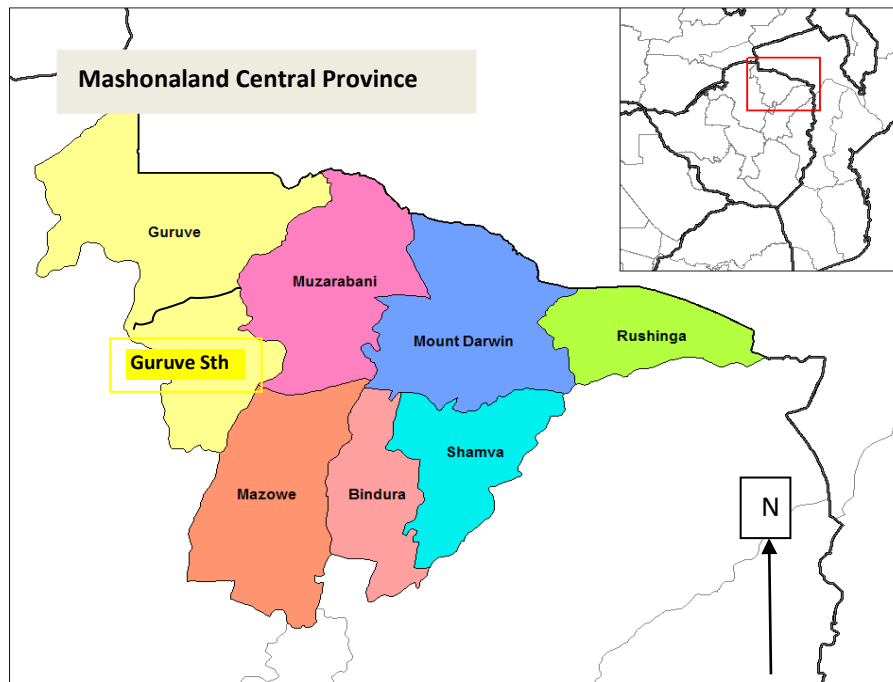
Given Zimbabwe's historical background that involves protracted bloody wars during the colonial period, in post-independence, the new regime has often clashed with other opposition formations, civil society and individual personalities over policy pronouncement, ideology and or perception amongst others. In most of these conflicts, members or rival formations have either killed each other or the ruling party membership or through the hard power, have killed the others. During the 1982-87 *Gukurahundi* crisis, government security agents and members of the dissident group killed innocent people in cold blood leaving over 20 000 souls dead (CCJP, 1987). Similarly, during the 1985 General elections, members of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) ruling party meted violence on the political opposition elements leaving others dead. From 1999 when Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) political party was formed, ZANU PF and through the hard power intensified its killing spree targeted at divergent ideology across the board. Specifically, civilians were killed in 1999, 2000, 2002, and in 2008 (WOZA, 2008, Machakanja, 2010, RAU, 2012). In most of these conflicts, it was people known to each other who were either fuelling or killing others in cold blood. Most of the perpetrators have not considered the sanctity of life and the question of '*ngozi*' avenging spirits.

Traditionally, in the Shona culture, it is believed that if one transgresses socially or goes against set societal systems and expectations, there are some varied calamities that are experienced either by the individual or the entire community. Some of these social systems and expectations otherwise called folkways and mores develop into what is then considered taboo for they are 'forbidden solely to regulate societal behaviour'. The enforcement of these taboos is two-fold; at the individual level where one fears facing misfortunes as a person or coming to the whole family and at community level where the traditional leadership ensures

maximum adherence otherwise the entire community gets affected by natural phenomenon like droughts and disease epidemics. In the event that there has been some transgression, some of the ways of remedying the wrongs are through traditional compensation to the aggrieved and appeasement of the spirits. The processes towards achieving these ends usually involve a lot; expensive material resources, human labour and commitment and torrid rituals so much so that people are deterred from infringing the taboos. Members of the community are restrained from hurting others, killing others and annoying the spirits of either the dead or the forests.

Mashonaland Central province is located to the north of Zimbabwe bordering with Zambia to the north and Mozambique to the east and with Harare to the south, Mashonaland East to the south-east and Mashonaland West to the west. The province is made up of 8 administrative districts; Bindura, Mazowe, Guruve, Mbire, Muzarabani, Mount Darwin, Rushinga and Shamva. In terms of total land area, there are 28 346 square kilometres, constituting about 11% of the entire Zimbabwe land area. There are 1 022 975 people in the province, according to Zimstats (2012) national census, of which 92% live in the rural areas.

Fig. 1 Mashonaland Central Province



(Provincial Statistics Department Mashonaland, Bindura, 2006)

Mashonaland Central province is one of the first regions to be exposed to the war of liberation in the early 1970s as the liberation fighters on reconnaissance programmes first visited districts in this province; Guruve, Muzarabani, Mount Darwin and Rushinga (Bhebhe, 1999). This also explains why most of the earliest liberation war fighters were drawn from these areas and why the same districts are characterised by political violence. The area is characterised by violence perpetrated by people who believe that the only salvation to their culture of violence lies in the influence of taboos and other cultural deterrents. What the inhabitants have however failed to realise is the fact that globalisation has steadily washed away some of the basic values around traditional norms and taboos.

While almost all the districts in Mashonaland Central province have been involved in violence at one point or the other, Mazowe and Shamva have been significantly outstanding largely because the two are touted as the spines of ZANU PF ideology and the fact that there

is prime land for agricultural purposes. To some extent, the districts are inhabited by prominent politicians who would not let the constituencies to opposition political parties. The proximity of the two districts to Harare has also influenced violence as people can easily move from the capital city of Harare to campaign for their political cause. Actually, during a 2001 by-election that was held in Bindura following the death of the sitting Member of Parliament Border Gezi, one of the contesting political parties then, MDC deployed its campaign teams from Harare via Domboshava communal areas which is about 30 kilometres away. This move was precipitated by the fact that ZANU PF had sealed the entire constituency from other parties. Apparently, Mazowe borders with Harare along the Borrowdale and Marlborough areas while Shamva is about 40 kilometres away.

It is important to highlight the fact that most of the conflicts that have been recorded were experienced around election periods. What traditionally happens in Zimbabwe is that at least 60-45 days before the election date, the election management body, Zimbabwe Election Commission (ZEC) holds a Nomination Court to accept names of all possible candidates in the pending plebiscite following a Presidential proclamation in a Government Gazette. Prior to the Nomination Court, no-one is allowed to campaign for any post. This process has not taken into consideration the role and effect of the Delimitation Commission which draws boundaries for political constituencies. It is after this nomination and opening of the campaign space that political parties embark on terror campaigns through the youth constituency. In the majority of cases, the youth are mobilised and abused in violence and terror projects by senior political leaders mainly because of their idleness. During the process, they are promised jobs, beer, political apparel and even marijuana drugs. To the youth, the fact that they spend their time with senior politicians, drinking beer and driving around makes them feel excited and very happy. At the end of the day, the youth are assigned to carry out

heinous acts of violence against their political rivals. It is also important to mention that while the youth are at the forefront in violence, they are supported by the hard power sector, ultimately giving them courage and blessings. This only applies to the youth aligned to the ruling party.

In the province, there is an unwritten belief within ZANU PF that Shamva is the haven of the most audacious and brutal youth who can be easily mobilised to inflict terror on the members of the opposition parties. This has been witnessed on several occasions but most prominent was when Chiwaridzo township of Bindura was 'invaded' by the MDC in 2001 before the youth from Shamva Tafuna small-scale mining area were deployed to reclaim the township. During the clashes, 5 people were killed and several others were injured and property destroyed. Unfortunately, the cases were suppressed from the media and the Police made no arrests (Dodo and Musorowegomo, 2012).

In most of the incidences where people fight in both districts, the leadership ends up consulting with the traditional healers and Christian prophets for cleansing and leave the foot soldiers facing the potential consequences of misfortunes and avenging spirits. There is a general belief that the traditional cleansing ceremonies protect perpetrators from the ills of crime while some simply believe that traditional taboos and norms are supposed to deter people from engaging in violence.

It is important to note that the two districts were selected for this study mainly because of the following reasons: their proximity to Harare makes the study easy in terms of movement and coordination; the two districts are still strong adherents to the concept of traditional taboos; the districts also experienced enough political violence to meet the requirements of this study

and that there are different ethnic groups in both districts so much so that they are able to input their understanding of taboos in the study.

The conflicts studied in this research are political: pitting ZANU PF against the MDC party membership. What must be realised is that whilst the study talks of the above parties, there may be involvement of other political ideologies which may not be adequately captured and discussed. However, the two remain the most prominent and most active. ZANU-PF has been the ruling party since 1980 independence from the Ian Smith regime and has dominated the province until in year 2000 when the MDC claimed some percentage of the membership. In this study, what is referred to as MDC is the main faction of the two MDC formations led by Morgan Tsvangirai.

1.3 Shamva District

Until probably year 2000, Shamva district was largely divided into four main settlement types; communal areas where the generality of the black subsistence farmers lived, commercial farming areas where the majority of white farmers lived, semi-urban areas that provide with commercial services like government offices, post offices, banks and high density settlements and the mining areas where commercial mining took place resulting in some urban-like settlement sprouting. Presently, the district is characterised by basically three settlement types; semi-urban at Wadzanayi Township, commercial farming area and communal areas. However, what is most striking about the commercial farming areas is the fact that there is not much difference now between the ‘commercial’ and the ‘communal’ farmers following the 2000-2004 land reform exercise. That alone has meant heightened unemployment especially for the youth and subsequent poverty for the entire communities. All the three settlement areas are also characterised by a politically polarised atmosphere.

The district is under the following traditional leaders; chief Nyamaropa in the central region, chief Madziwa to the north, chief Mutumba to the west and chief Bushu in the east and Headman Mushowani.

Shamva is known to be politically violent in selected areas like Wadzanayi where there is a lot of influence from the administrative political structures, Tafuna, Madziva Teachers' College and Chindunduma/Corner Store general areas mainly because of the influence from illegal artisanal miners locally called '*makorokoza*' who are generally extremists in behaviour. Illegal miners are of no fixed abode and therefore prepared to commit crimes and easily slip away without any trace. However, the opposition MDC party has some political support around Shamva Gold Mine and in Wadzanayi Township largely because of their urban nature and the fact that there are workers who feel the effects of a poorly performing economy. Madziwa Business Centre and Chihuri general area are also notorious for political violence and they are influenced by being in the midst of the communal area which is a stronghold of ZANU PF. It is also suspected that political culprits take comfort in the fact that, it is the home area of the Police Commissioner General Augustine Chihuri.

1.4 Mazowe District

Like Shamva, Mazowe district is characterised by four settlement types; urban areas in Glendale, Concession, Christon Bank, and Mvurwi, mining settlements in the mining areas of Mazowe Jumbo, Iron Duke and Ceasar, communal area largely in Chiweshe and commercial farming areas throughout the district. The district has 29 wards, 13 of which are in Chiweshe Communal Area and a population of 156,693 people as at 2012 national census (Zimstat, 2012). All the 429 commercial farms measuring 343,378 hectares that were in the district

before the 2000-2004 land reform exercise were compulsorily acquired rendering almost all the previously employed farm workers jobless (Matondi, 2013).

Mazowe district is under the following traditional leaders; chief Chiweshe to the south, chief Negomo to the east, chief Makope to the north and headman Nyachuru in the south as well. The district, home to the Mbuya Nehanda spirit medium of the 1800 still practices some of its traditional cultural systems albeit with some interference from various Christian religions like the Salvation Army and the Apostolic churches and the influence of globalisation.

The district has known pockets that are politically volatile. Gweshe, Nzvimbo, Jaji, Bare and Chideu general areas (all in the communal areas) are places where ZANU PF has over the years maintained its grip and so dominated violently. The traditional leadership has also played some role towards strengthening the domination of ZANU PF party; with chiefs and kraal heads threatening to evict their subjects who are suspected of siding with the opposition political movements. Some of these traditional leaders have stretched their influence into the former commercial farming areas contrary to the dictates of the Traditional Leaders' Act which stipulates that traditional leaders only govern in the communal areas. This is evidenced by Chief Negomo's futile attempts at prosecuting people in the commercial farming areas and urban towns since 2009. The political situation in Glendale, Concession and Mvurwi, all urban areas, is tricky as both political movements: ZANU PF and MDC have almost equal support and therefore can square up when it comes to violence.

1.5 Statement of the Problem

People have been killing each other for political reasons in Zimbabwe ignoring the threats and reality surrounding repercussions of some of the taboos in African traditions regarding

life. Most of the killing, injuries and hatred have been perpetrated on the weaker and vulnerable part of the society by the supposedly stronger without any regard for the negative repercussions legally, socially, morally or otherwise. Most of the regulatory systems witnessed in these areas have been enforced by the influence of the taboos. But how sustainable is the African traditional taboo system as a mode of social behaviour control in the face of modernity?

1.6 Objectives

To successfully engage in the research, the following objectives were formulated and are to be achieved.

- To identify taboos which are in use as conflict restraint apparatus.
- To analyse the nexus between the Zimbabwean traditional belief system and the contemporary western approach to conflict.
- To explore the influence of taboos in conflict escalation/de-escalation in Zimbabwe.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the traditional taboo system in conflict resolution in Zimbabwe.
 - a) To assess the influence of modernity on the traditional African belief systems.

1.7 Research Questions

In-order for the study to be focussed, there is need for a clearly drawn set of questions that will then set the route for the entire research. Research questions are important in any research because they help explain what the study will be set to establish. According to Maxwell (2005), primarily, research questions serve two purposes; to assist in focussing the study, that is the relationship between questions and goals and the conceptual framework and

to guide the process, that is the relationship between questions and methodology and validity.

For this study, below are the set questions that guided the study:

- What are some of the African traditional taboos that are still in use in Mashonaland Central province?
- How does society reconcile with the traditional African beliefs and practices?
- Have taboos been of any meaningful importance in restraining behaviour and restoring order?
- How could taboos be modernised for the globalised conflict-ridden society?

1.8 Structure of the Whole Report

The thesis is presented in a logical sequence following the requirements of the University. It is presented according to chapters, One to Six. Chapter one simply presents an introduction to the study before background information is presented in detail. Basically, this chapter addresses the following areas; research objectives and questions, statement of the problem and its scope. It is outlined in a manner clear enough to allow consumers to easily follow the argument. This is followed by Chapter Two which reviews literature. Literature Review is a critical understanding of what the other scholars have said and researched on the same subject. The chapter also reviews other documentation and policies from other related stakeholders.

Chapter Three is also presented looking at the mode through which the study was technically conducted specifically concentrating on the various operations of the research, theoretically and philosophically. This chapter deals with the real operations of the research process, the planning, execution, moderation and analysis of the results and deduction mechanisms. The research design and paradigms, data collection tools, analysis methods, issues about validity, reliability and relatability and ethical considerations are discussed in this chapter. This is followed by Chapter Four which

discusses the theories and conceptual framework designed during the study. Chapter Four focuses on some of the theories that could be used to guide the research before closely outlining the main theory which is the Deterrence Theory of Punishment. Weaknesses and strengths of all the selected theories are unravelled in an effort to get the most appropriate guiding theory.

Chapter Five discusses the collection of data from the participants through all the three modes; interviews, focus group discussions and archival material. After the relevant data mobilisation, it is presented in its semi-raw form before analysis is conducted. It also looks at how the interviews and FGD were conducted, the challenges and successes that were encountered on the ground. Results from the three data collection means is presented and interpreted accordingly creating relevant themes in line with those created by the Deterrence Theory of Punishment in Chapter Three.

Chapter Six simply condenses what has been mobilised during the research prominently highlighting most of the creative and innovative ideas from the findings. This chapter answers whether the objectives of the study have been achieved or not and reveals any new knowledge that has been added on to the academia body. However, because there were other new areas that were noted but not answered, it brings out other areas for further research. After this chapter, come the Appendices and References.

1.9 Summary

This first chapter of the study presented an introduction to the study by highlighting the background to the study: the conflicts that were experienced during the period under review, participants, taboos involved and the modus of implementation of the noted taboos in conflict management. The chapter also explained the geographical location of the areas under study before narrating the districts' social, political and economic activities as a way of presenting some background to the areas under study. It also looked at the research objectives, research

questions, limitations and delimitations to the study so that the reader appreciates the scope of the study and the path through which the researcher will follow in unlocking the puzzle. Also touched in this chapter is the statement of the problem which has been presented in a detailed manner and some of the key terms that were identified and defined as they will be applied in the entire study.

Chapter Two

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Every family has ways and practices that are meant to socialise members so that their behaviours and ways of conducting themselves in public are within the expected norms as per their traditions and cultures. To achieve those expected norms and standards, society has some rules that have survived the test of time and have almost become part of social laws; meant to restrain and or regulate people's behaviour. Over the years, it has been these social rules that have to some extent, controlled and policed society. Confirming the same notion are Haralambos and Holborn (2000), Afe (2013) and Emmanuel (2009) when they note that 'every culture has a long list of guidelines that direct conduct in particular situations. These are taboos and Gelfand (1979) calls them 'avoidance rules'. Arifalo (2005) also contributes in the debate giving out that during the pre-colonialist era, taboos were the only measure of social restraint and duty and the foundation of the entire social order. However, another school of thought argues that all these traditional African systems are fast eroding away through the inculcation of Western ideologies and technologies (Eyong and Foy, 2006).

The essence of this study was to analyse the role that taboos have played in the Zimbabwean conflicts either as a restraining mechanism or as a conflict motivator. It is also important to highlight the fact that the conflict that was experienced in the areas under study never assumed an ethnic dimension as to the Shona versus either the Ndebele or whites or the Kore-Kore versus either the Ndau or Venda. Rather, it simply followed purely political lines as to which political party or orientation one followed. However, in this chapter, the focus is on

critically understanding what the other scholars have said and researched on the same subject. The chapter also reviewed other documentation and policies from other related stakeholders.

2.2 Indigenous Knowledge

Indigenous knowledge is infrequently documented, and is usually passed on by word of mouth between generations; but much information is only used in exceptional situations and so may fail to be passed down to upcoming generations. It is often active knowledge that may only be reserved if it is in use. Dora-Hoppers (2001) cited in Maila and Loubser (2003) explains indigenous knowledge as ‘information that is defined by its embeddedness in the cultural network and history of persons together with their development which is the spine of the social, economic, and technical identity of such persons’. On the other hand, Melchias (2001) describes it as what native people have always known and done for ages; customs that developed through test and error and also proved flexible to deal with change.

Indigenous knowledge driven systems are steadily being worn-out chiefly due to the adoption of modernity (UNEP, 2003). Eyong (2003b) also notes and laments the fast erosion of indigenous knowledge and attributes it to globalisation, colonialism, commercialisation, and lack of competent codification, modernisation, collapse of the customary family constitution and role, induced community displacements, and the shrink in the practitioner support. It is this erosion of indigenous knowledge that has affected the relevance and sustenance of traditional taboos in the developing world. Eyong further opines that IK is a critical engine for sustainable development arguing that lack of it means that people will not have a base from which to initiate their developments and programmes.

Similarly, Nyota and Mapara (2008) give out that indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) like songs and children's games are some of the ways that were used to pass on knowledge and history to younger generations. It is argued that, through these systems, children could be socialised into morally acceptable habits so much so that they grew up as up-right individuals.

2.3 Taboos

A taboo is a prohibition due to sacredness or some other reason defined by society. It is enforced by social convention and practice whereby society believes that any violator of the norms will suffer or face some misfortune. According to Osei (1995), a taboo is a derived Polynesian word '*tabu*' which means prohibited. In Greek, it is similar to '*sacer, Kadesh*' in Hebrew, '*Nso*' in Igbo, '*Zviera*' in Shona, and '*mmusu*' in Akan language. The essence behind taboos or avoidance rules, according to Gelfand (1981) and Dodo et al (2012) is that a child in a family must conform and behave like others in order to avoid an unusual occurrence. Any unusual behaviour in any member of the family would mean an outcast. Similarly, people were expected to be afraid of some behaviours and activities that they were involved in because of the repercussions thereto. Thody (1997) however defined a taboo as a precautionary belief that hampered open exchange of ideas as it forces adherents to follow its dictates or face punitive measures. Most taboos have their roots in the history or the myth of a community and initiation into a deity service. Taboos are not cast in stone that they are static across generations and time. Instead, they can be changed, wiped off or have others devised and added onto the list depending on the prevailing circumstances and challenges, geographical location, culture and people's perception towards their resources and heritage. First and foremost, societies make norms which serve as guidelines for expected behaviours in particular societies, times and situations. It is from these norms that laws, folkways, taboos

and mores are derived. A folkway is a practice for daily behaviour that individuals adhere to for convenience though no violation of any of it has serious consequences. On the other hand, a more is a practice based on morality and the society strongly believes in it so much so that any violation usually results in condemnation. Unlike the above two norms, a law is a practice that is on paper and enforced by an authorized organization. It is mandatory that its violation results in a particular sentence (Giddens, 2001, Macionis and Plummer, 2002).

Taboos were traditionally regarded as part of traditional education system. According to Omobola (2013) and Kagan (2012), societies were expected to socialise their youth into their customs, religious philosophy, ethical values and societal views of the entire community through its traditional education. There are also arguments to the effect that traditional education was responsible for the continued existence of some societies prior to the coming of contemporary technical inventions.

Taboos may cover a variety of subjects, such as restrictions on same family marriages, restrictions on consumption of some foods, conditions on dressing and killing a person or killing a sacred animal. Interestingly, most of the scholars around the concept of taboos acknowledge that while taboos have over the years managed to control societies, there is an element of falsehood. These taboos are then grouped by Gelfand into six categories according to the following themes; those that talk about avoidance of danger, good behaviour, living in the correct way, successful pregnancy, healthy living, and those conveying religious teachings while Madu (2002) indicates that when something is said to be taboo, it must not be touched, talked about, or looked at. Meanwhile, Thody (1997) also categorises taboos into five distinct forbidden groups; actions, nourishment, themes, ideas, and signs.

Meanwhile, Bozongwana (1983) goes on to classify the same taboos in a slightly different manner from that of Gelfand. Bozongwana's approach groups them according to the people who are affected by them. As such, the classification is according to those that affect men, those that affect children, those that affect women, and those simply classified as general taboos. Tatira (2000) presents a slightly different perspective to the background of taboos. This is evidenced in the argument that taboos were traditionally a mechanism to regulate and control the behaviours of children when they grew up. The emphasis is on children and the argument is that children's behaviour could only be moulded at an early age. Subsequently, Tatira thematically groups these taboos into 5 categories; those that are meant to guard against bad behaviour, those that warn against danger, and those that conscientise children on issues pertaining to health, those that are meant to prevent cruelty, and others grouped under miscellaneous. All these scholars' approaches to the question about taboos are different though they seek to relay the same message. This is seen in Pfukwa (2001) conception of taboos where he views them in their practical usage. Precisely, Pfukwa groups them according to those that related to wild animals and birds, those that related to land, and those that related to people. Although he had specific categories, he went on to talk about other specific taboos for specific events and activities. No wonder why he elaborately talked about taboos related to the Zimbabwe's liberation struggle.

Taboos are one of the earliest social systems that regulated society (Cassier, 1972). Over time, these were developed and more of them were added by religious priests and community leaders as a way of over-hauling the entire social system. Again, over time, the same religious leaders assimilated them into their sects or belief systems and transformed them into something more sacred and supernatural as they consolidated their power and control over societies. The few taboos that were not assimilated and remained in the minority religions or

cultures like the traditional African system were rubbished as ‘savage taboos’ by philosophers and anthropologists like Cassier and others. Overall, from the arguments posited by various scholars, it can be safely observed that taboos are strong sanctions required for the effective control of societal behaviour.

It must however be realised that in many African societies Zimbabwe included, esteemed taboos are now on the periphery and rapidly phasing out mainly due to socio-economic challenges and the wave of modernisation that has flown across the borders. Their role of protecting the natural surroundings, order, peace and the uprightness of African societal structures has been exposed to extinction (Mawere and Kadenge, 2010).

2.4 The Shona People’s Beliefs about Taboos.

Since time immemorial, the Shona people have always believed in the Supreme Being (God) and have been worshipping through the ancestral spirits. That religious structure worked effectively so much so that whatever people prayed for was delivered. The Shona people also believed that whenever a person disrespected a taboo, the ancestors sent serious misfortunes and unusual occurrences as a way of punishing. If one killed another, no matter the reason, the spirit of the dead could then return to the perpetrator usually at night and inquire why the murder was committed. The appearance of the dead is so traumatising that the perpetrator and the rest of the family are forced to seek amends. There are also instances when the dead can appear as a ghost to several other members of the perpetrator’s family as a way of influencing the entire family to make amends and compensate. However Masaka and Chemhuru (2011) think otherwise as seen in their argument that Shona taboos only stir-up fear in people, which has no fundamental significance, “but is a means to an end” - good behaviour.

In most cases, the spirit of the dead comes to a member of the perpetrator's family in a trance and outline the circumstances surrounding the murder act as a way of ensuring that everyone is convinced that it is the spirit of X deceased. The spirit then makes relevant demands to the perpetrator failure of which people may start to die mysteriously. The entire family may in other cases, perish except the perpetrator so that he/she pays up. The Shona people also believe that once a person has killed (*kubata ropa*) another say in a war situation, he/she is supposed to be cleansed to remove all the evil spirits associated with that war. This is done through a special traditional process that involves traditional brew. According to Honwana (1999), this avenging spirit called '*ngozi*' in Shona is similar to the ones in Mozambique which are called '*mipfhukwa*'.

It is also believed by the Shona people that whenever a taboo has been tampered with, the entire community may be able to tell through the subsequent implications in the community. In some cases, there may be droughts, unusual occurrences of say baboons in a village contrary to the norms and trends and that people may lose their teeth in the event that they ate their totems. In the Shona culture and traditions, there are several taboos that are recognised and whose infringement can be deadly. These and several others have been respected and help to regulate society.

2.5 The Zezuru, Taboos and Conflict Prevention

It should not surprise that the study only focused on the Zezuru people and yet initially, it indicated that there are several ethnic groups in the two areas under study. What must be realised is that the Zezuru people constitute the majority (about 96%)¹ of the entire

¹ According to a source within the Registrar General of Births and Deaths' (RG) office in Bindura. RG is the department responsible for the registration of people in Zimbabwe.

population. In this discussion, effort is made towards establishing how the Zezuru people understand the role of traditional taboos in conflict prevention processes. The Zezuru traditions and culture must be approached from a background whereby the Shona² people established themselves in what is now called Zimbabwe in about 850AD, according to Samukange in Ngubane (1976) and have likely therefore established better and firmer than any other group around.

The Zezuru people have for a long time firmly believed in African traditional systems as part of the social regulatory mechanisms. This has been noted by various scholars (Chiwara et al, Tatira, Pfukwa, Masaka and Chemhuru and Dodo et al) who all agree that taboos, traditional leadership, traditional spirits, customs and cultural values have collectively maintained and nurtured peace, harmony and development. The Zezuru people have also employed various effective modes in attending to different conflict situations; *unhu/ubuntu*, the court system (*dare*), the elders (*tete/sekuru*), compensation (*kuripa*), taboos (*zviera*), silence (*kunyarara*) and retaliation (*kutsiva*) (Dodo et al, 2012).

2.6 African Community Living

Life in the African concept is cherished and highly valued. Life is celebrated differently in different communities and people sacrifice some of their valuables to sustain it. It is usually defined by happiness, socially and psychologically and not so much by financial resources. Africans usually regard the concept of rural communities as the basis of one's well-being as most people are brought up and educated in the rural areas, after marriage, they establish

² The Shona people were only created as a nation in 1838 following the arrival of the Ndebele people from the south. Prior to that, they were unrelated and distinct smaller ethnic groups simply identified as 'people'

retirement homes and finally get buried in the same rural areas. This is based on the pre-colonial settlement lifestyles.

Periodically, Africans and in particular, Zimbabweans visit rural homes where the rest of the extended families are based with a view to rekindle relationships and familiarise with their traditional customs. Besides, they also join members of their rural communities to commemorate significant traditional rituals and cultural proceedings like appeasement of the dead (*kurova makuva*), initiation, title-taking, marriage ceremonies, memorial ceremonies, spiritual dance ceremonies (*bira*) and enthronement of village bulls (*kudira mombe dzemusha*) amongst several others. Some of these efforts are part of the society's endeavour to sustain some of the traditional taboos so that they remain relevant.

For traditional Africans, society is more than simply a social assemblage of persons bound together by reasons of natural origin or common interests and ideals. Family in the African understanding refers to a wide array of persons in the extended family including brothers, cousins, sisters, uncles, aunts and grand fathers and great grand-mothers (Gelles and Levine, 1995, Hornby, 2000, Macionis and Plummer, 2002 and Schaefer, 2004). All these relatives are accorded equal respect according to their positions in the family hierarchy and ages. It is from these families that society develops characterised by oneness, courtesy, honest, respect and trust.

Traditional African lives are clearly defined by several traits chief amongst them being; the belief in ancestors as elucidated by Mbiti (1990) that ancestors were the closest connection between the physically living and the spirit world. Mbiti (1990) posits that the departed symbolically return to their human families from time to time as they still knew and had

interest in what is going on in their families. African lives are also defined by initiation rites that graduate young adults into responsible adults. These are varied like the ‘*chinamwari*’ in the south-east of Zimbabwe, the ‘*Sande*’ in Liberia, and the ‘*ng’hula*’ in Tanzania.

On another note, Gwaravanda (2011) in Matavire (2012) alludes to the theory of ‘*unhuism*’ which is grounded in the critical upholding of traditional values and beliefs. Matavire (2012) goes on to argue that any violation of these ethical values enshrined in ‘*unhuism*’ is a transgression to the whole neighbourhood and is punishable. In Zimbabwe, chiefs are the custodians of all values of ‘*unhu*’ and have moral and social power to effect remedies should there be a transgression. The same chiefs also define what is morally good or bad.

2.7 Important Traditional Institutions

Essential sanctified institutions with significant religious aspect in the lives of some Africans and in particular, Zimbabweans are varied. However, all of them fall under the authority of traditional leaders who, through their natural power invested in them by traditional cultures and values can mobilise resources and development. Most of the sacred traditional institutions; public shrines, elderly, children, names, places, cemetery, and mountains play a role in the management and administration of local development as outlined by Lutz and Linder (2004).

Some of the traditional institutions have been maintained to preserve some particular taboos, especially those to do with societal behaviour regulation. This is achieved through instilling fear in the members of the society. Understanding how traditional institutions regulated society can in this study also help explore how the same institutions could also regulate societal behaviour especially in times of politically motivated violence. The fears of the

traditional sacred shrines by the public especially cemeteries and some mountains have helped maintain social order in local communities. The elderly, usually considered wise are members of the traditional governance councils headed by chiefs and kings and whose mandate is to administer development and planning (ibid). The same constituency is also responsible for conflict resolution systems in their neighbourhood though in some instances with the help of some shrines considered sacred. Children in most African institutions are regarded as special members of communities whose chief responsibilities amongst others are to ensure the growth of family names, bind families together and as peace ambassadors in families.

2.7.1 Public shrines

Public shrines are some of the most significant holy institutions which help appreciably in promoting the sense of community. In traditional African society, these shrines are encircled by all sorts of taboos and prohibitions (Mbiti, 1990). There are some shrines that uphold the identity of a people and these are jealously guarded. To ensure that people do not arbitrarily abuse these, elders come up with regulations as a way of controlling either entry or usage. There are also other shrines that depict the history of either a community or a place. Their maintenance in an orderly manner reflects how that community has maintained its values and resources which eventually become a heritage. Such shrines could include places of prayer and cemeteries.

2.7.2 The elderly

Elders are aged and experienced members of the community who are endowed with social ethics and guide the rest of the community. They are a group of the society that plays a catalytic function in promoting peace and harmony and also teach and counsel on moral

values (Kasomo, 2010). Whenever, traditional programmes or rituals are to be conducted, it is the elders who either lead or guide simply because they have both the experience and the knowledge about the processes. They also communicate directly with ‘God’ through respective spirits. In terms of morality and societal order, elders draw parameters on which society follows. It is some of these parameters that eventually led to the concept of taboos as a regulatory mechanism.

Similarly, elders can also play an instigation role in society. Because they are a revered group, elders’ words and positions are taken seriously and considered as part of the societal policy (Ki-Zerbo, 1990). Another valuable feature in the concept of community elders is the issue about respecting all the elderly regardless of any existing relationship as pronounced in the concept of ‘*unhu*’.

2.7.3 Children

Most children’s lives in the developing world, Zimbabwe included are defined by war, poverty, starvation, undernourishment, diseases, abuse, subjugation, neglect and lack of education amongst others. Despite this unfortunate negative tag on their forehead, they are supposed to play an important role in the traditional African society. In the traditional African society, children represent the wellness of a marriage that was understood to be divinely instituted and endorsed (Gecaga, 2007). Therefore, bearing children was a sanctified responsibility that needed to be executed for passing-on life meant partaking in the divine prerogative of conception.

In the traditional African society, having many children was permitted simply to ensure the continuity of the family name and for labour purposes. However, not all of the children

would then be adequately provided for leading to various delinquencies: criminality, prostitution, drunkenness and violence. Children were also an economic investment in light of future marriages and that they served to build relationships with other communities from which marriages would have been created (Gecaga, 2007).

As children grow, they are gradually socialised into specific roles and positions which they are expected culturally to assume like being fathers and mothers and heirs to inheritance. However, most of these traditional processes seem to be losing value and place in the face of globalisation which is influencing rural-urban migration and ‘technologisation’ of the social systems amongst others.

2.7.4 Names

In everyday lives, people take names as symbols of identity only without any other value attached to it. However, in traditional African societies, personal names have meanings, and can influence a person’s character, deter or boost life opportunities (Gecaga, 2007). Names also create a link between name and cultural background, and thus, present some information about a culture. Most African names tell stories, change nonfigurative ideas to stories, celebrate extraordinary events the family would have experienced, or some event that occurred about the period of a child’s delivery and most importantly, enhance and raise cultural superiority and distinctiveness, while at the same time displaying a particular people’s approval of their mores.

2.7.5 Songs

Songs are part of social entertainment and mode of communication that has been in use since time immemorial. Traditionally, songs and dances have been used for various reasons by various communities but chief amongst them; communication, entertainment, morale booster and as consolation in times of bereavement. In other instances, they may be used to define and distinguish a people and their cultures. Songs are a form of communication with a functional role accompanying birth, marriage, hunting and political actions. Songs are usually used to fight off wicked spirits and to give respects to family spirits. There are also songs and dances that push individuals to murder others and perform other acts of violence in community (Ziegler, 2007). In other terms, song expresses the frame of mind of the people and evokes feelings. As part of social arts, song and dance bring to the fore issues of free speech, artistic authority, and responsibility and accountability for artistic design. Art: song and dance clearly displays massive influence that it has and how that power can be taken advantage of and employed in risky and lethal ways. Politically and during war situations, songs and dances are used to motivate combatants and warriors to fight and defeat the opponent. Dance also uses figurative movements, masks, dressing, body painting and other artefacts to send messages.

Song and dance can variedly relay messages through the content of the songs (lyrics), the attire of the singers or the manner in which either singers or dancers gyrate to the rhythm of the song. Though there are cases when listeners or viewers may misinterpret song messages or dance routines to mean bad, there are also instances when the literal messages will be meant to achieve immoral and bad ends.

2.8 Traditional Leaders

Ever since time immemorial, Africans have had community leaders who are ranked at varying levels, all people oriented and appointed through traditional channels of consulting with the ancestors and the entire community leadership. These range from the highest paramount chief, the chief, headmen, kraal-head, village-head, and the family or clan head. Within the same structures, there may be other titles that may be subordinate to the ones cited above. These can be the chief's messenger, the chief's council members, the chief's wives, the clan's eldest nephew, the aunts and the uncles. Nowadays, the inclusion of the latter category into the traditional leadership system appears unusual but these are the core group of the leadership circles. All these had an almost similar role of administering life and resources in various forms from a traditionally expected style and control relations and social conduct in a traditional area. Therefore, leadership is not a new phenomenon in the African circles.

Traditional leaders are viewed from various perspectives some of which have brought a lot of controversy around the concept of traditional leadership. When it is supposed to be traditional, there are some schools that are advocating for the modernisation and technologisation of the area. This school is called the modernist and is advocating for non-sexist and non-racial appointment of leaders which other schools have categorically described as unacceptable and alien. The other school of thought called traditionalist believes that the institutions of traditional leaders seek rural governance, appropriate policy execution and ultimately equitable development through; dispute resolution, land allocation, acting as a symbol of peace and unity and enhancing culture and traditions.

Traditional leaders are hereditary local neighbourhood leaders who are selected through rules of succession. In Zimbabwe, traditional authorities were incorporated into government

system based on the Westminster model and exist through the Traditional Leaders Act (Dodo, 2013). Most traditional authorities' legitimacy is derived from their history and culture, which are usually supported by divine references (Lutz and Linder, 2004). Wherever they are selected, they are respected and listened to by almost the entire community. This respect also to some extent was derived from the fact that the leaders made fair judgements, fair treatment of all their subjects, made popular decisions, and their wisdom. In the pre-colonial phase, traditional leaders had enormous powers and authority over land and their subjects who were but comfortable as they understood their terms of references. The coming of colonialism ushered in a new dispensation in as far as leadership, authority and accountability are concerned. The colonialists according to Ribot (1999) literally turned all the traditional leaders into puppets to stir their mode of governance. Ray and Reddy (2003) cite various cases in Cameroon and Northern Ghana, where colonialists randomly selected individuals as conduits of communication before they were gradually called chiefs. Elsewhere in Congo, Beke (1999) says Belgians are also on record for imposing chiefs on nations that had no traditions of chieftaincy. This was also experienced in the Chiweshe chieftainship dispute in Chiweshe communal area between 1997 and 2000. Apparently, the potential candidate in the house that was due to take the throne was considered 'politically incorrect' and the dispute was fanned by the District Administrators' (DA) office as a way of buying time. A similar 'crisis' was also experienced in the Makope chieftainship also in Chiweshe communal area between 2005 and 2007 (DA, 2007). The selected candidate was removed by the DA's office for sympathising with the opposition political party.

Similarly, Pwiti and Mvenge (1996) who have written widely on this area posit that traditional leadership systems were in place to maintain respect for and the survival of cultural sites. This was managed through the sustenance of taboos, restrictions, myths and

ceremonies, and these measures were effective in ensuring the survival of heritage and cultural practices. Traditional leadership systems promote responsible and controlled utilisation of resources. A sacred shrine at the site of Domboshava, Great Zimbabwe, Ntabazika-Mambo and Mutota Ruins present an example of how taboos and restrictions worked as effective tools for managing cultural landscapes. In the same vein, the communication between spirit mediums and God was also facilitated by the traditional leadership systems, which mobilised most of the material resources needed for the ceremonies and the organisation itself.

Historically, traditional leaders had an important responsibility that stretched from social, economic, moral to political. They catered for the welfare of the people by providing with land for agriculture and grazing which was core in the lives of the people economically. Traditionally, especially in Zimbabwe, there was a programme called '*Zunde Ramambo*' (Chief's granary) which provided for the poor and orphans. The same facility also helped in times of droughts and other emergencies. The security of the local communities and defence against external aggression was also a responsibility of the traditional authorities.

Traditional leadership controlled most of the developmental projects. Culturally, it is believed that they are the only agencies who can convince the ancestral spirits to accept or adopt any new concepts or ideology in the area. They also serve as the intermediary between the people and the government. No wonder why donors and government agencies seek permission from these for any developmental work. The development of Dande dam in Mashonaland Central province, Zimbabwe was retarded after the traditional leadership had objected to the idea. To some extent, this could also explain why in 2007, the whole government was taken for a ride by Rotina Ronica Mavhunga, who claimed to be a Spirit

medium and that she had discovered 'pure diesel' in the Chororodziva hills area in Chinhoyi (The Herald, 2007). In a feat of confusion and excitement and in the wake of a serious shortage of fuel in the country for over six years then, the desperate government had no option but to fall into the trap by a 'traditional healer'. Honestly, when no one learned person could believe that, all the scientists, engineers and a platoon of service chiefs and technocrats in government joined hands to form a committee to manage oil extraction for the nation. In 1999, a traditional chief in Mashonaland East province led his people into the commercial farming land demanding to be resettled in a bid to de-congest the communal areas amongst other reasons. Similarly, in 2000, Chief Mabhena became famous when she led her people in the popular campaign for political change in her area of authority. Subsequently, her efforts led to the election of a female candidate of her choice as a Member of Parliament (MP) in Umzingwane constituency (Dodo, 2013).

Traditionally, like anywhere else the world-over, the traditional leadership system has always served as mediators, judges and advisors whose verdicts were respected and taken with high esteem unlike the present day politician's rulings which are plagued with corruption, inconsistencies and biases. Where people could not make acceptable judgements, traditional leaders could resort to the spiritual sphere for advice. Traditional leaders were also responsible for peace, stability and for resolving disputes. Their ability to adjudicate in times of conflicts and social disputes played an important role in minimising chances of wars and or conflicts. This therefore meant that they had to be impartial, fair and effective in their judiciary systems if they really wanted to enforce community order.

According to Rukuni (1998), management of communal grazing areas and other natural resources could only be improved by strengthening village-level traditional leadership

institutions. Rukuni argues that the people who use the resources on a daily basis are the best to manage their resources free from foreign interference. The strong belief in cultural traditions within African communities also earns traditional leaders respect as these are also believed to be administrators of such institutions like the rain-making celebrations, acceptance of the dead from the wilderness ceremonies '*kurova guva*', appeasement of the avenging spirits '*kuripa ngozi*' concepts very much respected and honoured by Africans. In the majority of cases and traditionally, chiefs and even village heads were known to be elderly personalities whose wisdom could not be questioned. Traditional leaders in most of the countries where they still exercise their roles are also into tourism development. In 2009, Chief Mukuni Ng'ombe of Zambia established a shrine in his area that was aimed at promoting cultural tourism. The tourism venture also covers some of the Zimbabwean chiefs who fall under part of the Mukuni chieftaincy that has roots in Zambia and some of the chiefs include the following: Wange, Nekatambe, Mvutu, Mutshana and Nelukomba. This venture comes along the same lines as those of the Great Zimbabwe settlement, which today serves as a tourist attraction (Dodo, 2013).

In light of the traditional leadership concept in Zimbabwe, the law provides for the recognition of this position in society albeit restricted and subservient to the modern court system. It has also been established that the responsibilities and roles ascribed to respective traditional leaders differ depending on the following: region, culture, age, customs, precedence and capabilities. However, according to www.mlgpwud.gov.zw, in Zimbabwe traditional leaders particularly chiefs' roles are wide and involving. First and foremost, a traditional leader is a head of the community under his/her jurisdiction who then is supposed to supervise headmen and village heads. Through the traditional leadership structure, Chiefs oversee the collection of village levies, taxes, rates and charges payable in terms of the Rural

District Councils' Act. According to the Zimbabwean laws, the guardian and defender of all public property is the chief who ensures that all the roads, telephones, dip-tanks and wells amongst others are kept in good order and safely.

In 2007 the government of Zimbabwe established an Employee/Community Share Ownership Scheme or Trust (E/CSOS/T) to allow employees and communities to benefit from local natural resources under the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act (Chapter14:33), which was passed by parliament in 2007, (GoZ, 2007). This concept was copied from South Africa, where the Bafokeng people are into joint ventures with some platinum mining conglomerates that remit royalties for the local development (www.uneca.org). While Mungwini (2007) posits that the Zimbabwean government has instituted a variety of measures towards the empowerment of traditional leaders, the researcher also realises that the same constituency is now being used by the ruling regime to oppress innocent people and coerce them into voting for a specific political formation ahead of their choices. Some of these traditional leaders, according to Mungwini (2007) have either threatened their subjects with expulsion from their villages, denied them relief food in times of hunger or even mobilised idle youth to assault their subjects. To achieve this hegemony, the regime has made use of material incentives like provision of vehicles, houses, financial allowances, social amenities and special recognition in society.

Equally, traditional leaders have also failed in their mandate in various areas either due to structural challenges or constitutional deficiencies. The dilemma with the traditional leaders is that the field has been over-politicised to an extent of being given directives by mere District Administrators (DA). Most of these leaders, out of ignorance and growing poverty, have had to bow before the DAs in anticipation of 'favours' in the form of wages and other

perks. This lack of an alternative escape route has also helped in the failures of the traditional leadership system. Resultantly, traditional leaders have dismally failed to sustain the relevance of traditional taboos especially in restraining conflicts and behaviour regulation.

In various African countries, traditional customary law is informed by culture and traditions which usually view violence against women as normal. This normalcy becomes part and parcel of communities' and national behaviour. This practice has also affected the provision of education to women and girls thus leaving them behind economically, politically and socially. Globalisation has also played a role in destabilising the smooth development of traditional leadership and its systems. This has negatively affected the development of traditional systems as the geographical boundaries have been shrunk, new languages developed, alien beliefs and cultures introduced and technology eroded some of the roles previously associated with traditional authorities. It also brought with it the concept of urbanisation where people from different backgrounds, cultures and religions meet. In these set-ups, traditional laws fail to apply effectively.

2.9 Culture

Culture is the sum of a people's practices that ultimately shape the lives of people. It covers all the creative means through which people adopt to adapt to the prevailing situations (UNDP, 2004, Holenstein, 2005). It can be defined in two distinct fashions; looking at community products and expressions, like buildings, traditional dances, sculptures and another which considers culture as the way people live. Culture can however be appreciated differently; either as defined above or as a system entrenched in the people's lifestyles, that which is gradually passed on to future generations as an ideal practice. It can be good or bad and encompasses customs, religion, and ways of living, morals, mother tongue use, ethnicity

and legacy. Culture is established through groups and communities taking up particular ways of livelihood and is passed on through human interaction. According to Leith and Solomon (2001) and Kotzé (2002), culture may be self-ascribed or assigned: an important trait which helps trace the origins of any conflict. Culture also defines the propensity levels of conflicts and violence for a particular community.

In the African context, conflicts that have led to state disintegration, genocide, deep-rooted xenophobia, serious human rights violations, and horrible mutilations of large numbers of people are a typical example of a culture that has characterised the continent (Ross, 1997, Deng, 2005). While culture is supposed to sustain the belief systems and methods of a particular peoples' way of living, it has in the recent years been defined as a vehicle through which the ills and irregular are passed down to younger generations. According to Leith and Solomon (2001), self-ascribed culture is the way societies describe their own culture and identity, expressing self-importance and self-awareness and protection. It is these traits joining people together like shared language, kinship and other similar habits that then lead to ethnicity. It is therefore not surprising that some of the conflicts and challenges experienced in Africa and Zimbabwe in particular are culture-influenced.

2.10 Some Types of Taboos

2.10.1 Food taboos

Food taboos can help utilizing a resource more efficiently while at the same time helping to protect a resource. Food taboos are often meant to protect the human individual from diseases and allergies (Douglas 1996, Meyer-Rochow 2009) and to preserve and conserve food reserves. Masaka and Chemhuru (2011) give out that there are several taboos that are respected in the Shona culture with regards to food citing that *'Ukagara paduri, vakadzi vose*

vaunoroora vanofa’ (if you sit on the mortar in which grain is pounded, all the wives that you marry die). This taboo discouraged people from sitting on a mortar which is used to pound food; as such, this was considered unhealthy. Given a strong belief in the Shona culture that if one kills a wife, avenging spirits persecute, and no-one would therefore want to sit on the mortar lest he threatens his wife. Similarly, “people are discouraged from sitting on hearthstones on the common understanding that doing so would lead one to murder his wife or one’s wife will die, *‘Ukagara papfihwa, unouraya mukadzi’*” (Masaka and Chemhuru, 2011:136). This practice is also considered unhealthy and dangerous to the person sitting close to the fire. Masaka and Chemhuru also point out that fire, in the Shona culture signifies life through sexuality. Therefore, if one sits on hearthstones, he will be threatening chances of reproduction and that is tantamount to killing.

2.10.2 Health taboos

There are also some taboos that were devised to ensure that people’s health is maintained and regulated. It was important within the Shona culture that health aspects be upheld for one’s health determined one’s life. It is taboo to excrete on the road lest one develops boils on the buttocks, *‘ukawozhera munzira, unoita mamota kushure’*. This measure was devised to deter people from spoiling public places especially roads where passers-by could step on that dirty and spread diseases. Besides, roads are not secluded places for such acts. It was also said that *‘ukadya uchitaura haugute’*, if one took food while talking, he/she does not fill up. Literally, it was feared that if one had food while talking, there may be instances of spitting on other people’s food. Besides, talking and eating exposes one to getting gagged by food and die.

2.10.3 Environmental Taboos

Environmental taboos are intended for the regulation of the ethical use of the environment. Such taboos were devised by traditional authorities as a way of conserving the fast deteriorating natural resources. Jimoh et al (2012) suggest that incorporating cultural norms and taboos into preservation programs may present incentives to communities to protect natural wealth. Jimoh et al (2012) go on to cite Lingard et al. (2003), Schachenmann (2006), Tengo et al.(2007), Jones et al. (2008) and Rabearivony et al. (2008) who report the importance of taboos and cultural laws in the continued existence of forest biodiversity in Madagascar. Colding and Folke (2001) acknowledge that social taboos exist in most cultures as typically clear examples of unofficial institutions, where norms, rather than legislative laws and regulations, determine human conduct toward natural environment. ‘Resource and habitat taboos’ (RHTs), according to Colding and Folke (2001) have roles similar to those of recognised institutions for nature conservation in modern society but have not been adequately acknowledged in this capacity. It is also argued that social taboos offer a variety of advantages chief amongst them being that they are non-costly and compliance is voluntary.

According to UNEP (2003), there are indications that sacred forests are losing value because pressure on the land to supply the requirements of the inhabitants is growing and that traditional beliefs and customs are breaking down. Therefore, coming up with such taboos helps keep away people from further depleting the resources. It will however be realised that some of these taboos are similar in various societies though leadership in these respective areas may not have consulted each other. In Akan and Ewe cultures, the following taboos are some of theirs that help conserve the environment; hunting of animals or fishing during forbidden seasons and sacred days, eating of totem animals such as zebra, mice and eagle and

eating of sacred animals (Osei, 1995). Similarly, these taboos are also found in the Shona culture and meant to serve the same purpose.

Joining in the debate about the role of African traditional taboos in natural resource conservation is Mawere (2012). However, his approach is from the aspect of ‘*unhu/ubuntu*’ philosophy whereby he argues that traditionally communities have been able to protect and preserve their resource simply through good behaviour and ability to adhere to local rules and regulations. Mawere (2012) cites Norumedzo communal area which is rich in edible stinkbugs (*encosternum delegorguei Spinola*) ‘*harurwa*’ and loquats ‘*mazhanje*’ in the local grove ‘*jiri*’ that was widely believed to be sacred. According to the local taboo, it was believed that any abuse of any of the two natural resources; stinkbugs and loquats, would invite the wrath of the ancestors through other terrible misfortunes. This argument is similar to the one that Eneji et al (2012) allude to relating to the sacred groves that are found in Ghana and other West African countries and seen as realistic systems of local strategies for the administration and preservation of natural surroundings in the countryside communities. However, Shastri et al (2002) argue that there are several other means through which traditional biodiversity conservation could be effected other than traditional traditions and cites the following: religious traditions that talk of monastery forests and deified plants, royal customs that relate to royal hunting preserves in the case of pangolins in Zimbabwe and sacred animals like lions referred to as ‘*mhondoro*’ in Shona language, Livelihood traditions which also refer to other resources as cultural and social space and source of livelihood products and services.

2.10.4 Unhu-Enforcing Taboos

These are rules that are meant to force people to adhere to the expected virtues of humanity otherwise referred to as ‘*unhu*’. These taboos simply ensure that there is order and that social rules of society are followed and respected. In the Shona culture and even African traditions, the concept of morality and general good behaviour is supreme if a people have to be considered mannered and learned. Peace, stability and development are anchored on the behaviour of people; people who value the sanctity of life, value others and their properties and people who are tolerant and democratic.

Citing one example of such taboos are Masaka and Chemhuru (2011:138), “*Ukadongorera munhu achigeza, unoita shohwera*” that if one peeps on a person who is bathing, he/she develops pimples on eyelids’. The taboo simply realises that there are some uncultured people who behave in unexpected ways; socially and culturally and therefore sets guidelines for the control of such practices. In real life, peeping on naked people has no such consequences as evidenced in a variety of nude shows and practices the world-over except that it is prone to exposing people to sexual abuse, rape and demeans the other party. Another taboo in the same category is ‘*ukaseka chirema, unozvara chirema*’, that if you laugh at a lame person, you bear a lame child too. In essence, it is immoral to look at other people and demean and embarrass them for whatever their postures. Traditionally, it is believed that God is responsible for whatever form people may be in and therefore, judging may be improper. Laughing at a lame person naturally demeans. Therefore, this taboo was devised to control people from demeaning others with the threats that they too could have children with similar disabilities.

2.10.5 Death Taboos

Murder is among extraordinary or serious taboos in the African cultures, Shona included. The taboo argues that if you kill, avenging spirits will persecute you for you will have angered the highest ancestral spirits. The other explanation is that if one kills, the entire family suffers serious misfortunes that no-one prospers. Closely akin to the murder taboo is suicide. It is believed that this is also one of the most extraordinary taboos whose sanctions involve the denial of proper burial rites and animal sacrifices by the family of the deceased to the ancestors. The explanation behind these two taboos is that a long time ago, people lived in the wilderness. Therefore, their survival depended on their large numbers and so could not afford to have people either killing others or themselves.

It is also believed that if you lie against someone, you will be burnt after death '*ukarevera mumwe nhema, unotsva kudenga*'. It is believed that the spirit of the person whom you will have lied against will liaise with the ancestral spirits in the realm of the dead and ensure that you are recorded in the appropriate registers as a candidate for hell. This taboo was devised to ensure that people do not lie and especially lie against other innocent people.

Having sex in the bush was also taboo in the Shona culture. '*Ukavaka bonde musango haubereke*', if you have sex in the bush, you become barren. It was believed that the ancestors roaming in the forests were going to see it and get angry thereby wishing misfortunes and sexually transmitted diseases. However, traditionally, the explanation was that if the bush is close to the villages, there were chances of getting caught while others feared that having sex in the bush exposed people to insects, dirty and some other dangerous creatures. However, during the liberation struggle, the explanation behind this taboo was that, people involved in intercourse could be caught in the act by the combatants or that the act

could then involve the combatants and ultimately compromises the agenda of the war. Besides, the taboo also helped secure village girls from the wrath of the sex-starved combatants.

Another taboo in the Shona culture states that if you walk backwards, you will be heading towards your grave, *'ukafamba negotsi unenge uchienda kuguva kwako'*. What this means is that if you walk without seeing your way, you will be going towards your burial place. In other words, you will be exposing yourself to danger of injury or encountering vehicles that have capacity to run over you. Another taboo says if you step on a grave, you die, *'ukatsika paguva unofa'*. This taboo was devised to regulate people's conduct towards the welfare of the dead and all shrines to do with the dead. This alone shows how the Shona people value the dead and how they treat life as a sacred virtue. This also ensures that people fear death and as much as possible try to keep away from violence. There is also another taboo which says, *'ukarota munhu akafa achikudeedza, ukadaira unofa'*, meaning that if the spirit of a dead calls you in your sleep and respond, you die. The taboo was devised to ensure that people respect their sleep and that once they go to bed, they do not disturb others by making noise. Responding to calls by the dead meant that one will be responding to a call of death. Whereas in real life, no-one dies for talking after sleeping times, the taboo has managed to control the Shona people's sleeping habits. The Shona people also share a taboo which says, *'ukatarisa munhu akafa mumaziso, anokutevera'* meaning that if you look into the dead person's eyes, the dead will follow you home. The taboo simply discouraged people from seeing the dead unnecessarily. In other words, it was devised to discourage people from killing each other or simply be around where there was violence. It must be realised that the threat of reprimand contained in taboos makes the would-be offenders reconsider their decision because of the sternness of the punishment that goes with violating taboos.

2.10.6 Safety Taboos

The Gikuyu have a practice whereby they remove all iron tools and weapons from the house of an expectant mother since it is believed that metal tools attract lightning which can affect the pregnant mother. This taboo illustrates the level of protection that a mother and her child receive in traditional African societies.

All the above discussed taboos were designed to instil discipline in the members of the community. That way, people could be kept away from violence. The same discipline was also expected during all the election eras in Zimbabwe when communities engaged in heinous acts of violence.

2.11 Social control

According to Chigidi (2009), taboos have always been measures to regulate people's way of doing things and not really prescribe how an activity could be conducted. In other words, taboos simply set parameters on what ought to be done. This follows a realisation by sociologists that in any society, there are some people who violate rules and these are called deviants. However, to take care of such deviance, there is social control which is a measure that societies come up with to enforce the observation of norms. Most societies maintain social control through the use of sanctions, which are publicly devised terms of approval or disapproval. Chigidi (2009) points out that taboos serve two purposes; directing activities and behaviour into acceptable channels and avoiding immediate danger, injury, embarrassment or any other unpleasant consequence in society. An element of acknowledgement to the effect that taboos also served as an important informative and educational tool clearly comes out through Chigidi.

An interesting argument has been raised as to why taboos did not direct on how an activity could be done contrary to its approach of directing how an activity could not be done. This has been interpreted differently by various scholars (Chigidi and Chiwome, 1996 included) who posit that it was meant to leave some room for flexibility and ‘other options’. Suppose when a community catches a thief and are planning to kill, taboos direct not to kill but does not direct on the alternative route to follow. Chigidi (2009) further goes on to state that the avoidance rule is two-pronged: the first prong is a kind of ban while the second prong consists of a statement expressing the effect of violating a prohibition.

Taboos only served their purpose well if they were accompanied by some frightening measures either on the person defying or to one closest like a mother. This fear was nurtured over the years so much so that it became sort of a culture and part of the societal norms. Though this fear was meant to apply to children, it even went as far as affecting adults. That way, the later was therefore expected to be kept away from crime or any other mischief. According to Osei (1995), within the Akans and Ewes of West Africa, taboos are adhered to since it is believed that they are imposed by traditional rulers and priests. Therefore, they may require blood sacrifices for the appeasement and clemency of the gods and ancestors. Taboos symbolize the corner-stone of the guiding principles regulating and directing the behaviour of people towards the gods and the ancestors in African traditions.

2.12 Challenges Facing Taboos

Like any other scholar, Kilonzo et al (2009) notes that while taboos have some important role in society, they have been rendered irrelevant by a variety of challenges some of which have been necessitated by society while others are natural changes impacting on society. Some of

the challenges that are cited include dense population which Haupt (2000) says impacts on the need to observe some of these taboos negatively. Apparently, as more people gather, there tend to be competition for resources and some blending of cultures and systems. Resultantly, this fusion erodes some of the previously recognised taboos. Nyaundi (2003) and Schaefer (2004) posit that secularisation leads to a reduction in the significance of the ideals institutionalized in religion for the integration and legitimization of daily lives in the contemporary society. Also closely linked to the above is modernisation which transforms peoples' lives for the better. It is through that process of modernisation that society abandons some of its traditional beliefs and systems that are considered archaic. Communities also abandon some of their traditional taboos through urbanisation. As people move from the rural areas into urban areas, there are some concepts and beliefs which they condemn as backward. This clearly explains why in urban areas, people eat foods without due regard for the ingredients.

Similarly, Nyaundi (2003) and Schaefer (2004) posit that the advent of foreign religions and the introduction of formal education have seriously impacted on traditional beliefs and systems. All missionary churches damned customary philosophy and practices, as well as belief in taboos and totems. They were regarded as satanic. It is also posited that government sanctions and political interference have also negatively affected the relevance of taboos as some policies do not promote the involvement of local and public participation either in the crafting of laws or in the implementation of same. All the excluded communities tend to defy what would then be expected of the entire community. There are also instances when political authorities come in and dictate what they feel is appropriate for their programmes at the expense of the generality of the population.

2.13 Conflict Prevention

This is an olden practice that has sustained various societies albeit in different forms and understanding the world-over contrary to some scholars (Wallensteen, 2007, Bercovitch et al, 2009) who believe that the concept was started in the 1950 and 1960s. Conflict prevention is a general practice which is used to ensure that issues of instability and controversy are not allowed to manifest. The world-over, societies are encountering challenges from population increase, structural adjustment in the global economy, relocation into bigger towns, environmental degradation and fast social transformation. Therefore, societies have had some in-built mechanisms to deal with such situations. In fact, those societies that have institutions and regulations for the management of conflict and well- groomed traditions of governance are better placed to institute conflict prevention systems. Different societies and cultures have equally different approaches to conflict prevention and resolution. It is integral in peace-building and development work, social transformation and social justice as it is multidisciplinary, multilevel, multicultural and analytic. In short, it seeks peace.

2.14 Conflict Transformation

Like it has been alluded above, conflicts are inherently within the peoples' lives, they make lives change in shape and appearance and they drive development and innovation. If left for too long or if there are no measures instituted to address, conflicts may end up detrimental to both people and infrastructure. It is at this juncture in a conflict cycle that some transformational initiatives be attempted. In this research, it may be prudent to look at how conflict transformation may be important in attending to cases of conflicts through traditional taboos.

Conflict transformation is not about following some set guidelines or steps in trying to resolve a conflict. Rather, it is about a way of looking and considering a particular conflict with a view to understanding its dynamics; the substance, the background, and its configuration. What this simply means is that a conflict has to be closely analysed before coming up with any remedial measures. However, the transformational aspect comes through instituting some measures that change the way people on the ground view both the conflict and their surroundings. In short, it is about restructuring the conflict arena and all other associated variables on the ground. However, various scholars have posited differing viewpoints.

Prominent among various authorities in conflict transformation is Lederach (1999, 2003) who defines the concept from a broad perspective whereby he singled out some of the most important features in conflict transformation. However, before defining, Lederach (1999) points out that it is important to understand how conflict affects change on the ground and proffered the following modes: structural, relational, personal and cultural. In his definition, Lederach (2003) first and foremost identifies the following variables: optimistic orientation and readiness to mediate the conflict, embedment of conflicts in human relationships, 'motor of change' that responds to the needs of the people, and building positive change from the strength formed from the conflict. Others factors in Lederach's definition also include; lessening of violence and enhancing justice, direct contact and social structures and the important connections in human relationships which may not be visible.

From the above definition and orientations, it can be seen that the concept is not an event but rather a lengthy and cyclical process which requires a lot of patience and commitment.

Similarly, in the Zimbabwean conflicts especially those under discussion, all the above cited processes have to be religiously adhered to if these conflicts are to be permanently addressed.

2.15 African Traditional Religion (ATR)

Traditional religions have always been at the core of the indigenous peoples' survival. They have been in existence since probably the creation of Africa's humanity. What this therefore means is that, it is probably one of the oldest religions considering the widely recorded evidence that humanity is known to have first lived in Africa over 25 million years ago and the presence of a primate in the '*hominid*' line of descent, popularly called the '*Ramapithecus*' traceable to Eastern Africa 14 million years ago (Murdock, 1959, Fage, 1978, Malan, 1993 and Middleton, 1995). African Traditional Religion is the belief that has been passed on from generation to generation. Ekeke (2011) argues that ATR is not a fossil religion but one that belongs to the indigenous people and one which they practice. ATR is stored in the peoples' mythology and folktales, music and dances, liturgies and shrines and in proverbs and terse phrases. It is also a belief whose initiator is neither known nor worshipped. According to Durkheim in Moller (2006), traditional religions are almost similar in nature and share the following traits amongst others; the animation of nature by spirits, the belief in totemism, life after death, possession of humans by ancestral spirits and magic. Some of the traits that define the religion have been raised by Ekeke (2011) when he notes the following: that the religion developed from the individual experiences of the people; that it connects the people who follow it with their fore-fathers and that it developed from the peoples' surroundings without anyone having been converted into it like what happens with other religions.

However, as aptly put by Ndoro (2001) and Maradze (2003), the central role was washed to the periphery following the coming of Christianity, Islam and other religions and supported by various means through which it was inculcated into the peoples' cultures; denouncing traditional ceremonies, taboos and rituals. The olden communities valued their religions so much so that they devised taboos as some of the protective measures to safeguard them. In other words, they were an invaluable heritage as was defined as a legacy from the past, what people live with, in the present and what they pass on to future generations, to learn from, to marvel at and to enjoy (SAHRA 2005). Other scholars (Eneji, 2012) strongly believe that it may be a fallacy to think that traditional African beliefs and norms were washed to the periphery, other societies still hold on to their systems like in some Nigerian religions whose belief system holds the ascription of supernatural powers to objects called 'gods'.

The belief in ancestors is an important element of African traditional religions as it is important in understanding the role of the traditional religion in inculcating the ideal of harmonious living among African peoples. Ancestors, according to Mbiti (1990) are responsible for family issues, habits, customs and ethical norms. Therefore, if ever one committed a crime, it became an offence against the family ancestors who then invisibly policed meting severe punishment on people who disregard the hallowed traditions of the community (Ikenga-Metuh, 1987). Africans therefore, try to observe such taboos so that they ensure peace and harmony in their relationship with one another and other supernatural beings. To a greater extent, it is this invisible police mechanism by the ancestors that then deters the would-be offenders from committing crimes and possibly killing others. To the Shona people, the individual realm, the natural realm and the divine realm are connected. The natural world provides home for the spirits that send communication to the individual world while the spiritual world provides direction, chastisement and approval to the human world.

Individuals for that reason have to have a good relationship with both the natural and the spiritual worlds.

Several scholars have posited that most societies have norms of acceptable behaviour, taboos and prohibitions. In that regard, some traditional African groups also have motivational features and incentives through which compliance to the norms of approved behaviour and social ideals are encouraged (Ejizu, 1986). Equally, any deviancy is punished appropriately through some socially established mechanism. According to Ejizu (1986), there are norms and taboos that try to address the need of the individual human person for security of life and property. These taboos include the replacement of a murdered person by another or secondment of a girl child from the immediate family of the murderer. This is expected to, according to the African traditions, 'console' the spirit of the dead and end the avenging spirits from tormenting the living. The fact that one will be forced to surrender his or her baby girl to the family of the victim free of lobola is a deterring measure enough to scare people from murdering others. There are also instances when the ancestral spirits can come in to help regulate social behaviour and relationships in society. This is sometimes done through sending illnesses to deviants and offenders (Chavhunduka, 2001). Such illness is not curable using the modern medicines thus forcing the patient to seek help from the traditional spirits. During the healing sessions, the offender is reminded of the wrongs and taught about other conflict resolution methods that do not harm or short-change other parties. The same beliefs and understanding of the traditional African religion formed the basis on which the Rwandan 'Gacaca' conflict resolution mechanism was founded (Uvin, 2003, Kanyangara et al, 2007, Kubai 2007), the 'Mato oputi' process of Uganda, (Wasonga, 2009), the Oromo-employed 'Gadaa' process in Ethiopia and the 'Guuirt' concept in Somaliland amongst others. According to Kasomo (2009), the local African communities had well spelt-out religious

methods of ensuring peaceful co-existence and settling misunderstandings catalysed by indigenous religious-cultural values and practices.

There are also cultural practices imbedded in traditional systems which mirror principles and viewpoints shared within a community. Each society the world-over has particular traditional cultural customs and philosophies, some of which are harmful to other societal groups such as women and children. These detrimental customary rituals and practices include food taboos, female genital mutilation (FGM); female infanticide; early pregnancy; taboos which stop women from managing their own reproductivity; and traditional delivery practices and dowry price (UN, 1994).

Gender violence in Africa and Zimbabwe included has been coming in various forms; physical, psychological or sexual, at the instigation of traditional leaders. The three-pronged dilemma on the part of women has ignited, fuelled and nurtured challenges for women. It is from these and others that created and forced arranged marriages '*kuzvarira*' and carry and marry '*musengabere*'. The other critical areas where women have suffered are in the inheritance domain where under African traditional customs, property inheritance is said to be the domain for men only and women are discriminated. Widows are also forced into *levirate* inheritance against their will. This discrimination has even affected issues about property rights where traditionally, women were not allowed to own land or any other valuable property except a few household items like stoves '*mapfihwa*' and beds '*bonde*'. All this abuse is contrary to the dictates of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 1966 Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the 1993 Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (Vienna

Declaration) and the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (UN, 1995). At continental level, the abuse of women by traditional systems is also being controlled through; the 1981 African Charter on Human and People's Rights, the Protocol on Women's Rights in Africa of 2003, the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality of 2004 and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)'s African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). Similarly, at regional level, Southern African Development Community (SADC) has put in place mechanisms to control and monitor women's abuse like the Declaration on Gender and Development of 1997 and the SADC Plan of Action for Gender (Stefiszyn, 2007).

Closely akin to the above is that some women are forced into polygamous marriages largely due to poverty and illiteracy and hope to be sustained by men who are believed to be better learned and more empowered economically and resource-wise. Women are married in polygamous marriages to be assigned to produce food for the families and engage in bearing children. King Mswati (3) of Swaziland is now a proud husband to 14 wives. Traditionally, he marries a new virgin girl every year during the annual Reed Dance, which is constitutionally provided for. In other areas, girls suffer forced female genital mutilation (FGM) all for the sake of trying to beautify them for the gratification of men's sexual desires. It is also practiced in the Chiredzi area where they call it '*chinamwari*'. FGM is also widespread across Africa (Nyirinkindi, 2007).

Some quarters have indicated that the African traditional religion's method of resolving conflicts is somewhat bad, irrational and evil given some of the results that have been noted on the ground. The term evil is a common one in the African society especially in reference to the practice of doing what is generally bad to the others with the intention of fixing an old goal or simply to hurt the other part. In most societies, there are measures in place to control

this practice of hurting others' feelings. Similarly, in the traditional African society, there are norms, taboos, laws, customs, set behaviours and regulations which primarily regulate how individuals conduct themselves in the eyes of the community and against others. In other ways, it is a natural way of policing society. Mbiti in Ekeke (2011) point out that all the measures that were put in place to control society are the moral code and ethics of a people. The moral code and ethics go on to cite a variety of bad practices as examples of 'evilness': theft, rape, murder, witch-craft, gossip, inflicting pain on another, assault and several other practices that hurt or cause pain on others unnecessarily.

It was believed that anyone who practised evil deeds would face punishment from the 'gods' and the long dead. Therefore, as a way of restraining people from practising evil deeds, there were measures and oral beliefs that were circulated to the effect that any infringement exposed one to terrible backlash by the ancestors, 'Gods' and the spirits of all the long-dead. According to Mbiti in Ekeke (2011), this gave birth to the concept of taboos in the traditional African society. What it simply means is that 'evil' is in the eyes of the victim and not the perpetrator and is simply a moral element within the society no wonder why there are people who go on a spree of practising evil deeds without realising how much the other part will be suffering.

2.16 Ubuntu/Unhu/Humanity

'Unhu' is the type of conduct that has its roots in traditional African societies and depicts compassion, courteousness, selflessness and sociability between people. In other words, 'unhu' implies an excellent human being; a well-balanced and ethically honest person. According to Samkange (1980) and Makuva (1996), 'unhu' could be deduced from the way an individual behaves; "*loves, walks, looks, jokes, talks, eats, dresses, treats others, sits*

or greets”. Ramose (1999) defines ‘*ubuntu*’ as a comprehensive philosophical scheme that involves reason, metaphysics, epistemology and moral principles; characterised by the strengthening of oneness and team spirit among the Bantu people. It is the same spirit of oneness that, according to Onadeko (2008), moulded African communities ever since time immemorial so much so that they believed that blood was thicker than water. Similarly, Fourie (2008) gives out that ‘*unhu*’ is the ability in African culture to convey empathy, reciprocity, dignity, peace and kindness in its endeavour to build a habitable community.

Traditionally there were several institutions that had responsibilities to socialise people especially children into ‘*unhu*’ and some included the family, friends, school, religion and the media amongst others. It was expected that as children grew up, they copied or emulated the behaviours of either their parents or elders in the family. Most children believe that whatever is done by their parents is the best in life and so would like to follow suit. This explains why in most cases children follow after their parents in real life professionally. Friends too have played an important role in the development of one’s behaviour in life. While some children would have copied most of their parents’ traits, they are also to a great extent influenced by the conduct of their friends commonly called peer pressure. In most societies, most teachers are regarded as role models and sources of knowledge and wisdom. Therefore, whatever they impart on their students is grasped seriously and shapes their way of life. Besides, some schools have particular socialisation policies which seek to mould their students in a particular manner ideologically. Just like schools, religions also play a role in the socialisation of children into ‘*unhu*’. It is sometimes easy to tell one’s religion just by looking at a person’s behaviour; that means that the kind of conduct would have been moulded in that religion. The other of the most prominent agents of socialisation is the media. It is generally thought that the media especially radio and television is the most talkative members of the

family and therefore whatever they say influences everyone listening or watching. Equally, the depiction of some personalities in the media influences how society views them either as celebrities or villains. Whatever depiction has an influence on the lives of some children as they try to copy (Makuwaza, 1996). Therefore, all this socialisation should shape children into good people in society; people who fear crime, violence and conflicts; people who fear to anger or injure others and people who hate to see blood or tears. To some extent therefore, it is the kind of socialisation that determines a person's behaviour and liking for violence.

2.17 Superstition

Superstitions are old-age beliefs by humanity on some unproved and magical actions. It is a concept that is found across all societies, the world-over. Superstitions can deceive people into believing that the performance of certain prescribed acts will magically bring good luck or prevent something distasteful from taking place. In some societies, taboos and superstitions are confused and applied interchangeably. However, taboo has been defined by various scholars and researchers as an entity within superstitions. Actually, it is the belief in superstition that has brought about the concept of taboos, with the latter being a preventive measure to an action or activity that leads to superstitious belief. Kagan (2012) has actually defined superstition as a conviction or a tradition that is not derived from truth or actions that can be verified. Superstitions basically symbolise the fundamental intrinsic fright of humanity, caused by the fears of this world. It is a symbol of approval of our lack of knowledge and boundaries of our power; an indication of acknowledging the grandeur of this world and its system of operation, which is away from mankind's intellectual capacity and appreciation (Kumar, 2009). Similarly, Valeed (2012) argues that most superstitious practices are a result of sham explanations of the natural actions. To others, the concept of superstition

lies in the belief that if people kill an innocent person, they face avenging spirits. This, they believe is just unreal, superstitious.

To avoid superstition-induced misfortune, humanity has come up with spells, amulets, lucky signs, talismans, incantations, lucky numbers, magic rituals, and taboos to influence events and or control life activities (Omobola, 2013). Taboos are therefore one of the several life-regulatory mechanisms that have been devised by society. Superstitious acts may include; avoiding walking across a graveyard at night, hotels avoiding the 13th floor, soldiers keeping mascots for luck and not burying the dead at midday amongst others. Continued adherence to the superstitions eventually over time transforms into a taboo.

Closely akin to the question about superstition is the concept of myths. Myths are beliefs and unproven stories about a people that are passed on to generations as reality. They have become almost a reality following a lengthy usage of the concept and yet no proof has yet been produced to substantiate myths. They contain information about the people's beliefs regarding the nature and purpose of human existence and the principles underlying relationships among humans, the divinities, and other creatures (Barfield, 1997). Myths provide supernatural explanations for the present arrangement of the world; historically and territorially. They have served various purposes in the lives of people the world-over; good and bad. Generally, myths according to Omolewa (2007) serve the following basic roles: socializing means, educating people, providing emotional and mental easement and amusement to the society. African myths and cosmological beliefs may be oral; carved or wood, clay, ivory, or stone; or acted in dance (Roberts, 1997). In some cases, they are used alongside propaganda so that a particular constituency of people is either deceived or influenced. Myths are what in the people's minds; either what they desire or what they fear

most and are found as conventions, ethics, habits, norms, and behaviour. The belief in avenging spirits in the event of a murdered person is also treated as a myth.

Myths try to give explanation of what introduced the current bad social system and to show that man is meant to triumph over the current discomfort. Structurally, according to Mbiti (1991) and Thomas (2005), a myth is eternal, populated by extra-ordinary 'creatures' and is generally accepted in the society in which it was born. Mbiti further argues that myths work as a language presenting realities for which history does not avail a convincing account.

2.18 Exorcism

Over the years that humanity has been in existence, there have been various crimes and misconducts at all levels in society. Resultantly, day time haunting, weird psychic phenomena, bizarre poltergeist activity, and demonic possession are high so much so that the same people have turned to the belief in superstition and eventually devised taboos as some of the regulatory measures on the ground (Fikentscher, 2004).

Exorcism as an attempt at cleansing a person from bad omen '*kugeza munyama*', has also to some extent, been necessitated by a rise in numbers involving cruelty and taking other people's lives. This has been seen through the advent of ghosts and vampires (if ever they exist). In some cases, the perpetrators of violence may be possessed by spirits of those they would have killed. In others, immediate relatives or children of murderers may also be possessed and speak in unusual languages as a way of delivering a message that one of theirs was killed by murderer X and so demands compensation as prescribed. However, as a way of running away from compensation, one is exorcised to become clean, albeit remaining a short-term relief.

Exorcism has also been used as another way of correcting the wrongs out of taboos. In some of the African traditions Zimbabwe included, it is taboo for a child to beat up a mother and if one does so, there will be serious misfortunes that have to be appeased traditionally. However, there are instances when one is not prepared to follow the embarrassing appeasement procedures and opts for exorcism as a way of suppressing misfortunes (Barfield, 1997).

2.19 Avenging Spirits

Earlier on the research talked about superstition and exorcism in relation to the traditional cleansing of the African people. This cleansing was just meant to ensure that those who had committed cases of murder or other atrocities were free from perpetual torment by the spirits of the dead. What is interesting with the avenging spirits is that even if a perpetrator of crime is convicted in a court of law and serves a sentence, traditionally, some appeasement still has to be done to attend to the soul of the dead and the remaining family. In some of the political conflicts that have been experienced, there have been reports of atrocities of varying magnitude perpetrated by different political youth militia and some other non-youth and in some cases at the instigation of some political leaders.

Some of the reported crimes have had tormenting repercussions especially involving avenging spirits; psychological trauma, mental break-down, strange deaths and weird ailments. The concept of the avenging spirits is an efficient restraint in crimes like murder especially where relevant policing authorities seem to be supportive of the crimes. According to MoB (2011), some of the mental health matters and suicides are related to the might of avenging spirits. To show the level of lawlessness during the period under review and how

much people had resorted to arbitrary murders, torture and immorality, the Provincial Governor had at one point in 2011 warned villagers at Nzvimbo Growth Point in Chiweshe against practising witchcraft following a spate of unexplained deaths in the district which, however have been allegedly attributed to the crimes of 2008 political violence (Newsday, 2011).

2.20 Case Studies of Avenging Spirits

CASE 1

During the Zimbabwe's June 2008 Presidential run-off at Chidzi Township (not real name) in Buhera Central Constituency, Mr Chada (not real name), who was the headmaster of Munda School (not real name), was a Presiding Officer, when political party youth of Party X entered the polling station violently forcing everyone to flee except Chada.

The youth force marched Chada into the bush, accusing him of supporting party Y and murdered him. To cover up, the youth hung the body in a tree. The following day, he was discovered and hurriedly buried without post-mortem.

Chada's avenging spirit (*ngozi*) was now demanding explanation for his murder from one youth and demanding 65 head of cattle. The spirit made these demands through the youth's daughter. The youth took his daughter to Chipinge for some cleansing rituals after which the *Ngozi* temporarily stopped. A few weeks later the *ngozi* possessed another child of the youth's brother.

Following threats to wipe out the entire family by the avenging spirits, the youth's family paid 19 cattle during a ceremony that was presided over by a local chief and headman. The *Ngozi* continued to demand the outstanding cattle threatening the other youth who participated during the murder (Maruzani, 2012).

CASE 2

On the 18th of June 2009, political party X supporters led by a parliamentary aspiring candidate circled the village where Moyo (not real name), Party Y ward chairperson lived. Moyo was attacked by party X supporters before seeking refuge in a pit-latrine toilet.

Attackers stoned the toilet until its concrete roof bowed crushing Moyo. Still alive another supporter gauged Moyo's eyes before another axed his leg and arm bones. Moyo was then dragged behind a Mitsubishi truck to Muti political base (not real name) over 20 kilometres where an identified army colonel was stationed.

On the Colonel's orders, Moyo's dead body was paraded to villagers. The aspiring MP took Moyo's body to Birchnough bridge mortuary where he (Moyo) was frighteningly seen seated in the mortuary after displacing other bodies. Moyo's body was also found outside the locked mortuary a number of times. The avenging spirit has reportedly been visiting some of the leading personalities during Moyo's murder so much so that the aspiring MP has since consulted a traditional healer to cleanse himself.

CASE 3

In June 2008 political party X set up bases and set out some youth to find food for the occupants. The youth approached Mr Sibanda's homestead (not real name) and demanded a goat to which the latter advised them to get any one from the pen. As the youth retrieved the goat, it attacked them injuring one called Mahu (not real name).

Angry about the attack, they went back to Sibanda accusing him of witchcraft before badly beating and taking him to Muti political base where an identified army Colonel was stationed. Along the way one assailant called Peter (not real name) murdered the captive through suffocation. During the suffocation, a black bull allegedly appeared and chased Peter before it mysteriously disappeared. Sibanda's sons who are members of the security sector demanded explanation from the Police.

After about a week, Sibanda's ghost reportedly appeared to Mahu's father who is a businessman at a local service centre. According to Mahu's father, he had brought into the shop large merchandise from Mutare at night hoping to shelf the following day. On arrival on the morrow, all the merchandise had been shelved mysteriously and the ghost appeared again asking to help serve in the shop. The same ghost also appeared to Peter and demanded 100 cattle before he fled to Masvingo (MoB, 2011).

CASE 4

On 22 March 2009, 6 political party X members led by the son of a provincial governor attacked and murdered a member of another party Y at the homestead of an identified local headman in Nemangwe, Gokwe. By the time the case was heard in court on 22 September 2011, the family of the deceased had not yet buried the deceased arguing that they wanted the matter finalised first (Radio VoP, 2011). Meanwhile, the corpse had been reportedly seen seated on other coffins and had even chased away some self-proclaimed prophets who wanted to cleanse the mortuary. Eventually, the father of the leading murderers who is also a Governor had to pay 35 head of cattle and US\$15 000 to the deceased's family. All the accused were also found guilty of the murder case and sentenced to 18 years in prison (The Standard, 2011, MoB, 2011).

2.21 Totems

Totems '*mitupo*' are symbols or artifacts that represent a people and identify people of the same genealogy over time. They serve as a unifier among members of the same ethnic group and control their relationships with natural resources. According to Kilonzo et al (2009), it is generally sacrilegious for an ethnic member to eat meat from an animal of their totem or cut a totem plant. In some communities, it is believed that if one eats his/her totem, he/she loses teeth or invites serious misfortunes. Totemic beliefs also extend to marriage matters; people of the same totem cannot marry for they are considered related. Totemic beliefs have therefore improved peaceful ethnic life and family relations. Society elders and religious leaders employ totems for rite processes and sacrifices in-order to bring peace in the neighbourhood (ibid).

Other scholars have argued that totems are basically used as avoidance entities or protective features for vulnerable animals or plants. This argument is coming from the fact that once an

animal is known to be a clan's totem, it is kept sacred and never killed. The same principle applies with plants. Resultantly, the concept has worked as a conservation mechanism in society.

2.22 Globalisation

When we talk about taboos in this era and age, various thoughts fly around as to the direction we may be taking as most of the activities are destined for the better and a globalised village; where people are leaving behind their traditional practices for the contemporary ones that are spread around the world through the use of electronic media. This then means that the practices that are spread and adopted as international standards are of those who own and direct the media. Such dissemination and standardisation of practices is what is popularly called globalisation though various scholars have defined it differently.

The same processes and practices have over the years eroded and transformed most underdeveloped countries' traditional cultures. However, Ritzer, (2008: 573) has defined it paying particular attention to the aspects that erode people's cultures; "Globalization is the spread of worldwide practices, relations, consciousness, and organization of social life... that transforms people around the world with some transformation being dramatic" while Robertson (1992: 8) refers to globalization as both "the compression of the world and intensification of consciousness of the world as whole". From the two above definitions, it is evident that gradually, various community cultures and traditional values are being compacted into some foreign culture whereby the latter remains dominant. Similarly, in an attempt to define globalisation, Nsibambi (2001) also clearly notes the importance of interfacing of cultural values, systems and practices seeking to boost and deploy economic, political, technological, ideological and military power and influence for competitive

supremacy in the world, aspects which have already been cited by other scholars. Waters (1995) defines globalization as a social process whereby social and cultural beliefs and practices are compacted while according to Ohiorhenuan (1998), 'globalization basically imposes global homogenisation of western ideas in a synchronisation of cultures, values, and lifestyles'. Ajayi (2003) argues that the concept of globalisation is not new and posits that there have been three major phases: 1870-1914, 1945-1980 and from 1980 up to the present. Ajayi argues that this conception is premised on the notion that globalisation is all about interaction and integration; processes which were recorded in Africa hundreds of years ago through trade, slavery and the Africanisation of the continent by the Afri people.

Globalisation has been classified broadly into 3 distinct groups; economic, cultural and political (Kasongo, 2010). It means that these 3 sectors have been redefined along the west's conception of the world. In terms of a globalised culture, what it means is that all the cultures of the less dominant and minority people have been absorbed into those of the dominant groups. The level of domination of a group is determined by the level of investment in the apparatus and resources that are used to disseminate information on the world market. In this case, it is the economies in the north and the west that control most of the media outlets and business corporations that ultimately distribute products deemed to be good for the entire world population.

Also, Sklair (1991) and Guillen (2001) posit that a new culture is in the making and soon taking over from all the world cultures. Dubbed 'culture ideology of consumerism' and said to be stirred by insignias, imagery, and 'anaesthetic of the lifestyles and self-image' is fast moving onto the world market. Through the same process, globalisation is also affecting state structures which society depends on when faced with challenges (Yashar, 1999). Just like

state structures in the form of roles and responsibilities that are in the domain of traditional leaders (chiefs, headmen, kraal-heads and others), other traditional forums that used to regulate societal behaviour have been interrupted and rendered invalid. Prah (1995) and Kwasi (2005) also posit that the advent of colonialism slowly windswept the place of African languages in African economies by awarding the highest esteem to school-education in colonial languages. In the same vein, value systems were grossly altered at the detriment of African cultures.

While other scholars argue that the dynamism in cultures has fermented its erosion by other dominant cultures and globalisation, there are others who still maintain that despite the dynamism, culture continues to give community a sense of distinctiveness, dignity, and connection, protection and holds society together (Fridah, 1998). It is my strong belief that globalisation is a polite and diplomatic replacement for colonialism as both have attempted to undermine the production and sharing of cultural African wisdom of science and technology, development, sociology, conflict resolution, and peace-building (Kwaja, 2009).

2.23 Roots of Conflicts

Whenever there is a conflict, there usually are issues that would have instigated same to erupt and these may be in different forms as aptly outlined by Johan Galtung, John Burton and other researchers. Conflicts have structural and proximate causes. Structural which are the root causes refer to the underlying problems while proximate refer to the triggering factors (Moller, 2003). Some conflicts are dyadic, others involving several parties while some are polyadic. It is also important to realise that the nature of the conflict actors differs from level to level, that is interpersonal, intrastate, and transnational to international conflicts.

Issues that trigger conflicts the world-over differ according to varying factors as proffered by Robert Kaplan and Paul Richards (1998), like Relative Deprivation, which typically triggered conflicts in the DRC and Chiadzwa diamond area in Zimbabwe, resource availability and its distribution, like it was experienced with the oil in Nigeria and farming land in Zimbabwe, and how communities perceive levels of development as defined in the 'Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis' by Dollard (1939) in Moller (2003) amongst several others. However, scholars of the likes of Ibrahim Abdullah and Yusuf Bandura see things differently as they argue that some youth are into conflicts simply due to subaltern, "lumpen" youth culture that is anti-social and anti-establishment in orientation. According to Bandura (1997) and Abdullah (1998), "lumpens" are "largely unemployed and unemployable male youth who are exposed to scandalous deeds, trivial thievery, drugs, drunkenness, and sickening naughtiness".

Coercion according to Barker (2002) and BCPR (2005) is another contested thesis on the causes of conflicts in Africa. According to this argument, youth fight because they are forced to; either by physical kidnap, or owing to lack of other viable options for survival. The consequence of this is that youth are not responsible for their decision to fight, and therefore, ought to be considered victims rather than instigators. This, to some extent explains the existence of child soldiers, most of whom may not have any capacity to consent of make any meaningful decision to join any conflict. Religion may also be a factor leading to conflicts. The infamous al Qaeda-inspired war, the Christian-Islam wars in Nigeria and Algeria are some of the cases within this category (ibid).

Ideology has often caused conflicts in most countries especially during the era when Africa was still a colony of Europe. Ideology is a belief system that explains a chosen order for

society and has a powerful emotional character that tends to combine thought and practice. The West-East conflict was also a typical struggle over world polar ideologies; communism versus capitalism (Fukuyama, 1992). In the majority of cases, grievances may be there for lengthy periods and only await appropriate factors that set off a conflict.

Governance failures in Africa have their roots in various reasons, chief amongst them being the legacy of colonialism. Various scholars and analysts (Matthews, 2001b, Bessant, 2003) proffer arguments to the effect that colonialists left seeds of mismanagement that have started to germinate tens of years after they have left Africa. Most of the scholars accept the theory as true. However, there is also another thesis about demography that was coined by Samuel Huntington and parallelly dubbed youth bulge by the likes of Heihnson Gunnar and others. Closely akin to the above thesis is the education factor which is also said to be behind some of the frictions in Africa. Human Rights Watch (2003c) and BCPR (2005) argue that most of the young adults who are involved in conflicts are either ill-educated or never attended primary education at all. The main argument is that they are influenced into joining conflicts for they have nothing to lose or that they have limited capacity to think on their own or to discern the bad from the good. Clearly cited as a factor of violent competition is the criteria for admission into university in Sri Lanka where Sinhalese-Tamil relations are soured over a process of selecting students called “standardisation”. Interestingly, there is also another school of thought to the effect that while education is supposed to reduce the propensity for conflicts, the same institution can also be a breeding ground for potential recruits. Bhebhe (1999) aptly discusses how St Alberts, Mnene, Chegato and Manama schools amongst several others groomed combatants for the second liberation war in Zimbabwe in the 1970s.

It has also been researched in BCPR (2005) that political involvement of the youth is not providing a means for them to convey their requirements, aspirations and complaints. Therefore, they remain outcast in their own communities so much so that they engage into other immoral activities where they hope to be recognised and or make some benefits.

2.24 Conflicts in Africa

Almost the entire Africa, Zimbabwe included has been embroiled in a variety of fatal conflicts driven by a host of causes; nationality, boundaries, resources, ideology, perception and colonialism amongst others (Jackson, 1998). According to Igwe (2011), the existence of clashes between independent states in Africa has lately gone down, even though misunderstandings among diverse groups inside the same country are increasing because of tensions entrenched in inequalities of supremacy associated with divides along political, religious, ethnic or racial lines. Conteh-Morgan (2004) categorises the various causes of conflicts in Africa as follows: personal causes - banditry, looting, rioting, hate crimes; institutional causes - oppression, corruption, torture, paramilitary brutality, state repression; and social structural causes - poverty, hunger, avoidable inequalities, unemployment. Conflicts can take varying forms and duration of time and various scholars and researchers have also defined it differently. However at the end of it all lay the following tenets; hatred, anger, loss of lives, maimed people, destruction of infrastructure and loss of trust amongst others.

Conflicts in Africa as in most parts of the world were and are still being to some extent, perpetuated by the traditional theory of the Just War (Walzer, 1977, McMahan, 1994) which tries to explain or justify the waging of wars from two main perspectives; one explaining why the option of war is opted (*jus ad bellum*) and another governing the conduct of war

especially the requirement of discrimination (*jus in bello*). The theory posits that combatants have no right to kill just anyone. According to the theory, fighters are only permitted to kill opponents. All fighters, just and unjust alike, must distinguish between combatants and non-combatants, deliberately attacking only the former and not the latter.

To understand some of the underlying causes of conflicts the world-over especially group rebellions, Conteh-Morgan (2004) posits that it is paramount to get the wisdom of the rebels' worldview, their inspiration within a normative-material societal organization. Conteh-Morgan who argues from a constructivist perspective is premised on the ontological postulation that conflict participants are fashioned by the socio-cultural environment (Okoro, 2010) in which they exist making reference to the Sierra Leone Revolutionary United Front (RUF), a rebel group infamous for amputating the limbs of common persons during the civil war, the Mozambique National Resistance Movement (RENAMO) insurgency (1975-1992) and the Zimbabwe 'Gukurahundi' massacres which left thousands killed, tortured, maimed and in most cases deformed through physical amputations (CCJP, 1999, Dodo, 2010).

Africa is littered with cases whereby communities and individual personalities have killed each other for whatever cause without any regard for the sanctity of life and all the other possible repercussions of prosecution and or the avenging spirits. Sometimes, instead of being guided by some of these social and cultural norms, people are overcome by extreme anger and hate that they decide to kill and ignore the dictates of morality. In Kenya there has been a rift between the Maasai and Kikuyu communities in the central and Rift Valley provinces over access to water and pastures since the 1960s. However, animosity rose to unprecedented levels in 2005, when armed Maasai youths attacked Kikuyu farmers in the Mai Mahiu region leaving more than 2,000 Kikuyu displaced. Similarly, inter-ethnic conflicts

between the pastoral Pokot and Turkana of North-West Kenya, lasting from 1969 to 1984 caused widespread economic disruption. Interestingly, Pokot men organised in age-sets, invest time and capital in raiding other communities' cattle, because they want to achieve certain goals in life (Bollig, 1990). In Rwanda prior to the 1994 genocide, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), (Tutsi-based rebel movement) damaged property, recruited child soldiers against their will, systematically killed civilians, displaced thousands, and committed various other human rights abuses as they launched attacks against the Rwandan regime (Human Rights Watch, 2003).

According to Schabas (2002) and Wasonga (2009) the Uganda based rebel group Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) led by Joseph Kony embarked on a torturous insurgency against the Ugandan regime after the 1986 Yoweri Museveni-led coup. Later on in the struggle, LRA turned their weapons on their own Acholi people in the north, looting, raping, killing, destroying villages, and abducting boys and girls as young as eight or nine. This war led to the serious underdevelopment of the northern part of Uganda and the subsequent internal displacement of people. Meanwhile in Zambia, the Lusaka Times (2013) reports that the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) had expressed disappointment at some politicians in Livingstone, Mpongwe, Kapiri-Mposhi and Lukulu West who displayed politics of violence towards one another. YALI is a grouping of youth who are working towards rebuking abuses by politicians who capitalise on the desperation of idle youth in Zambia during election times.

Conflicts, especially violent ones remain some of the major barriers to human development and the attainment of human dreams. While Igwe (2011) acknowledges that there is no usual relationship between poverty and violent conflict, he posits that the Human Development

Index (HDI) is affected by a variety of factors associated with violent conflict. Some of these factors include sexual violence, loss of life, and forced displacement of people. Violent conflict according to Igwe (2011) also leads to the spread of communicable infections, persistent famine and undernourishment, shortage of water, the devastation of possessions, and the interruption of essential community services like education and health. Other less instantaneously noticeable effects are psychological pressure and trauma especially due to the breakup of families and communities, conscription into a child soldier and sexual abuse of women and girls. Eventually, Igwe (2011:5) argues that violent conflicts can also erode the valuable and vital 'social fabrics' and 'social cohesion' developed over years.

It is important to mention that elections in the developing world, especially Africa are a major cause of conflict which has cost millions of lives and hampering individual security and prosperity. Electoral violence according to Hoglund (2009) has bad influence on people and their communities as it undermines the democratic system as defined by tolerance and non-violence. Electoral violence is linked with vice and underdevelopment and has played as a training arena for civil conflict.

2.25 Elections and Violence

Elections have an important function in democracy; allowing people to express their concerns and hold governments accountable. Some of these important roles played by elections in any country were discussed during an Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA) fourth Annual Symposium on 17-18 November 2009 in South Africa by amongst others prominent scholars: Gilbert Khadiagala, David Leonard, Mwesiga Baregu, Jörgen Elklit, Ade Adefuye, Mpho Molomo and Sheila Bunwaree (EISA, 2010). Yet, in Africa and Zimbabwe in particular, high stakes electoral contest results in violence and derails the stability of democratic institutions

(Forero et al, 2013). Most of the elections that have been held in Africa have been characterised by controversies and conflicts of different magnitudes; leaving souls tormented, injured and dead and infrastructure destroyed. Political violence has been experienced in varying modes: destruction of possessions, rape and disruption of public meetings, assassinations, captivity, beatings, attempted assassinations, burning property, and prowling, political thuggery, torture and unlawful arrest amongst others. All this has retarded the growth of Africa and Bekoe (2010) and Fischer (2002) posit that violence in Africa's plebiscites affects between 19% and 25% of the elections. Port Gentil, Libreville, Gabon, Northern Ghana, Niger Delta, Lome (Bekoe, 2010) and Rift Valley, Zanzibar, Mashonaland region, Soweto and Harare are some of the areas that are notorious for repeated electoral violence. It therefore becomes imperative to look at the nexus between elections and violence so that our study of political violence becomes well focussed; knowing where the violence is emanating from and who may be fuelling it. Elections and most of the political violence that has been recorded in Africa are closely related. Electoral violence is therefore defined by Albert (2007) as involving 'all types of prearranged threats; bodily, mental, and structural, meant to intimidate, harm, blackmail a political participant prior to, during and post an election with an intention of shaping, delaying, or influencing an electoral process'.

The Kenyan Presidential election of 27 December 2007 transformed the country from one of Africa's most secure democracies into turmoil where more than a thousand people were left dead and over 350,000 rendered internally displaced persons (CIPEV, 2008). According to Ohito and Obonyo (2010), the bloodshed was directly fuelled by political actors especially gangs like '*Mungiki*' that contributed to the majority of the killings. It was also observed that there were a small number of cases of electoral violence before the Election Day; instead, most of them happened during political meetings and were mainly in particular small towns.

There was also campaign-related ethnic violence in the Rift Valley, an area that records ethnic violence cases every election year as political hostilities and antagonism is transferred to disputes over land. As a result, 41 people died during the pre-electoral campaigns in the Rift Valley area alone (Otieno, 2009). Research has proven that areas that experience violence continue doing so over a period for as long as the features that trigger violence are not removed. According to Bardhan (1997), experience at international level shows that when people mistrust each other and are frightened of being persecuted, the fright might then push individuals to turn to violence as a defensive move. There is also vast evidence to the effect that resource denial, and poverty, can lead to uprising, dissent and civil conflict, especially in the developing world (Collier, 2000, Collier, Hoeffler and Soderbom, 2008). To some extent, this explains why political violence in Zimbabwe is mostly recorded in Mashonaland region.

Most of the violence in Kenya was reported after the elections and obviously a sign of disapproval of the election results. This was directly contrary to the Zimbabwean situation whereby most of the violence was pre-electoral, a sign of intimidatory violence by parties that sought to keep some groups away from participating in the elections. Since Zimbabwe's political independence in 1980, the political playing field has been characterised by political violence. Some of the most prominent cases of violence are discussed in detail under the 'Conflicts in Zimbabwe' segment in this chapter. However, as aptly recited in Dodo (2010), (2012a) and (2012b), each election phase has been marked by severe retribution and punishment of the opposition elements. During the 1980 to 1985 period, ZANU (PF) persecuted its main political rival then (PF) ZAPU before the latter was technically swallowed by the former in a 'coalition' of 1987. The persecution was perpetrated through the '*Gukurahundi*' operation which according to CCJP (1997) left over 20 000 innocent lives lost. The 1985 to 1990 era also witnessed members of the opposition United African National

Congress (UANC) and Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) being persecuted; illegally detained, assaulted and permanently disappearing. The 1995-2000 period laid the foundation of the worst era in the history of the independent Zimbabwe when the labour movement was persecuted following its mass strike in August 1996 and the 1998 infamous 'Food Riots'. The same period also ushered the farm invasion programme which left thousands of workers jobless and homeless (Magaramombe, 2003).

Following a firm foundation for the worst period in Zimbabwe, the post February 2000 Referendum was again defined by violence by state security agencies against members of the opposition politics. It was not long before another phase of violence was witnessed especially in Mashonaland Central province when a Parliamentary By-election was held following the death of the sitting member of parliament Boda Gezi. There was massive scale violence at the instigation of the security agencies as was noted in EISA (2010) that security agencies also play some role; in Bindura, Mazowe and Shamva districts as the government tried to threaten away all potential opposition members from both campaigning and coming in to vote. This phase was later followed by the 2002 Presidential election which was also marked by violence. During the 2005-2010 political era, Zimbabwe witnessed record level violence during a 43-day stretch from May to June 2008 when ZANU PF youth militias, former liberation war fighters and National Youth Service graduates supported by state security agencies unleashed violence on all known and perceived opposition elements. Resultantly, thousands of people were either killed or could not be accounted. This 'moment of madness'³ led to the establishment of a Government of National Unity (GNU) on the 11th of February 2009 (Dodo, 2012).

³ The description of the *Gukurahundi* massacre by President Robert Mugabe after he had been asked to apologise for ordering the massacre of the Ndebele and some moderate Shona people between 1982 and 1987.

In other cases, election violence leads to armed wars as evidenced by the 1993-1994 postelection violence in the Republic of Congo which set the foundation for its civil war in 1997 (Bekoe, 2010). This had followed a case where two contenders, Denis Sassou-Nguesso and Bernard Kolelas had disputed an election victory by Pascal Lissouba sparking violence by respective militias between November 1993 and January 1994 leaving over 2,000 people dead. In ensuing clashes that stretched up to 1999, over 20 000 lives were lost (Ibid). In Togo after the 2005 presidential elections, over 800 people were killed culminating in a comprehensive political accord (CPA). The CPA was primarily meant to attend to some of the crucial impediments to free and fair vote: the makeup of the electoral commission, the establishment and re-examination of the voters' register, the reform of the security sector and the institution of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission. However, despite the reforms, following the 2010 presidential elections Togo was again defined by opposition riots over the credibility of the ballot count (Bekoe, 2010).

Realising the overall impact of the effects of politically-induced conflicts in Africa, the continental leadership came up with some commitments which various individual countries have either signed or ratified as a way of ensuring peace and stability and conflict management. Some of these commitments are; the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Declaration on Democracy, the Kampala Declaration of 2000, the 2000 Lomé Declaration, the Council for Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA) of 2000, the African Charter on Peoples' and Human Rights, the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and the African Charter on Governance, Democracy and Elections (EISA, 2010). The above commitments and several other efforts are expected to

ensure that political violence is nipped in the bud especially in countries that are characterised by violence each time there are elections.

2.26 Human Rights

The world over, the debate about the definition and the criteria for identification of human rights has continued to grow as more people continue to be subjected to inhuman conditions. Most people especially in the developing world have not really enjoyed their rights largely due to ignorance, diseases, post-colonialism, lack of judicial and press autonomy or poverty (Magnarella, undated). It has almost become a tradition that each time Zimbabwe holds national elections; there is violence which evidently creates a fertile ground for the abuse of peoples' rights through rampant and unexplained assaults, selective application of the law, enormous corruption and firm control of the electronic media.

It has been noted that all the victims of political violence and other human rights violation victims have never been compensated in view of the restricted jurisdiction and compromised governance of both the Human Rights Commission and the judiciary (Gwagwa, 2013). Human rights in Zimbabwe could be best protected through the use of a constitution which according to Gwagwa (2013) forbids members of the hard power from actively participating in politics; clause 208 of the new constitution prohibits the Defence Forces, the Police and the Prison Service from active politics while section 9 as read with paragraph 48(2) of the Schedule to the Police Act particularises on the Police force (GoZ, 2013). Apparently, the hard power has been accused on several occasions of abusing its power on a defenceless population. Similarly, the African Charter articles 3-17 define an array of individual rights, including rights to; equal protection of the law, to life and security, freedom of expression, movement, conscience, and political participation (Magnarella, u.d).

2.27 Youth in Decision-Making

Various scholars have posited that just about 65% of Africa's population is under 35 and more than 35% of the population is between the ages 15 and 35. Similarly, about 10 million young women and men who enter each year into the employment market are not adequately and properly absorbed thus leading to either under-employment or unemployment (Barker, 2002, HRW, 2003). According to BCPR (2005), youth is defined variously: chronologically as an era between particular ages, functionally as the period of transition from babyhood to adulthood, and culturally as the roles that individuals play in society while the United Nations (UN, 1996) defines as the age between 15 and 24.

It has also been established by BCPR (2005) that there is no coherent framework for analysing and attending to youth and violent conflict. Instead, what are in use are loose policies dubbed “conflict prevention agenda” which generally analyse the causes, circumstances and dynamics of conflict and the “youth agenda” which also explores the environment around youth as a distinctive group. It has been acknowledged that there are however some policies on children which have been corrupted to address youth and conflict agenda and these are: Convention on the Rights of the Child adopted in 1989 and reinforced in 2002 by the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, which sought to shield children under 15 from enlistment into national armies and for those under 18, conscription by non-governmental armed groups and the 1996 Graça Machel Report on Children and Armed Conflict (CRC, 1989, OPCRC, 2002).

Meanwhile, Kamatsiko (2007) and Quintino and Ayoo (2007) argue that young people must partake in the development of policies, laws and programmes that affect them since they are

both victims and perpetrators. Young peoples' participation in decision-making has demonstrated to be valuable to both young people and their communities as their contributions are based on their insights, knowledge, previous experiences and ideas, hence a useful course of action has been developed and constructive results achieved. Young people's participation also strengthens a pledge to and understanding of human rights and democracy (UN, 2005). It is essential to realise that partaking is not an end in itself. Rather, it is a means through which youth may take part in and pressure processes, decisions and activities in order to manipulate results, get their issues attended to, expose prejudice and exploitation, realize justice and realize their rights.

UN General Assembly defines youth participation as simply made up of four components: *“economic participation, work and development; political participation, youth in decision-making processes; social participation, youth and community gatherings; and cultural participation, the arts, cultural values and expression.”* (UN 2005:9).

However, DWA (2007) in its research on youth participation in decision-making in Angola, unearthes a number of factors dissuading youth participation: culture of social segregation whereby some decisions are taken in controlled forums, rigid organizational customs characterised by highly structured decision-making, culture of apathy and unemployment. The same research also points out that valuable involvement requires that youth affected by conflict be listened to and their views considered in peace, conflict management and reconciliation programmes.

2.28 Conflicts in Zimbabwe

Telling anyone who has never been in Zimbabwe about the gravity of conflicts and violence that the country has experienced over the period post its political independence may be an

understatement of the reality on the ground. However, it is important to highlight the fact that since 1980, Zimbabwe has generally experienced 12 recorded cases of national conflicts: 1982-1987 Gukurahundi atrocities, 1985 election violence, 1990 election violence, 1991-1994 Structural Adjustment Programme, 1992 natural agricultural drought, 1996 electoral dispute, 1997 former liberation fighters' demands for compensation, 1998 food riots, 1999 political conflict, 2000 farm invasions, 2002 political violence and the 2008 political violence. However, Mazowe and Shamva districts also experienced another era of violence during the May/June 2001 Parliamentary by-election in Bindura following the death of the incumbent Member of Parliament, Boda Gezi⁴. Most of the conflicts that have been experienced in Zimbabwe and the injustice thereto, have been at the instigation of ZANU PF party as aptly noted by Makwerere and Mandoga (2012) who posit that the traditional institutions of justice and peace had been swallowed and manipulated by ZANU (PF) leading to a continued structural suppression of the people. Similarly, according to the Solidarity Peace Trust (SPT) in Reeler (2009), it also identifies ZANU PF Youth as the perpetrators of most violence throughout Zimbabwe. Jointly with the former freedom fighters dubbed "war veterans", these groups make up 83% of all suspected perpetrators. SPT also reports that state agents: ZRP, ZNA, and CIO are also a noticeable 18% of the sum perpetrators.

All these national conflicts that have been experienced have to a great extent affected the education sector. First and foremost, whenever there is a conflict in Zimbabwe, the first

⁴ Violence that was experienced during this period was not recorded as the press was shut out of the area by government security agents. Therefore, literature on these incidents is difficult to get if ever it is available. Dodo Obediah and Msorowegomo Collin were imprisoned and tortured for 31 days for documenting some of the political atrocities in this area in *Political Intolerance, Diversity and Democracy: Youth Violence in Bindura Urban, Zimbabwe*. *American International Journal of Contemporary Research*, Vol. 2/6, (2012) p.134-143.

sector to feel the heat is education as the children are either the participants or direct victims while teachers are accused of spreading 'sensitive' information around the communities. In some cases, the schools are converted into political camps or torture chambers so much so that most children begin to associate torture with schools. According to the Progressive Teachers' Union of Zimbabwe report in RAU (2012), during every plebiscite since 2000, Zimbabwe resembles a state of war owing to state-sponsored violence. The report further notes that the attacks on education and the militarisation of learning institutions had reached alarming levels that Zimbabwe was now in the top 9 countries that have a record of attacking and undermining the education sector. It was also revealed in the report that at least 46 administrative districts in Zimbabwe had some political bases where civilians and perceived enemies of particular political parties were tortured and killed (Ibid, UNESCO, 2007).

The 35-day May/June 2008 political violence was first recorded soon after the announcement of the March Harmonised election results. These results followed a 43-day results announcement delay by the Zimbabwe Election Commission (ZEC). However, prior to the results date, there were already signs of an era characterised by violence and intolerance of diverse political feelings (Dodo and Musorowegomo, 2012).

In May 2008, ZRP Officer Commanding Masvingo Province (Herald Reporter, 2008), failed to cover up a story in the private newspaper that ZANU-PF supporters had attacked and killed an MDC activist in the Gunikuni area in Masvingo South. Meanwhile, in Mashonaland East, ZANU PF provincial information secretary urged Zimbabweans to tolerate political differences while he also reported of political violence involving the kidnap of a former liberation war fighter in Mudzi North, arson cases in Macheke and Uzumba districts and torturing people for wearing political regalia allegedly by supporters of the MDC-T (ibid). on

the same subject, Makwerere and Mandoga (2012) reveal that rural areas had become areas of political retribution and flashpoints for all considered ‘dissidents’ and cited the refusal by a Chief in Mazowe in 2008 to sanction the burial of a National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) member in his area of jurisdiction. Apparently, the deceased originated from Chief’s area of jurisdiction and NCA is a civic organisation critical of the 1979-drawn constitution and opposed to ZANU PF policies of patronage. According to Reeler (2009), the participation of respective constituencies in violence differs in magnitude and presents the following statistics which show that ZANU PF youth were the main perpetrators of violence with 36% while the MDC was the least with a paltry 0.7%. Besides these two participants, there also other participants like the army, police, intelligence service, party supporters and other individuals who may not have been identified.

Fig. 2.1 Violence Perpetrators

ALLEGED PERPETRATOR	%
Central Intelligence Organisation	4
MDC	0.7
Former Freedom Fighters (War-Vets)	16
Zimbabwe National Army	24
Zanu Pf Youth	36
Zanu Pf Supporters	27
Zimbabwe Republic Police	24
Unknown	8

(Adapted: Reeler 2009: 32)

Still on violence, RAU (2009) makes mention of political bases as a crucial contributing factor in the escalation of violence. About 41% of the bases identified during the 2002 Presidential election were at schools, with about 78% of them being at primary schools. A

similar study in 2009 also showed that about 20% of identified bases during the 2008 violence were placed in schools such that proper learning activities were severely affected. The study also establishes that there were bases in 46 of the 65 districts in Zimbabwe (ibid).

In view of the above cited cases perpetrated over the years (Machakanja, 2010), there are varied calls that the suspected corruption, violence and political murders of the period under review cannot be swept underneath the mat under the excuse of preserving public cohesion and harmony. According to Machakanja (2010), the generality of the people's feelings are that perpetrators of the most horrible abuses must be brought to justice and that any forgiveness be publicly done as part of a transparent truth, justice and reconciliation process.

Hate speech by some politicians and some leaders has also been identified as another cause of conflicts and instability in communities (RAU, 2012). According to RAU, hate speech is any message, signal or behaviour, script, or exhibition which is prohibited as it could provoke violence or destructive act against a protected or vulnerable person or group. There are some statements that are uttered by some politicians which directly incite people especially the youth to go on the streets and in other instances fight other groups. Statements like;

“Zimbabwe will never tolerate homosexuals” by Robert Mugabe.

“Morgan Tsvangirai is ugly” by Grace Mugabe.

“President we are prepared to shed our blood for you” by Solomon Madzore of MDC.

“You can vote for Tsvangirai but if he brings back the whites, we will go to war” by ZANU PF.

“The service Chiefs will not salute Tsvangirai” by General Vitalis Zvinavashe (late).

According to RAU (2012), hate speeches also have the potential to create enemies in society as evidenced in the case involving The State Vs William Nhongo et al, in 2003, where three ZANU PF members were charged with killing MDC activists. In their defence, they argued that they had followed government press reports which indicated that they were really fighting a justifiable war against the MDC, which was an enemy. The court convicted them of a lesser charge of culpable homicide instead of murder.

While there may have been more cases of torture, violence and murder, below is a list of some of the recorded alleged cases over a period of time in the two districts under study.

Fig. 2.2 Recorded Cases (Actual names altered)

DISTRICT	VICTIM	CIRCUMSTANCES	DATE
Mazowe	And Jul	A farm foreman was shot and killed by Zanu PF militia.	20 April 2000
Shamva	Bari Besa	Beaten to death by Zanu PF youths at Stodart Farm in Shamva.	16 May 2008
Shamva	Banda (Mr.)	Shamva was killed.	24 April 2008
Shamva	Ale Gega	Axed to death by ZANU PF youth militia at Chigega village near Madziwa business centre.	2002
Mazowe	Baso Moses	Died after he was assaulted by Zanu PF youths.	April 2008
Shamva	Dumburai Peter	Murdered by Zanu PF youths.	2002
Chiweshe	Chunga Giby	an MDC activist was killed by Zanu PF activists	20 June 2008
Chiweshe	Chunga Hamy	Killed by Zanu PF youth.	20 June 2008
Mazowe	Chiura Moffat Sokks	MDC activist murdered.	January 2002
Bindura	Gondo Ed	Murdered in Bindura	26 March 2000
Bindura	Miti Try	Allegedly killed by ZANU PF youth and Police officers	2001, 23

		in Bindura.	December
Mazowe	Jedze Gody	Assaulted to death by soldiers and Zanu PF youths	9 May 2008.
Bindura	Hari Chen	Shot dead by armed Zanu PF militia at Chireka Village, Bindura South	11 June 2008
Shamva	Hari Sam	Beaten to death by Zanu PF youths and purported war veterans at Chidembo Village	11 May 2008
Mazowe	Kays Member	Aged 23, was abducted and forced to drink poison leading to his death by Zanu PF supporters	11 May 2008
Shamva	Reza Howard	An MDC activist was murdered	2000, 13 December
Shamva	Reza Peter	An MDC activist was murdered	23 April 2000
Mazowe	Shorai David	Died after being forced to drink poison in Mazowe by an identified army Colonel.	7 May 2008
Bindura	Mamombe	an MDC activist was shot dead at his home by Zanu PF militia	20 June 2008.
Shamva	Madziva Elias	Headman of Ward 8 in Shamva North was axed to death by identified purported war veterans.	11 May 2008.
Bindura	Mandish Peter	Murdered by ZANU PF militia.	22 July 2001.
Mazowe	Manga David	Was beaten to death Zanu PF militia led by identified army majors	5 May 2008.
Mazowe	Mafu Doren	MDC pregnant activist was stoned to death by Zanu PF supporters at Nzvimbo Business Centre	2 May 2000.
Mazowe	Mambo Arthur	Beaten to death by an identified army major.	5 May 2008
Mazowe	Mhende Pats	Was beaten to death by Zanu PF militia led by army Major.	5 May 2008
Mazowe	Mugari Runy	MDC youth secretary for Mazowe district died at a Harare hospital from injuries sustained after being severely attacked by Zanu PF youths.	14 August 2008
Mazowe	Muswa Leys	Died from injuries sustained after being assaulted by Zanu PF militia in Chiweshe.	30 June 2008
Mazowe	Muni Rob	Assaulted to death in Chiweshe.	26 March 2000

Bindura	Ngara Gents	An MDC activist was murdered	5 May 2002
Bindura	Ruwai Irene	An MDC activist from Bindura died from injuries sustained after she was attacked by Zanu PF youths	7 July 2008
Mazowe	Tangwa Givy	Was beaten to death by Zanu PF militia in Chiweshe	30 June 2008.
Mazowe	Tangwa Giby	Brother to Gift also died from injuries sustained after being attacked by Zanu PF militia in Chiweshe	30 June 2008
Shamva	Zano Edy	Was assaulted to death by Zanu PF youths and purported war veterans.	16 May 2008.
Mazowe	Zayi Fungai	was found dead after she had been abducted by Zanu PF supporters in Glendale	23 July 2008
Shamva	Zvawe Kwell	was beaten to death by Zanu PF youths at his home	27 May 2008.

(Newsday, 2008, The Zimbabwean, 2008, Daily News, 2009, Atlantic Council, 2012)

2.29 Ideology

Societies usually share a variety of issues which they eventually begin to regard as some of their identity features. In most situations, this belief in common systems is what may be called ideology. According to Erikson and Tedin (2003), ideology is about beliefs on the appropriate order of people and how it can be attained. While Erikson and Tedin's definition focus on people's beliefs and societal order. Knight (2006) gives out that a particular ideology develops and relays collective values, thoughts, and principles of a particular constituency. The two definitions simply tell us that ideologies are philosophical standpoints which have the power to direct the thinking and views of a people. It defines a community. Ideology is what George Hegel and Karl Marx called "false consciousness" as it was used to deceive people, Michael Oakeshott defined it as a form of rationalism while Edward Shils saw it as a form of romanticism. The term was coined during the French Revolution by a philosopher Destutt de Tracy for what he termed "science of ideas" (Cranston, 2003). However, Cranston (2003) goes on to argue that while ideologies are belief systems, not all

belief systems are ideologies. Some ideologies turn out to be shared so extensively that they almost become components of the commonly acknowledged attitudes of an entire society. A lot of what are commonly recognised as social rights, like gender parity are ideological philosophies of the feminist movements. Most group members acquire ideology from selected intellectuals, experts, and other '*ideologues*' who educate, elucidate, inspire and clearly replicate the group ideologies (Dijk, 2006).

The communities where a particular ideology has been established tend to follow some defined path in whatever they do. Particularly in Zimbabwe, political movements are characterised by some identifiable set of beliefs and values which then set their behaviours. It is from these beliefs that societies embark on conflicts and violence as they believe that their goals are incompatible (Jost, 2006). Precisely, ZANU PF party was founded before the liberation struggle of 1966 by nationalists and hence calls itself a revolutionary cum-nationalist party while the MDC was founded well after the political independence of 1980 mainly by workers, students and the civil society and therefore calls itself a labour-inclined revolutionary party. These two distinct frameworks have over the period made it almost impossible to reconcile the movements.

Established gradually over a period, ideologies play both cognitive and social functions (Dijk, 2006). First and foremost, an ideology is supposed to prepare group members to systematise and manage their behaviour and contacts to meet their aims and interests. Other ideologies also serve to legalise dominance and explain opposition in relationships of authority and manage and position the societal representations collectively felt by the group members. In other instances, an ideology can help define and guide professional conduct (Ibid).

ZANU PF ideology was drawn from the East where it got its military support during the liberation struggle. It must be realised that the ideology believes in the elimination of opponents as was widely practised during the war when all perceived and suspected sell-outs were executed. It is the same belief which is still being employed up to this day in Zimbabwe as evidenced by the elimination of several personalities who are suspected to be enemies and threats to the existence of the party. In the rural areas, the youth considered vanguard of the party also terrorise and kill opponents at will without any regard for the sanctity of life. All what they look at is the protection of their party's interests and continued stay in power. On the other end of the debate lies the MDC party which believes that its formation was motivated by the masses' desire for political change and development. Over the period, it has also continually argued for social, economic and political change in Zimbabwe. As it has been attacked by ZANU PF, MDC has retaliated physically in some cases leaving several people either dead or injured.

It has generally been observed that ideological orientation has various effects on both the intended and unintended people on the ground; influence on political beliefs and conduct; projecting intergroup behaviours and a tool for elucidating the prevailing circumstances or how it should be different (Jost et al, 2009). On the ground in Zimbabwe, ideological orientation has left behind a belief that people from different political movements should and can never socialise and relate positively. This has ultimately seen societies engaged in conflicts.

2.30 Victim

Each time there are conflicts and fights in Zimbabwe, there are some sections of the society that suffer the most while others play perpetrators and enjoying the suffering of the weak.

Those who are on the receiving end largely because of their defencelessness and innocence are what are being referred to as victims in this study. However, the term victim remains debatable depending on the direction that one approaches it. To attend to the debate, there has to be a wide open contest about which persons and communities should be recognized as victims of the respective conflicts and violence cases. According to the United Nations (1985) victim means;

“Person who, has suffered harm, or impairment of fundamental rights, through recognized norms relating to human rights”

According to Huyse (2003), victims can be categorised on the basis of three broad distinctions: individual/collective, direct/indirect and time. In the identification of victims, while there are several factors that are at play, these also count valuably: socio-political factors, legal factors and cultural influences. Within the victim categories, there are what are called first and second generation victims. Huyse (2003) defines first-generation victims as those who have been maltreated during their life. However, other scholars have shown that first generation’s offspring have to stand the cost of what happened and may act like victims, showing anger and resentment. Children are arguably the most vulnerable victims in conflicts and violence. Huyse (2003) argues that girls are another group of child victims who are either coerced into marriage or separated from their families as commercial sex workers. There are also unseen and indirect victims made up of kids barred from receiving education or who are ill-treated at home by parents and members of the family. Typically, these emotions may be found in the relatives of the survivors of the 1994 Rwandese genocide, 1987 Zimbabwe’s Gukurahundi and the 1975-1992 insurgency in Mozambique.

Again, Huyse (2003) talks of ways in which an individual who is already a victim of political violence can be subjected to more pain after the direct cause of victimization has gone. Some of the cited scenarios include: *“rejection of the status of victim, unfulfilled prospects, unwanted effects of victim-centred initiatives and social stigmatization and segregation”*. Such cases are also evident in situations where those people who would have been persecuted are kept in ‘solitary confinement’ and denied medical and counselling services. Primarily, this emanates from the fact that responsible authorities deny the existence of violence and trampling of others’ rights unnecessarily. The other possibility of re-victimisation is through passive victimhood, which is a state in which people shun addressing their pain and shock through silence, disconnection and defiance.

2.31 Offender

It is interesting that the discussion on victims has already been done and what might have quickly gotten into each of the readers’ minds was that innocent people were tormented by nature without any human being involved or influencing. What should be now be clarified is that most of the conflicts that have been recorded the world-over had some brains behind and some willing foot soldiers on the ground. Similarly, in the conflicts that were recorded in Zimbabwe, there were such characters: men, women, boys, girls, the aged and the disabled and their total sum are what are literally termed offenders or perpetrators. Offenders are usually involved in conflicts because of various motivations: coercion, ignorance, poverty, ideology or any other cause like revenge. Therefore, their classifications tend to differ from criminal, political or moral. According to Huyse (2003), the classification of offenders is largely determined by their motive in the crime. Huyse posits that primary or direct offenders are those motivated by a criminal mentality and are subjected to criminal courts to answer charges. On the other hand, there are some who are into crime or conflicts out of political or

moral conviction and these are called indirect offenders. According to Huyse (2003), offences in any of the two classifications emanate from the following factors: direct or indirect returns that they benefitted out of the offences of others, failure to intervene when violations of human rights were perpetrated and through unpremeditated injurious act.

In most conflicts, there is what is called domestic beneficiaries who, among the population gain most from the unfair situation. There are also bystanders and onlookers who are treated as accomplices due to their inaction when approached by victims of conflict. Huyse argues that these' guilty is moral and in some cases these are international parties who choose to remain aloof like what happened in Zimbabwe and Rwanda in 1982, 2000 and 1994 during the '*Gukurahundi*', political violence and the Genocide respectively.

In understanding offenders and their behaviours, it may be necessary to look at the causes or their motivations which Huyse (2003) has identified as: context, politics, ideology, revenge and resource need. Context is the environment around which violence is being perpetuated. In some cases, the offenders themselves may be victims of some deliberate policies meant to sow hate within societies. Typically, this was experienced in Rwanda, where Radio Mille Collines provoked the Hutu people to massacre the Tutsi population. Politics induced violence lies behind the argument of a war situation while ideology usually pits religious groups over the supremacy of their 'Gods'. Revenge motivation is influenced by one's need to return the infliction of pain or terror on a party that would have previously inflicted pain. It has however been reported about by Collier and Hoeffler that the need for scarce resources often lead to violence that can result in the death and injury of some parties.

2.32 Agency Concept

Agency, according to Bandura (2001) is an act performed on purpose. It is the deliberate facilitation of an act directly or otherwise and it provides for individual choices to behave accommodatively or opt otherwise. It is found in three modes: personal, proxy, and collective. There are however cases when one's actions produce undesired outcomes. According to Bratman (1999), this is not an issue. Rather, the issue is in the intentions of an individual. Simply, Bandura (1991b) says that the power to initiate actions for specified intentions is the main attribute of personal agency. An agent needs to be very good at planning, fore-sightful and a charismatic motivator. Bandura gives out that after one has adopted an intention and an action plan, he/she should never relax and hang around for the suitable performances to come out. Therefore, the concept of agency involves not only the deliberative capability to formulate options and action plans, but the capability to provide form to suitable courses of action and to inspire and control their implementation.

Socially and morally, societies set themselves standards which they follow and which also regulate their behaviour. Failure by any member of the society to conform to the standards of morality automatically invites negative sanctions while the opposite equally invites the opposite of negative sanctions (Bandura, 1991b). Other scholars have also talked about self-sanctions which they believe enforce self-discipline at personal level. In short, the question about agency simply points to the role that people play whenever they are to engage into some illegal activity; that it is not always that people are influenced or persuaded to engage but that often, they make their own decisions based on various influences and motivations.

2.33 Women and Violence

With reference to the Structural-Functional theory, it must be realised that in society, where there are conflicts, there are a variety of players who may also include women. This is the category of people in society that has traditionally been labelled vulnerable and yet is has since turned perpetrator. Women are known to suffer unduly from violent conflict. According to various researches and experiences, women endure not only from the effects of war, but are also attacked as a tactic of fighting.

However, it also has to be noted that women are not only sufferers of violence, but may also be active players in the fighting, openly as fighters, or covertly, by creating grounds conducive for violence through mobilising resources or stirring male counterparts to engage in violence. Besides, women also assume several other responsibilities like becoming bread-winners during conflicts; acquiring new techniques and take part towards peace initiatives (UNSCR, 2000). During the same conflicts, women are also subjected to sexual assault which is basically an endeavour to get a sexual act through force, by any personality despite the connection to the victim. Sexual violence is perpetrated primarily to undermine families; effect ethnic extermination; implant terror in people as a way of weakening resistance; as retribution and to show strength. In other instances, violence against women and girls hinder access to services like schools, health and water wells as a way of avoiding the risk of kidnap, sexual violence and mistreatment (Ward and Marsh, 2006, DCAF, 2007). Some women and girls are displaced during conflicts thereby disrupting their economic activities and social lives (Buscher, 2006). According to Rehn, and Johnson-Sirleaf (2002), in most situations, women are sidelined when it comes to peace negotiations and other peace-building initiatives as if their role in these disturbances in not good enough to cause unsettledness. This omission of women has contributed to the escalation of conflicts and unending hostilities in

communities as women, as an isolated constituency will still be fuelling the conflict from another perspective.

2.34 Alternative Endogenous Dispute Resolution (AEDR)

When conflicts erupted, people maimed and killed each other without restraint. In the majority of cases, they fight over ideology variation, perception differences and even resources. It is important to realise that such conflicts continue only in the absence of possible resolution measures. Endogenous knowledge is wisdom that is initiated from within communities, rooted in and developing from local contexts. Endogenous knowledge is based on local methods, wisdom, information, institutions, and resources and is a multifarious and holistic system that cuts across political, social, and economic aspects of people's lives.

The argument could also be taken from another dimension as posited by Lutz and Linder (2004) who argue that traditional systems contribute to conflict resolution in two important ways. According to the argument, traditional authorities at the local level are often regulating conflicts and settling disputes among individuals. Lutz and Linder (2004:29) also raise some of the dividends that accrue out of a relationship between governments and traditional leadership systems as:

“Acceptance of policy implementation, potential for better responsiveness to local needs, traditional authorities as advocates for peace building and inclusion of the local population in public activities and development”

Traditional African leaders had devised taboos to serve as some of the conflict restraining strategies in society. At this juncture in this study, it may be necessary that we focus on some of the available endogenous dispute resolution measures with a view to understand how these

other measures could have resolved conflicts. Suffice it to mention that AEDR in this study is referring to endogenous means like unassisted negotiation (*nhaurirano*), third-party intervention (conciliation or mediation) (*yananiso*), and compensation (*kuripa*) (Mutisi, 2009, Dodo et al, 2012). Various scholars (Lederach, 1995, Zartman, 2000, Mutisi, 2009) have posited that conflict resolution measures can only be called endogenous if they have been practiced for a reasonable period of time and have developed within African societies rather than being imported. It is further argued that endogenous conflict resolution methods are communal, exceptional, context specific, casual, recuperative, and varied.

It has been argued that most of the alternative endogenous dispute resolution methods are effective and good because they engage all parties in the conflict in the process of dialogue and interaction. The methods create an atmosphere for people to interact and engage in dialogue freely and openly and that the selection of people in the resolution processes is entirely by the conflicting parties themselves, which ensures transparency and trust among the people (Midodzi and Imoro, 2011).

Elaborately, Dodo et al (2012) discuss one of the methods that deliberately, Zimbabwe has adopted as a conflict resolution and management measure. This is silence, which Bloomfield et al (2003) calls ‘Amnesia’, (officially imposed form of forgetting) and delayed apologies. This method was first applied in the early 1980s against the Ndebele community especially after the 1987 *Gukurahundi* era. Ever since, the government has been employing the same method whenever there has been a conflict. This was also experienced during the 2000-2003 farm invasions whereby former white commercial farmers were dispossessed of farms. During the dispossession programme, property was destroyed while other people were maimed and killed (Dodo, 2010, 2012).

In other communities, decisions are communal and whatever is decided is implemented as a family. The Igbo community owns the decision-making process collectively (Uwazie 1994) and this is done to ensure that everyone assumes responsibility for any eventualities arising thereof. In the Kidepo Valley of Uganda, societies make use of curses believed to lead to mysterious deaths to deter continuous cattle raids by the Dodos, Mojirimots and Karamoja (Brock-Utne, 2001). The curses imply that divine punishment would befall transgressors. Okrah (2003) also add a similar voice alluding to the fact that traditional societies resolved conflicts through internal and external social controls that employed strategies of avoidance such as personal humiliation and fear of supernatural powers.

In Sierra Leone, according to Gross (1992), Alridge (2003) and Spirituals Project (2004), the locals believe in the concept called '*sankofa*'. *Sankofa* implies that to have moral society which is forward-looking, it is important that communities re-visit their past for the wisdom of their ancestors and their traditions. It is a concept borrowed from the Akan people and is symbolised by 'a mythical bird flying forward with its head turned backward' (Kanu, 2007).

2.35 Restorative Justice

Restorative justice is a justice system which seeks to re-establish relationships as far as possible, both between victim and wrongdoer and inside the wider neighbourhood to which they live. The process is effective with the total involvement of the victim and of the necessary parties in discussing the specifics, identifying the causes of misbehaviour and the crucial punishment.

According to Umbreit (2001), restorative justice has a wide intention in any society. Some of the intentions and values of the process include the following according to Umbreit (2001): restoration of the victim and the victimized community than punishment of the offender, elevation of the significance of the wronged in the justice process through improved participation, contribution and services and that offenders be held directly accountable to the victim. Some of the values of restorative justice also include the encouragement of the whole community to be involved in ensuring that the offender accounts for his or her actions whilst at the same time encouraging a curative reaction to the requirements of both victims and offenders, putting more emphasis on the acceptance of responsibility by offenders regarding their behaviour with a view to making amends and that communities should recognise their responsibility for the social conditions that motivate offenders to misbehave (Ibid).

2.36 The Rwandese ‘Gacaca’

It has been widely acknowledged that the infamous 1994 Rwandese genocide followed the downing of a jet flying the Rwandese President Juvénal Habyarimana to Kigali on 6 April 1994 allegedly by members of the Tutsi ethnic rival group. According to Ingelaere (2008), within 100 days, approximately 800,000 Tutsi and some moderate Hutu had been murdered by the majority Hutu.

As the tempers flared in Rwanda between the two main ethnic rivals, the two parties began to mobilise potential youth for military incursions. The youth of the respective political parties were at the fore-front in the terror campaign. The Coalition for the Defence of the Republic (*Coalition pour la Défense de la République, CDR*) was backed by its ‘*Impuzamugambi*’ youth while the Democratic Republican Movement (*Mouvement Démocratique Républicain, MDR*) was supported by its ‘*Inkuba*’ youth militia. The Social Democratic Party (*Parti-*

Social-Démocrate, PSD) was also enjoying the support of its ‘*Abakombozi*’ youth, while the ruling party, the MRND, was backed by the ‘*Interahamwe*’ (Ingelaere, 2008).

Following the genocide, the new government, courtesy of the local traditional leadership, instituted the ‘*Gacaca*’ court systems primarily to; accelerate the legal proceedings for those accused of genocide crimes; eradicate the culture of impunity; establish the truth about what happened; reconcile Rwandans and reinforce their unity; and Use the capacities of Rwandan society to deal with its problems through a justice based on Rwandan custom’ (Ingelaere, 2008:38, Mutisi, 2009, Wasonga, 2009). ‘*Gacaca*’, originally a Kinyarwanda concept, means ‘justice on the grass’. The wholly indigenous process is based on voluntary confession, expression of compunction, act of contrition, and request for clemency by perpetrators. *Gacaca* courts usually ended with the parties sharing a traditional libation and a meal as a gesture of reconciliation or that the offender got detested from the society (Sabera et al, 2007).

According to the National Service of the *Gacaca* Courts, (2006), an estimated 818 564 suspects were expected to be tried in different courts for the genocidal crimes. It was also established that about 5% of all the suspects had voluntarily confessed as a result of either government awareness or fear of the spirits of the dead (Prunier, 1995, Mamdani, 2001).

2.37 Ugandan ‘*Mato Oput*’

Following civilian atrocities at the hands of the Lord’s Resistance Army since the late 1980s, (Wasonga, 2009), local communities advocated the use of ‘*mato oput*’, a long-established Acholi voluntary peace and justice practice involving arbitration, trust building, acceptance of wrong doing, reparation, compromise, and restoration. According to the process, the

Acholi people believe in '*Jok*', the godly force of ancestors that directs the Acholi moral order such that any transgression from the norm is believed to hurt the ancestors who then unleash misfortunes as punishment.

Further, Wasonga (2009) posits that every member of the offending family is held responsible for a crime or murder committed by another. This then calls for collective responsibility in resolving the conflict through a traditional process which requires the sharing of a bitter herb before the sharing of meals as a way of appeasing the spirit of the dead and stop being haunted. '*Mato*' means 'drinking' and '*oput*' is a type of tree with bitter herbs. Symbolically, the consumption of the herb means that the two parties acknowledge their past wrong deeds and pledge never to repeat or revisit that bitter era again. It is also believed that as one drinks the bitter herb, he/she will be undergoing some spiritual therapy especially given that prior to joining LRA as a rebel, one would have been subjected to rigorous initiation processes.

'*Mato Oput*' process follows a systematic procedure which starts with a genuine acceptance of responsibility for one's crimes in society. Once that has been achieved, the offender is then required to confess so that the entire community know how the crime was committed. The confession must be of an individual's own volition so that ancestors may be able to forgive while the spirit of the dead and the entire family of the victim are also able to acknowledge genuine efforts by the offending party. If this process, according to the Acholi people is genuine, then forgiveness becomes easy and whole-hearted. All these processes are finally capped by some compensation which may be in various forms (Hovil and Quinn, 2005). However, it has been realised that if the crime involved the murder of people, then the compensation is of humans especially girl children who are still virgins. These girls become

part of the offended family before they are turned into wives in those families. The fact that there is now a marriage relationship means that the two families are close and bonded forever.

In Uganda, Acholi customary practices such as 'stepping on the egg' ceremony '*nyouo tong gweno*' is meant for those who come back home after a extended period of time. It is also intended to purify one of the evils that he might have contracted in the bush (Refugee Law Project, 2005).

2.38 Mozambique '*Kimbanda*'

Ordinary Mozambicans have been occupied by daily practices and rituals of justice, healing, and reconciliation led by traditional healers called "*kimbanda*" in local language (Igreja and Dias-Lambranca, 2008). The '*kimbanda*' have helped with the calm reintegration of ex-combatants and previous child soldiers, through cleansing rituals involving the entire area. According to Honwana (2001) and Igreja and Dias-Lambranca (2008), this is against a background where in Mozambique, there is an inextricable relation between the sphere of the living and the realm of the spirits so much so that the violation of taboos such as killing people without metaphysical or social explanation is an evil deed that needs instantaneous remedy through expiation rituals. It is also believed that if the crime is not justified (which is rare), the spirit of the blameless victim comes back to the realm of the existing to fight for justice.

2.39 '*Nyono tong gweno*'

According to Harvey (2006: 15), the 'Stepping on the Egg' ceremony '*Nyono Tong Gweno*' that is practiced in Northern Uganda involves the returnee stepping on an egg '*tongweno*'

positioned on a slippery twig '*opobo*' before relatives share food. The egg is said to signify cleanness and tenderness,' signifying reinstallation of purity. The practice is also believed to help wash the returnee from any outside influences he or she might have met while away.

2.40 Others

According to Uchendu (1995), the Igbo also make use of different methods and processes to ensure harmony and make peace as well as to manage violence. These include taboos, restrictions, banishment, curses, and demonstrations by women. Offiong (1997) argues that the belief in ancestor spirits, the political importance of the elders and their crucial responsibility as the mediators between the ancestors and the living, and the Ibibio belief in the supernatural powers of '*mbiam*' oath promote conflict resolution and social control in general. It is also argued that conflict resolution in the elders' council has advantages over any other contemporary systems mainly because of its holistic nature.

In Uganda, according to Baines (2007: 113), there is traditional practice called 'cleansing of an area' '*moyo piny*' which involves the sacrifice of goats to mollify ancestors and to wash an area of evil spirits which are understood to reside in areas where war-related atrocities may have been carried out especially at former conflict places, places of fatal clashes and where massacres occurred.

2.41 Sustainability of Traditional African Systems

The question that this study sought to answer is 'how sustainable and effective are the local indigenous systems in restraining conflicts in Mazowe and Shamva districts in the face of globalisation?' Attempting to respond to the question was Mkenda, (2010) who observes that in the current African worldview, there is a clear divide between issues that are thought to be

worldly and those that are religious. Mkenda hastily points out that the way people view the world has transformed arguing that technology and western culture have influenced man's intelligence and opinion about humanity which is no longer viewed in the religious sense but rather from an intellect and technical perspective.

It may be a daunting task to have a position on whether traditional African systems of conflict resolution are sustainable or not given a variety of conflicting arguments posited by different scholars and analysts. Clearly, Makwerere and Mandoga (2012) have noted that the traditional chiefs in Zimbabwe have been usurped by ZANU PF so much so that they can no longer discharge their duties effectively. Impartiality has since been eroded and one wonders how the same leaders are expected to try their subjects who are obviously of different political persuasions. Bungu (2009) and Myers and Shinn (2010) have also realised the weaknesses with the traditional adjudication and the entire leadership system. The scholars opined that some western-educated Africans have also moved away from the customary approaches of conflict resolution opting to adopt formal court systems' arbitration and western-style mediation for allegedly being barbaric, anachronistic, an impediment to growth and revolution of the continent, undemocratic, discordant and that they have been severely manipulated by ruling regimes so much so that they no-longer have a place in the modern world.

It has also been given by Bungu (2009) that there is a need to attend to the twin existence of traditional leadership and contemporary political leadership if conflict resolution in Africa is to improve. Bungu's stand-point is primarily emanating from the acknowledgment that competent democratic states must be anchored on local public ideals and contexts, while allowing shifting realities on the ground. Emmanuel (2009) supports Bungu's argument

adding that traditional institutions and practices should be enshrined in the constitution so that they complement constitutional roles of the law enforcement agencies. Emmanuel further argues strongly that olden traditional systems and practices could be re-invented and re-introduced in the current society and still serve the same purpose as it used to then before the coming of modernity; he sees some place and invaluable relevance of traditional African systems in the present society.

2.42 Reconciling Traditional Systems with Modernity

Realising the clashes that have been experienced in Africa pitting traditional African systems against contemporary laws and approaches to conflict resolution, it is important to explore some of the measures that could be adopted to address the problem. Various researchers have raised various possibilities on how the two perspectives could be either integrated or one swallowing the other. There are indigenous Africans who have realised the inappropriateness of western approach in relation to the cultural and political norms of African indigenous people. Jackson (2004) notes the need for the empowerment of indigenous communities to boost their understanding of matters of contemporary laws to enable them to protect and sustain their traditional knowledge. The Nairobi Declaration of the 2nd African Indigenous Women's Conference of 2004 in Jackson (2004) also points out that there are some African groups that are campaigning for local-led documentation of traditional knowledge and practices as a means of preserving traditional systems. However, on the same token, there are other quarters that are arguing that documentation of traditional knowledge and practices may not be the best as there are chances of capturing the irrelevant and not so important aspects of the African heritage.

In a bid to reconcile the two fronts, some African governments have come up with treaties, laws, conventions, policies and programmes aimed at addressing the conflicting perspectives (SIDA, 2010). One of the initiatives is the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights of 1981 which is an important instrument in safeguarding Human Rights in Africa. However, it has been criticised for not attending to the precise requirements of, or problems experienced by, African women. The charter is amongst others expected to articulate most of the human rights concerns of the generality of citizens and immediately provide possible solutions. The 1990 African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child primarily sought to ensure that children's needs were guaranteed in all respects. However, realising some discrepancies and shortfalls on the implementation part, articles 32-46 established a Committee that was expected to support and defend the rights enshrined in the convention. Most of the challenges envisaged when these charters were crafted also focussed on conflict ridden situations where minors are abused and terrorised through either rape or conscription into rebel armies amongst others. There were also desires to see the creation of social protection and care-giving institutions throughout so that the affected children could get help and solace. Individual governments have an obligation to establish respective social protection networks to cater for their citizens.

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on the functions of Women in promoting peace and security was established to create a conducive environment for women in society. Article 5 of the same resolution stipulates that parties shall forbid and denounce all forms of injurious practices which negatively impinge on human rights of women and which are opposing to the accepted international principles (SIDA, 2010). Closely complementing the above resolution was the Cairo Declaration for the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation (2003) which basically seeks to protect the interests and rights of women from the

archaic practices of some traditions and cultures. FGM had been a challenge during conflicts and other social settings whereby warring parties would use women as weapons of war while socially; women were forced to undergo mutilation as a way of decorating themselves sexually for their husbands. It is through that 'decoration' that most youth in conflicts would want to target mutilated women as sex targets for either rape or conscription into the armies.

Africa's demographics indicate that over 65% of the population is made up of the youth most of whom are discriminated by the public through riches and power inequalities, pathetic quality of education, inadequate health care, joblessness, and exposure to violence. Realising that anomaly, in 2006, African nations came up with a charter dubbed the African Youth Charter which sought to present a calculated outline for youth growth at continental, regional, and national levels (SIDA, 2010). In 2007, there was the Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance which was established to promote gender balance and equality in governance and development circles, equal participation in elections and equal eligibility to partake in politics and help address gender-based violence (SIDA, 2010). This charter was augmented by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Gender and Development in 2008 which also endeavoured to witness the development and growth of women in society. The latter convention preceded the AU-adopted Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa of 2002. The plan undoubtedly set the arena for continental and regional efforts to achieve acceptable, convincing and legal plebiscites held on the basis of an even playing field and with the least cases of violence (Matlosa, 2004). Women development was defined in the context of being able to partake amongst several others in peace-building and conflict resolution and also play a role in the media fraternity.

2.43 Role of Christianity in Conflicts and Conflict Resolution

African beliefs and cultures have been seriously influenced by the coming of the Whiteman from Europe during colonial periods of 1493 when the first Portuguese were granted permission by Pope Alexander VI to embark on an expansionist gospel crusade (Catholic Encyclopaedia, undated). The Europeans ensured that Africans discarded their religions as they described them as evil and instead prefer Christianity. Not implying that all Christian values are perfect, it has generally been observed that there are more Christian values and principles that have shaped society and the behaviour of people around Zimbabwe positively or otherwise. Some Christians and some of their leaders are revered personalities in society so much so that whatever they say or do is emulated by most people especially children. Zimbabwe, since its colonisation has unofficially declared itself a Christian state though the constitution claims secularism. This is evidenced by the official recognition and use of Christian values and protocol during national events and during the national radio and television epilogue and prologue programmes. It must however be realised that Christianity has had a lot of influence in the affairs of Africa; theological justification for the start and continuation of apartheid in South Africa, definition of local traditions and providing guidelines for the creation of constitutions in most Christian states.

Healing and safety from wickedness are among the most important characteristics of the church agenda in Zimbabwe (Cox, 1996). The church realises the level of ethnicity and animosity that exist in Zimbabwean societies especially post the *Gukurahundi* era. Both the political and social arena have been divided along ethnic lines so much so that even development efforts have been retarded. It has therefore been the role of the church to mend the differences that characterise the society through peace-building measures. The church also avails an empowerment which gives an element of respect and a striving means for life.

It has been seen in various areas where the church has provided with income-generating projects and some psycho-social support programmes to the needy communities as a way of enhancing their lives. In most cases, the church has been at the forefront in the provision of education and health. Most early schools and health facilities in Zimbabwe were missionary institutes which provided almost free services. They are still ensuring that most under-privileged sectors of the society do get these services.

According to Asamoah-Gyadu (1998), Christian churches also play an important role of sowing the seed of good neighbourliness especially as they preach anti-tribalism and anti-racism. In Zimbabwe, during the *Gukurahundi* crisis in the 1980s, there were church organisations that worked towards the development of all ethnic groups in the same society. CCJP went a step further by researching on the effects and the depth of the atrocities before documenting for future records.

During the 1970s liberation war in Zimbabwe and the 2008 political conflict, most churches; Catholic, Methodist, Salvation Army, Church of Christ and several others were the safe havens for the victims and vulnerable groups in society. Churches have been recognised as some of the safest and trusted places where vulnerable and victims of conflicts in society can seek refuge. The same institutions have also provided with peace dialogue, counselling and other forums for forgiveness like in the case of the South African Truth and Reconciliation programme and the Zimbabwean reconciliation gesture that were led by Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Archbishop Patrick Funny Chakaipa respectively.

However, there is another interesting side of the debate regarding the role of the church in conflicts and conflict prevention in Zimbabwe. Clearly, Machoko (2013) and Dodo et al

(2013) give out that some churches of the likes of Johane Marange Apostolic Church, Johane Masowe Chishanu Apostolic Church, and Africa Apostolic Church, were strategically co-opted by (ZANU- PF) political ideology as campaign tools during election times. This was managed through the joint application of aggression and inducement on some church leaders. Resultantly, some of these churches have either instigated conflicts or aided conflict perpetrators contrary to the general belief and expectations about the church.

2.44 Role of Political Parties in Conflicts and Conflict Prevention

Various scholars have written suggesting that most conflicts in Africa are ignited by political parties for political goals. Whether that is a fact or not may not be answered enough without really looking at several other sides of the debate. In this discussion, I seek to understand the role that is played by political parties either in conflicts or in conflict prevention. The initial assertion that most conflicts are caused by politics is going to be unravelled in detail.

In 1999, Kofi Annan noted that the failure of key states to invoke the political resolve to ask heads of governments and other personalities to answer for their crimes against humanity has produced a clique of the untouchables, a situation that invites more violence and misery for the weak and vulnerable (Annan, 1999). While that has been observed as a need, nothing really tangible (except the Geneva Convention) is on the ground though individual states have prosecuted politicians who have been involved in conflicts set to benefit individuals. A case in point is that of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) president Joseph Kabila who in 2007 rounded up politicians who had been involved in the violence of 2006 (ICG, 2007). Elsewhere, there have not been any meaningful deliberate actions.

What must however be realised is that political institutions have often fuelled conflicts especially where they feel that their interests have not been catered for adequately. In most cases, the leaders persuade the membership especially the youth to embark on an exercise to terrorise their opponents. This is quite visible where the leadership does not condemn violence as was the case in the Zimbabwean election of 2008 where opposition members were terrorised and killed by members of the ruling party in a fashion similar to that of the 1994 Rwandan genocide. In short, conflicts are fuelled in a variety of means; ideology, provision of weapons, incitement, provision of legal protection/institutions, failure to condemn and direct participation.

To address the challenge, the international community has put in place institutions to police the arena though effective implementation has not been feasible. In other cases, there have been the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the conflict-specific tribunals; International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and the Special Tribunal for Sierra Leone (STSL) (Hassan, 2008) and Truth Commissions in isolated countries; Uganda, Sudan Liberia, Sierra Leone, South Africa and others (Ntsebesa, 2008). Conflict prevention can only be effective if the political leadership shows its will power to see peace and stability. Addresses and words of unity within the society are the basics of peace. In Zimbabwe during the 2013 July Harmonised election, there was a national campaign by all contesting political parties for peace dubbed '*Peace begins with me, Peace begins with you, and Peace begins with all of us*'. This collective effort led to a peaceful election which was however marred by an unfair process.

2.45 Women in the Crisis

Almost the entirety of this discussion has been depicting women as invaluable members of the society who have over the period just stood by watching men and youth causing conflicts; as people who play no role in the governance of their societies and as people who cannot partake in conflict resolution processes. However, women, just like their male counterparts have been instrumental in all the activities in their societies.

Various researchers have established that despite participatory roles that women have in societies and particularly in conflict areas, they are vulnerable to abuse and victimisation. Women are more probable to be victims of gender-based violence: rape, trafficking, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced marriage, forced sterilization and genital mutilation (Turshen, 2001). It has also been noted that when sexual violation gets public attention, raped women are ostracised by their communities so much so that they may not even benefit from other social facilities. As a result, United Nations Security Council in June of 2008 adopted Resolution 1820 that formally recognised rape as a weapon of war. To augment, the Rome Statute mandated that rape be considered a genocide crime if the objective of the perpetrators is to exterminate the entire group of women. As if that was not enough, in 2009, the Security Council again adopted Resolution 1888, to direct peacekeeping missions to guard women and children from uncontrolled sexual violence during armed conflict (UNSC, 2008, 2009). Similarly, in most Zimbabwean conflicts, women are subjected to rape and other sexual assaults.

Besides being victims, women can be perpetrators of violence too. Women have often fought voluntarily for various compelling reasons: anti-unjust and greedy governments, supporting the political and religious agendas of their movements, for the economic incentives derived

from the group, and when looking for revenge against a rival group (UNICEF, 2006). There are also other instances when women have joined fighting after they are abducted and conscripted into a military group and this is common in the conflicts of Sierra Leone, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Uganda (UNDPE, 2005). Other than fighting in conjunction with their male counterparts, girls were also often engaged as sex machines and spies. In most conflicts or wars, combatants use girls as some forms of entertainment or forms of stress relievers after fighting while the victims have no option to refuse. Similarly, during the 2008 political conflict in Zimbabwe (Dodo and Musorowegomo, 2012) girls were also forcibly taken into ‘political bases’ as ‘assistants’ across the board; sexually, manual chores and morally. This was in stark contrast to the 23rd Special Session of the UN General Assembly dubbed “Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty-First Century” which re-strengthened the ‘Platform for Action’ calling for the banning of forced conscription of girls in conflict situations (UNSC, 2000).

In conflict situations, women have also been proven to be capable and imaginative advocates for peace in spite of the devastating obstacles that they encounter. Because women especially in the developing world do not go to work, they build social relations within their neighbourhoods which need to be nurtured. This can then be achieved through peace campaigns in their localities. In other cases, women can persuade their husbands and or children to desist from fighting lest they impose either social or sexual sanctions. The passing of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security simply;

“Reaffirmed the significant function of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and emphasising the significance of their equal contribution and total

participation in all efforts for the upholding and backing of peace and security” (UNSC, 2000).

Therefore, armed with this resolution, women have been able to partake in formal peacekeeping and peace-building processes. There are however, other areas where women have not been empowered by the UN resolution to participate in local processes and yet have contributed immensely in conflict resolution and management programmes. Most families’ food production is guaranteed by household wives who ensure that the family has enough to eat on a daily basis. Agricultural activities that bring food on the table for the family are often undertaken by women. In the rural areas and some conflict ridden societies, women also share the burden of fetching water and even looking after the injured combatants (Jackson, 2013).

2.46 Summary

In an effort to establish how traditional African taboos have worked towards maintaining peace, the chapter looked at how other societies and situations have embraced the same concept. It was therefore necessary to take a broad glance at other related variables that helped clarify some of the hidden beliefs and undefined perceptions.

The chapter made reference and reviewed other literature on African traditional beliefs, religions, alternative dispute resolution systems, conflicts and their causes in Africa and Zimbabwe and youth violence and some of the conflicts that have been recorded in Zimbabwe during the period under review. All the reviewed material is expected to have valuable significance to the ultimate findings of this study as it will provide a clear basis for either comparison or reference point. The reviewed literature also proved that the phenomenon being studied in this thesis is not new as it has been experienced elsewhere

albeit different times and circumstances. These other similar experiences are therefore expected to create some ground from which this thesis will formulate a firm and factual argument for a new body of knowledge. In short, the literature observed some relevance of the traditional taboos in the regulation of the past and present societies albeit with some weaknesses. Some scholars also noted the importance for the re-invention and re-introduction of the same taboos into the society for effective use. It was also observed that to some extent, rural/urban migration and the integration of different ethnic groups especially in urban, farming and mining areas had serious impact on the preservation of the taboo systems vis-à-vis conflict prevention.

Chapter Three

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This unit looks at the mode through which the study was technically conducted precisely focussing on the various operations of the research, theoretically and philosophically. This chapter deals with the real operations of the research process, the planning, execution, moderation and analysis of the results and deduction mechanisms. The methodology section outlines how the research process was conducted and precisely so, it focuses on how it was executed to the end including all the resources that were used. The *modus operandi* in this unit also seeks to satisfy the following objectives and questions that guided the study:

3.1.1 Objectives

- To identify some of the taboos which are in use as conflict restraint apparatus.
- To analyse and understand the nexus between the Zimbabwean traditional belief system and the contemporary western approach to conflict.
- To explore the influence of taboos in conflict escalation/de-escalation in Zimbabwe.
- To evaluate the effectiveness and relevance of the traditional taboo system in conflict prevention in Zimbabwe.
 - a) To assess the influence of modernity on the traditional African belief systems.

3.1.2 Questions

- What are some of the African traditional taboos that are still in use in Mashonaland Central province?
- How does society reconcile with the traditional African beliefs and practices?
- Have taboos been of any meaningful importance in restraining behaviour and restoring order?
- How could taboos be modernised for the globalised conflict-ridden society?

3.2 Research Design

The design chosen for this research was primarily exploratory. This was applied within the Qualitative paradigm, which sought to ensure accuracy by employing both descriptive and numerical data. Basically, a research design is a systematic work plan seeking to attend to a logical problem.

An exploratory approach was to some extent adopted to allow consistent and daily observation and experience of the local peoples' ways of life. This followed a realisation of the need for a closer analysis and understanding of how the people conducted themselves and how they related vis-a-vis traditional norms and taboos.

3.3 Qualitative Research

Qualitative research originated from the constructivist and interpretivist schools which, according to Sale et al (2002) had stemmed from the idealist field. Based on the above perspectives, qualitative research is premised on an ontological view that reality depends on a person's mental structure and that there is no single reality but several based on an individual's construction of reality. As a result, this research approach is viewed as an inter-

subjective creation (Hellstrom, 2008). The approach, based on its epistemological premise holds that there is never access to reality independent of people's minds (Sale et al, 2002).

Qualitative research methodology is also premised on the following arguments: a researcher offers his interpretation based on interests, purposes and values of others' interpretations which may equally be based on their values, purposes and interests; that a researcher may only get to appreciate a particular situation by describing constituent properties of that situation; that human meaning is context bound and that a researcher can also appreciate a particular phenomena from the view-point of study respondents (Bryman, 1988, Sale et al, 2002). The methodology according to Sale et al (2002) does not pursue objectivity and generalisability but transferability as the former two are believed to be unachievable from an ontological and epistemological view points. The two authorities; Walsh (2003) and Hellstrom (2008) give out that in qualitative methodology, sample size is not relevant as samples are measured based on the ability to provide vital and valuable information.

In this study, the researcher had to go on the ground and spent some time in the areas being studied so that he could gather the needed data appropriately. The essence of getting to the villages and areas of study was to ensure the following; to gather data in its natural form without any influence from the researcher. This was meant to widen the chances that what was to be found in the study area could be generalisable to other comparable areas that had not been studied before. Essentially, the study sought to understand cultural, professional, and other unofficial structures down to the minutest level as they had the capacity to develop unique means of socialising with the world. This explains why the study also employed unstructured interviews; which allowed for the release of wide and deep levels of data. It was also prudent to conduct the study from a discovery-based perspective so that completely new

information could be found and possibly add on the existing body of knowledge without any influence from that which was already known.

To ensure near objectivity and total acceptability of the results, the research instituted some measures like the following; depth in research, objective interpretation of the world by all concerned stakeholders, appropriate sampling mode, method triangulation and timing and duration of the study. In the field, the researcher tried to be descriptive as much as possible so that all the information could be captured. Similarly, data was being collected from all perspectives possible as a way of ensuring impartiality and credibility. This was also guaranteed by the representation of the participants in their own settings and in their own words. To maintain a calendar of events and progress, the researcher maintained field comments and observation reports of own experiences, feelings, and opinions.

3.3.1 Rationale for Using Qualitative Method

Qualitative research approach has been roundly condemned by other research approaches for its alleged lack of clarity in its methodology and abstract approach to analysis. In other words, this approach is argued to lack objectivity. However, this research, despite the above shortfalls opted for the qualitative research mainly because of its concern about how people approach and generate meaning of living experiences. Besides, the researcher is the main device for fieldwork data gathering and analysis. This eventually makes data interpretation easy and convertible into explanatory information. Overall, it is perhaps the most flexible of the available methodologies.

3.4 Grounded Theory

Grounded Theory, developed in the 1960s by two American sociologists, Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss, is an inductive, theory finding methodology that gives a comprehensive, thorough, and logical means of analysis (Bryant, 2002, Bitsch, 2005). It gives the researcher the liberty to investigate the study area and let issues to come out.

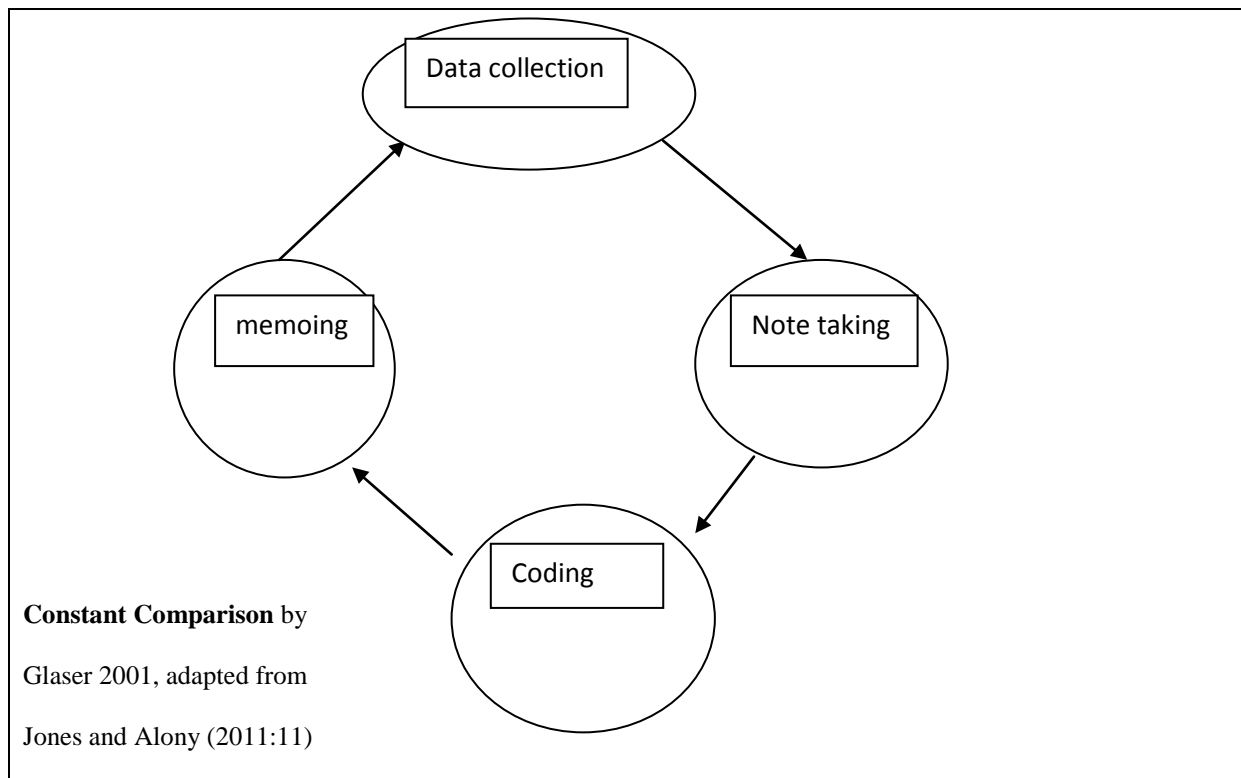
The application of the method implies that there is recognition of the researchers' partiality, the identification of a data gathering location, the data gathering procedure, coding and analysis, and the assemblage of results. One of the most crucial stages in the process is the coding and analysis which has three stages: open coding, selective coding, and theoretical coding (Jones and Alony, 2011). Open coding uses constant comparison and memoing⁵ and results in themes, sub-categories, and core categories. This process was very much adopted in this study to help NVIVO software. According to Glaser (2001), data collection could be in the form of open-ended interviewing and transcription, though other forms of data gathering such as documents and literature could also be used. In the beginning, two or three sets of data taken from practically uniform sources are gathered and analysed to produce a preliminary set of groupings, which then direct the collection of new data, and so on. After data collection, the researcher starts to code the data to show a range of issues represented. The coding method uses three successive and chronological levels of coding: open coding, selective coding, and theoretical coding (Corbin and Strauss, 2008).

Open coding is the initial examination of the raw data before it is coded through a procedure which sub-divides the interview into distinct threads of datum. The data is then collated

⁵ According to Glaser (2001), it is the core stage in the process of generating theory

accumulating to build classes of similar phenomena. Open coding according to Glaser (2001), employs a process of constant comparison which is an instantaneous and parallel course of coding and analysis (Partington, 2000).

Fig. 3.1 Constant Comparison



However, according to Jones and Alony (2011), the method is littered with several challenges chief amongst them; that after starting data gathering and examination, the researcher may not unearth significant theory and that the unconventional character of Grounded Theory will isolate the possible recipients from the research results

3.5 Data Collection Methods

Data collection methods are apparatus and systems that are used in the mobilisation of research data. These methods could be in a variety of forms (Barbbie, 2003). However, in this study, in-depth face-to-face interviews, focus group discussions and observations were used. Two administrative districts were randomly selected from the province with a total of 8 districts (25%). In each of the districts, five centres/locations were selected as data collection focal points to give wide geographical coverage as well as a mix of urban, peri-urban, farming, mining and rural settings.

3.5.1 Interviews

Interviews are perhaps the most extensively employed mode in qualitative research. In most cases, an interview is employed as the primary tool while in other instances; it is used as a complimentary tool. Generally, an interview is a systematic discussion between two or more people with the object of gathering information from an interviewee under the direction of an interviewer. However, Davies and Dodd (2002) define it as a method of getting data from people by asking questions and getting them to respond orally. According to Rubin et al (2004) and Creswell (2008), this method has been favoured in most disciplines for its merits and flexibility. When used in qualitative interviewing, there is a great deal of interest in the interviewee's point of view so much so that the interviewer can pose questions or interview on more than one and sometimes even several occasions. This is done to ensure that the researcher extracts rich and detailed answers. Another important feature of interviews is that interviewers can divert considerably from any list or guide, which is a sign of flexibility

There are various types of interviews chiefly; structured and unstructured interviews. In the former, there may be just one question that is posed by the interviewer and the interviewee is

then let loose to answer liberally, with the interviewer merely responding to issues that may be worthy of being followed up. Meanwhile, in the semi-structured interview, the researcher may have a schedule of questions or particular subjects to be covered, usually called an interview guide, but the respondent has wide latitude on how to respond. Questions may not necessarily follow a specific order as set on the list. However, other questions that may not be on the guide may be asked as probing progresses (Babbie, 2003). It has however been established that interviews are time consuming and labour intensive that several researchers opt them not.

In-depth interviews were chosen for their flexibility when it comes to question probes and clarity of grey areas. This method of data gathering was considered respondent-friendly and culture-friendly as participants' feelings and expectations were accommodated while at the same time, different cultural dictates could also be taken on board. The fact that some of the participants were elderly and semi-illiterate people, it required that they be approached at their homes for dignified and respectful interviews without having to ask them to move to another venue. This way, most of the participants felt that the research exercise was culture-sensitive. Interviews also provided with forums where the researcher could exhaust all the questions including probes. Besides, it established a friendly rapport so much so that callbacks were easy in cases of doubts on any questions. Interviews also have a high response rate as respondents are trekked and asked for their time. That way, chances of lying and or dishonest are eradicated.

3.5.1.1 Rationale for Using Interviews

It has been noted in other circles that though most researchers use interviews as the most basic data collection mode, it is not the best method. It has its weaknesses. First and foremost,

the debate around interviews is that they may be biased depending on the perception of the interviewer and that they are sometimes time-consuming in nature. However, in deciding to go for interviews, it had been realised that most of the targeted population could appreciate and respond to its requirements easily without the need for language alteration and writing skills. The research also needed to conduct some of the interviews in the form of discussions: allowing participants to relax and give out information in its original state.

In coming up with interviews, it had been realised that interviews involve the re-establishment of events by asking participants to reflect back over how particular events had occurred in relation to the present situation. Similarly, it was also established that interviews are less intrusive into people's lives unlike other available methods. When an interview has been conducted, it ends there and no-one is followed up later or surveilled from a distance.

3.5.2 Focus Group Discussion

Focus Group Discussions (FGD) are a qualitative research mode and a means of hearing people's views and learning from their experiences (Kelly, 2007). FGD are guided collective discussions to create a wealthy understanding of participants' experiences and viewpoints. Focus group discussions can be traced back to Emory Bogardus in 1926 (Wilkinson 2004) who noted that the method essentially helps to explore and discover new areas without really knowing what questions you want to ask. Besides, the environment and depth of the discussions help appreciate the conditions behind people's views and feelings. In the process, according to Wilkinson (2004), issues and events are interpreted thus presenting an appreciation of why some things are what they are and how they became to be. Again, FGD generate a practice of sharing and comparing among the discussants (Ibid).

According to Kitzinger (2005), FGD are valuable for allowing the discussants to build up their own questions and frame-works and that it allows researchers to get to know different communication means which individuals make use of in their day-to-day dealings, and these include joking, debates, mockery and recapturing past events. The method is also likely to expose varied understandings which usually are hard to get by more conventional modes of data collection. A focus group discussion (Kitzinger, 1994, Kitzinger, 2005, Stewart et al. 2009) is a valuable exploration apparatus when the researcher does not have enough knowledge about the discussants. It provides loaded and exhaustive information about feelings, opinions, understandings, ideologies and impressions of people in their own words.

According to Wilkinson (2004), on average, a focus group is made up of 6-10 participants in-order to avail every group member an almost equal opportunity to articulate some views. However, other scholars argue that the number of participants can vary (Marczak and Sewell, 2005). The groups are also left relatively large enough to provide an assortment of opinions. A successful focus group discussion depends on a tolerant, non-threatening and free atmosphere within the group where the discussants are comfortable to express their views and experiences without fright that they will be judged or assessed by others (Hennink 2007). FGD are however known, according to Morgan (2002) and Kelly (2007) to have their challenges so much so that it may be difficult to successfully come up with one. Some of the challenges include amongst others: they require a skilled moderator, usually difficult to bring together participants and that the participants' responses may not be independent on one another's position.

In this study, Focus Group Discussions were chosen for their ability to give participants/discussants enough time to debate and air out their views and opinions in a free and tolerant environment. In establishing these groups, the following features were

considered; homogeneity of participants, levels of understanding/literacy and almost similar social standing and interests primarily to ensure that the discussions flowed in the same direction. The discussions also sought to derive meanings from behaviours and actions of participants as argued in the interpretivist approach. The setting was conducive for independent and open discussions as they were conducted in the participants' backyards where they were feeling at home. In FGD, participants engaged amongst themselves before they either reached a common position or each of them presented his/her view point. Such discussions offered frank and thoroughly regurgitated thoughts as variously experienced by different individuals during the period under review. The researcher facilitated seven groups while the other three were led by selected members of the groups after receiving briefs on the expectations of the discussions. These facilitators also demanded to lead as they felt that they were some of the community leaders.

Six of the FGD took an average of 45 minutes to one hour of discussion and were all made up of between 7 and 11 participants of mixed sex while the other four were shorter running for about 40 minutes each and consisting of about 7 to 8 participants. All but 3 of the discussions were held in open places especially under tree sheds while the 3 were conducted in school classrooms. All these venues were selected and agreed to as ideal for free discussions.

3.5.2.1 Application of FGDs

Before holding FGDs, the researcher would first pay a courtesy call to the nearest village head for introductions and securing permission for the discussion. It was then during these courtesy calls that participants were identified for respective groups. If the village head or any other leader wanted to identify participants, then the researcher had to describe the nature of ideal participants who could be invited. Particularly, the following characteristics were

outlined; adult between 18 and around 70 years old as they are knowledgeable about taboos and might have also participated in the conflicts, have been necessarily resident in the village/area during the times of the conflicts, and freedom and willing to discuss issues around taboos and conflicts in the area.

Discussions were held in a comfortable fashion with the least interference from the facilitator. The researcher would prepare all the key guiding questions for the discussions, write them down and set on a maximum one hour time for the sessions. Using a cell phone alarm, time would be set to ring during the thirty minute mark to show that at least half the time was gone, ring again at the 50th minute to indicate that only ten minutes were left and finally at the 60th minute. However, if the discussions were producing valuable data before key questions had been answered, more time was added. At most 30 minutes were added. However, the facilitator was always around monitoring and where possible giving directions and order to the debates and discussions. Always, during the first 15 to 20 minutes, participants were not comfortable and free enough to express their feelings. To address that challenge, it was a rule of the thumb that at the beginning of each session, participants were asked to engage into mental-stretching games involving proverbs, idioms and riddles locally called '*tsumo, madimikira, zvirahwe*'. This was meant to set the participants' minds in the mood of the discussions and to ensure that they really got what taboos were all about in a traditional set-up. At the end of the discussions, the researcher would summarise all the minutes or notes recorded paying particular attention on surprises and trends that were common, important details of the sessions, results and conclusions reached. The researcher also highlighted all the themes, highlights, issues, questions or problems that would have been raised during the discussions.

Fig. 3.2**SCHEDULE OF FGDs**

	CENTRE	DATE	TIME	ATT	FACILITATOR	VENUE
1	Gweshe	1/2/2014	1125-1235	9	Researcher	Gweshe Pry sch
2	Jingamvura	3/2/2014	1005-1120	7	Researcher	Mhandu B/C
3	Bare	4/2/2014	1120-1155	7	Researcher	Bare Pry Sch
4	Glendale	6/2/2014	1000-1053	11	Participant	Tsungubvi Community Hall
5	Mazowe Jumbo Mine	8/2/2014	1005-1045	8	Participant	Mine creche
6	Wadzanayi	10/2/2014	1005-1055	8	Researcher	Wadzanayi Community Hall
7	Goora	11/2/2014	1000-1040	8	Researcher	Goora B/C
8	Mutumba	13/2/2014	1605-1705	7	Participant	Mutumba B/C
9	Musiiwa	15/2/2014	0905-1000	11	Researcher	Musiiwa B/C
10	SOS	16/2/2014	0905-1015	9	Researcher	SOS Pry Sch
				85		

3.5.2.1.2 Rational for Using FGD

It was important employing FGDs in this study as it helped bring and gather an invaluable amount of information from the participants. This ranged from free and frank discussions, rapport building forums to situations where some participants had to reveal some of their touching experiences during the times of conflicts. Most importantly, the research observed that most participants already knew each other as they lived, worked or socialised in the neighbourhood. This therefore made the discussions easy and freer than anticipated. These FGDs were also important in that as participants discussed, they provided an ear for each other, which greatly encouraged a wider variety of opinions. There were also instances when some participants made ‘undisciplined’ outbursts especially in response to positions presented by other discussants over issues to do with violence and or respective

compensation. These outbursts and moments of rage were also to some extent necessary as they helped expose the real and inner feelings of the people and communities in general. Also important in these FGDs was that participants were free and able to demonstrate physically how they felt, what they had seen and how they had also inflicted pain, injured or killed others during the conflicts.

However, FGDs had their own challenges which also to some extent affected data collection. Some participants had some information and views which they were not prepared to disclose to the group as a whole. In some cases, they confided to the researcher while in others, they completely refused to talk about such matters for alleged fear of reprisals from the victims and or condemnation. Such issues included; witnessing murders, witnessing rape, being direct perpetrators of murder, rape or robbery, and memories of how their loved ones may have either died or were persecuted.

3.6 Target population

The study drew its operational sample from a population made up of the youth, traditional leaders and the violence victims. The exact figure of the employed youth could not be ascertained due to inconsistent and unregulated rural-urban migration and rural-farms migration amongst other factors. Similarly, the exact figure of the victims of political violence could not be established authoritatively. The statistics given above were calculated from the data availed by different stakeholders; ZRP, ZPP, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Local Government, traditional leaders and the youth groups.

3.7 Sampling

Sampling is the selection of a subset of individuals from a population with each one person having an equal chance of being chosen. According to The American Heritage College Dictionary in Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007), sampling is an act, process, or method of picking a suitable sample. The purpose is to get a sample that is representative and the results made from the sample can be generalised to the whole population. Sampling is basically guided by an element of convenience. Sandelowski (1995) in Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007) argues that sample sizes in qualitative study ought not to be too small that it is hard to attain saturation while at the same time, it must not be too big that it is hard to take on a thorough and case-oriented study. Suffices to highlight that the research considered how much contact was necessary in order to attain saturation. In qualitative studies, the smaller the size of the sample, the more in-depth study is to be carried out. It is actually recommended to have smaller samples to guarantee in-depth and accuracy as supported by Walsh (2003) and Hellstrom (2008).

3.7.1 Snowball method

This is a non-probability method alternatively called chain sampling, chain referral sampling, network sampling or referral sampling. The method is used for research restricted to unusual small groups of people. It involves identifying one participant who then is used to find more sample participants through friends, family and associates. The process usually comes to the fore after information gathering has started. This makes pre-study description of participants very difficult as they will only be known on the ground. This therefore means the cost of finding samples and researching is reduced. While there is high anonymity in the sampling process, participants are known to the first participant, who is more likely to recommend people he/she knows very well and may be sharing alike qualities and behaviour features thus

leading to biasness. Closely akin to the above is a challenge to do with lack of control over participant selection. The other challenge is that representatives of the sample are not definite since the researcher was not involved in the distribution of the sample (Black, 1999). It has also been realised that results produced by this method cannot be generalised.

3.7.2 Emergent Sampling method

Emergent sampling or Opportunistic sampling is a process whereby a researcher picks a potential participant just as he/she comes by. According to Johnson and Christensen (2004), researcher takes advantage of opportunities during the data gathering phase to choose suitable participants. Emergent sampling applies after the research has begun in-order to capitalise on the unfolding proceedings. This type of sampling is mostly helpful when the researcher is incapable or reluctant to announce in advance of the investigation each and every issue that will be included in the study (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2007).

In selecting respondents, the research used snowball sampling which helped in selecting respondents for both interviews and FGD in respective locations. Snowball sampling is whereby a sampled respondent identifies the next suitable respondent. In rare occasions, the research also employed the opportunist or emergent sampling. Opportunistic sampling involves capitalising opportunities as they emerge and following up on leads. This method involved the selection of participants who had interesting and relevant issues/experiences to share in the villages or areas of study. Actually, before particularly selecting proper samples for the study, the researcher had to first identify relevant constituencies where ideal samples could be drawn from. In all the research areas, a pool of about 20 youth, 20 elders/traditional leaders and 20 political activists had to be randomly identified with the help of the main key respondent for the Focus Group Discussions. In this case the main key respondent was either

the local Chief/Headman or an official from the District Administrator's office. It was then out of these pools that final research participants were selected from except for those selected through opportunistic and snowball sampling.

Two administrative districts were randomly selected from the province with a total of 8 districts (25%). In each of the districts, ten centres/locations were randomly selected as data collection and focal points to give wide geographical coverage as well as a mix of urban, semi-urban, farming, mining and rural settings.

All the participants both in FGD and interviews were sampled through the snowball mode which allowed for identification of the most ideal and well placed figures in society. While there may not be other anti-cheating mechanisms to detect participants unworthy joining other than the snowball sample method, every other effort was made to ensure that all the participants were well placed and subject matter knowledgeable.

The research sample targeted 150 people, males and females, all between the ages of 18-70 mainly for their wisdom and experience. However, the eventual figure reduced to 135. All the participants, selected through snowball mode, were rich in the subject matters discussed so much so that most of their contributions were relevant and important. Some of the participants were either former perpetrators of conflicts and violence or had dealt with either perpetrators or victims over a period of time. They all had stories to tell in one way or another.

Focus group discussions were scheduled in each location made up of at least 5 male elements and 5 female sample elements (i.e. 10 people x 10 FGD) drawn from a mixed sample of

youth, community elders, business-people, politicians and any other interested individuals. However, after the discussions proper on the ground that were held between 01/02/14 and 16/02/14, the final total number of FGD participants reduced to eighty five (85), a reduction by 15% mark. There were also 50 individual sample elements selected for in-depth one-to-one interviews with an average of 5 interviews per location with the following sampled respondents; two traditional leaders, one youth and any other respondents from the community.

The choice of traditional leaders followed a realisation that they are the custodians of traditional values and culture and so are best placed to comment about norms and taboos in society. Besides, these are well versed with the experiences of the violent cases since 1980's political independence. Members of the two dominant political parties; ZANU PF and MDC-T were also sampled for their prominent participation and or involvement in the violence cases especially post-2000 elections. The two parties control most of the youth who are accused of perpetrating violence in the province and so the need to target their youth. Meanwhile, the youth were sampled for their direct participation in the cases of violence. It is important that the direct participants disclose their feelings and opinions regarding either alleged participation or their real involvement in conflicts.

The selected locations and their respective respondents are as tabulated below.

Fig. 3.3 Selected Research Centres

DISTRICT	LOCATION	#PEOPLE
MAZOWE	Jingamvura B/C, Bare B/C, Glendale, Mazowe Jumbo Mine, Gweshe B/C.	67
SHAMVA	Wadzanai Township, Goora B/C, Mutumba B/C, Musiiwa B/C, SOS farm.	68
TOTAL	10	135

A total of 10 centres were identified for data collection through interviews and FGD from the two districts that were sampled for the research.

The table shows the distribution of centres in different locations, respective respondents and respective relative frequency.

Fig. 3.4 Relative Frequency

LOCATION	#CENTRES	#RESPONDENTS	RELATIVE FREQUENCY
RURAL	6	79	0.59
URBAN	2	29	0.015
MINING	1	13	0.01
FARMING	1	14	0.1
TOTAL	10	135	1

To cater for all the categories of potential participants; urban, farming, mining and rural, locations were deliberately selected to address this with 6 locations (60%) being rural, 2 (20%) being urban, 1 (10%) being mining and 1 (10%) being farming areas. Therefore, this means that at least sixty percent of the participants are drawn from the rural areas where most of the taboos are believed to be still valid. The other 20% of participants are drawn from the urban areas that were notorious for violence and political polarisation while 10% each are from the mining and farming areas respectively. Besides, these areas still believe and respect taboos to some extent unlike in mining areas where morality and cultures have been eroded by modernity and cultural diversity. It must also be noted that most of the violence that was recorded during the period under review was experienced in the rural areas.

3.8 Principal Investigator

The Principal Investigator (PI) is a person who is charged with the running, integrity of the plan, conduct and supervision of compliance of the study project and other associated elements of the research. Amongst some of the several roles that are charged to the PI are overseeing the general research conduct to ensure ethical behaviour in all areas of the study including the handling of people, information gathering, administration, sharing and possession and responsible publication practices and authorship (Washington University, 2013). In this study, the PI was the researcher as he handled the entire activities alone.

3.9 Data sources

The study employed both primary and secondary data. Primary data was gathered from Focus Group Discussions and interviews that were conducted while secondary data was mobilised from policy documents, observations, government records, archival material from relevant published and unpublished books, articles, and local dailies especially related to the subject matter. All the data was gathered by the researcher alone as a cost-control measure. However, it is important to highlight the fact that most of the meetings and FGD were arranged with the assistance from the local office of the Local Government Ministry while in other cases, nearby school authorities would come in handy.

3.10 Data Collection

As part of the initial protocol of study, a visit was made to the provincial head office of the Ministry of Local Government and National Housing which is responsible for traditional customs and traditional chiefs where authority and consent on the conduct of the research in the province was secured with the Provincial Administrator's office in Bindura. Letters of

approval by the provincial head and the respective two District Administrators are attached as annex 'Approval 1, Approval 2 and Approval 3' respectively.

The study was divided into two phases. The first phase was an exploration survey intended to obtain information on the socio-cultural background of the people of the areas. This information was used to develop questions used in conducting the interviews and guiding FGDs during the second phase. The second phase also involved collection of vital information using the key informant interview technique, which also helped to gain insights into the traditional laws and taboos of the respective areas.

The researcher made use of a cell-phone as a voice recorder in instances where the participants would have consented to the use of such gadgets. Overall, all the data gathering process was done through note-taking (writing). The challenges with discussing, note-taking, probing and comprehending data contributed to the lengthy data collection processes. However, every effort was made to ensure that correct data was recorded in its original form.

At the end of each day, all the recorded data would be decoded, analysed and placed in appropriate themes before typed as permanent soft material. This process was applied to all the photographs, recorded voice and written notes. All the rough notes were carefully filled for future reference according to sources of data, areas of interviews/FGD and the importance of that data.

3.10 Limitations

During the course of the research, there were a variety of hurdles that were encountered. However, it is important to highlight the fact that the research topic was considered too

political to be researched especially in Mashonaland Central province. This marked the main challenge regarding the research process as some of the respondents were hesitant to partake while other responsible authorities felt that it was an opposition political party or some civil society organisation initiative meant to gather data for future retribution purposes. The other limitation that was encountered was in trying to understand the cultural norms of sampled societies without crossing paths of some traditional leaders. Some traditional leaders felt that the research was bound to water down some of the taboos respected in respective areas. Therefore, in the early stages, some leaders were resistant to the research.

3.11 Delimitation

The research was primarily focussed on the two districts of Mazowe and Shamva, Mashonaland Central province. The districts were selected for their diversity of cultures and modes of settlement i.e. urban, rural, farming, mining and peri-urban. Largely, the two districts are homes to the Zezuru ethnic groups though there are pockets of Chewa, Korekore and Sena people.

Mazowe borders with Harare to the west, Chinanhora to the south, Guruve to the north and Bindura to the east. It is basically characterised by commercial farming activities in the Mazowe, Mvurwi, Concession and Glendale areas, mining in Mazowe, Great Dyke and Glendale areas while communal areas are in the Chiweshe area. Politically, the district has two legislative constituencies: Mazowe East and Mazowe West and one senatorial seat: Mazowe.

Shamva borders with Bindura to the west, Murewa to the south and east while Mt Darwin is in the north. The district is sustained by mining at Shamva centre and dotted around small-

scale mining operations and subsistence crop farming in the communal areas in Bushu and Madziva. The district is made up of two parliamentary constituencies: Shamva North and Shamva South.

3.12 Analysis and Interpretation

All the collected data was analysed and interpreted using NVIVO software and Content Analysis method, which provided for the analysis of written, audio or photographic material. Data was divided into two categories; interviews and focus group discussions and was analysed differently with NVIVO deciphering the former and Content Analysis focusing on the latter.

Content Analysis is a method of analysing content of text data through a systematic process of identifying alike themes and deliberately ignoring statistical elements and their significance. Other scholars have defined it as a process of analysing qualitative data and attempting to pick main similarities in behaviours and meanings from messages (Patton, 2002). In other words, the method provides investigators with a forum to appreciate social truth in a subjective but methodical way. Through Content Analysis, key themes and patterns were also identified especially: ideas, behaviours, and incidents before they were arranged in coherent categories: chronology, importance and frequency. Prominent categories that were looked at include amongst others: subject matters, time of the incident, period of the activity and the event itself. Precisely, a combination of both Latent and Manifest Content analysis was employed to ensure a thorough analysis of all the collected data. Latent Content analysis primarily seeks structural meaning in the messages while Manifest analysis looks at the surface meaning (McBroom, 1992, Babbie, 1998). In the interpretation process, the study also used the triangulation method (Miles and Huberman, 1994) whereby all three different

pieces of data from different points of view were compared for truthfulness and credibility. Complimenting Content Analysis was the Phenomenology/Heuristic Analysis which focused on how individuals experienced the world. This method also allowed the researcher to input his experience of the research and surrounding environment to shape the results of the study (Kleiman, 2004). In data analysis, there was also need for some free imaginative variation which was basically the description of the essential meanings that were discovered during the data perusal process.

To complement the above approaches of data analysis, the research used NVIVO computer programme to compute some of the data gathered on the ground. This programme was of importance especially in creating relationships between descriptive variables: conflicts against their repercussions, age against the belief in taboos and age vis-à-vis level of involvement in conflicts.

3.12.1 Application of Content Analysis Method

This procedure of content analysis was initiated in the early stages of data gathering. The early consideration of the method in the examination stage helped the researcher shuttle to and from the development of ideas and data collection, which subsequently helped progress in the direction of sources that were most valuable for attending the research questions. To fully follow the process, the research strictly followed a systematic procedure as outlined in Tesch (1990).

To start the process, the researcher had to undergo a short induction lecture by another colleague who had previously carried out a similar process and was well versed in data coding and analysis. It was after this lecture that all the data from oral interviews and FGD

was converted to written texts for usability in the analysis. It was also considered important to include prominent gestures and expressions by participants. In the transcription of data, all questions and information was firstly categorised in rough themes before it was confirmed to be final text data and ready for use.

Having sorted out the data for use, the research then carefully unitised and coded all the available data according to its relevance and scope in the entire study. The researcher ensured that all the data was reduced to readable and analysable units of at most sentences. This finally led to a provisional production of the following six themes: taboo types, relevance/appreciability in society, age groups that recognised taboos, age groups involved in conflicts/violence, effects of taboos on conflicts and how they could be upgraded to suit modern situations.

Coding schemes for the analysis were developed from the Deterrence Theory of Punishment. Six key issues were raised from the theory as follows: voluntarism in an activity, consensus by society on an issue, definition of social units by the society, definition of acceptable behaviour by society, subjectivity of order and socialisation in society. From the themes created during the second stage of the analysis, coding schemes could then be developed after marrying with the key issues that were also picked from the theory as follows:

Fig. 3.5 Study Themes

Themes from the Study	Themes from the Theory
Taboo types	Consensus
Relevance of taboos	Definition of social units, Subjectivity of order
Age groups that recognise taboos	Particular groups in society which are associated with taboo recognition.
Age groups in conflicts	Voluntarism, Socialisation
Effects of taboos	Subjectivity of order
Upgrading taboos	Definition of acceptable behaviour
*Human Factor Theory	Generally looked at the appropriateness and goodness of individual behaviour and personality.

The themes and codes were tested for accuracy, consistency and relevance using a sample text. As the coding progressed and realising that human coders were also likely to be affected by fatigue and prone to make further errors, there were rechecks for consistency.

3.12.1.2 Rational for Using Content Analysis

It was important using the Content Analysis method in the analysis of gathered data. This was a simple method that only required materials that were readily available and cheaply. It was also realised that the method could be used to analyse events that have occurred over a number of years without compromising their value and meaning. Similarly, Content Analysis could also be applied in the analysis of depth interview data where a lot of qualitative material was involved; audio, video, actions and even thoughts and feelings.

However, during its use, it was also observed that the method had its weaknesses. Content Analysis could only be used to analyse already recorded messages. It was also ineffective in testing causal relationships between variables.

3.12.2 NVIVO 10 for Windows Service Pack 5 Analysis

In the data analysis, the researcher employed the interpretive approach which requires making sense of research participants' accounts before interpreting their meaning. Data was transcribed using Microsoft Office Word 2007 and cleaned before it was taken to the NVivo.

Subfolders (nodes) for in-depth interviews, observations and focus group discussions were created to keep data from different areas and different constituencies of participants before sets were established in the area called Navigation View. It was then that Nvivo created aliases/shortcuts. Nodes were created for efficiency and reliability.

First, creating themes manually from different data sets was the best way of breaking down the texts. However, the model explorer tool in Nvivo was useful to map out diagrammatically how the themes related to each other. During the analysis, when data had been brought together under expressive codes and thematic ideas had emerged with all the data linked through memos, it was possible to start coding again now only applying thematic codes. This was done to make sure that the hypothetical ideas which had appeared in the first round of coding could be methodically shown in the data, thereby attending to the validity of the research results.

The research first coded with broad codes 'tracks/rieles', which are general themes in the data (4-8 themes). Unintentionally, multiple coding could occur but only to cater for the whole narrative of the theme. After that, based on what came out during the coding stage and using a priori codes based on existing theory and the reflective notes, the research did code with 'fine' codes/more specific codes. To ensure accuracy and consistency, queries were being run

as the analysis progressed from tree node to tree node. A Coding Comparison Query was also run to check on the percentage of agreement and disagreement between codes created.

Advantages of using NVIVO

- It was relatively easy to use.
- It was easy to import documents from a word processing package and code
- It could also easily code imported documents on screen
- Coding stripes could be made visible in the margins of documents
- Enabled the integration of literature with data for enhanced debate
- The software was able to directly use audio data as data source

There was however a temptation to continue coding as the software had simplified the process.

3.13 Reliability and Validity

Rigour-less research is worthless and loses its utility, observes Morse (2002). Validity, in qualitative research, refers to whether the results of a research are correct and definite- “correct” in that study results truly mirror the state of affairs, and “definite” in that study results are supported by facts (Patton, 2002). However, to ensure accuracy and certainty, other measures were instituted like data triangulation which saw the use different sources of information as a way of increasing the validity of a study and methodological triangulation which also fused multiple data collection methods (Merriam, 2009).

In this wide arena of research, there have been other scholars who have argued that validity and reliability are quantitative components and not qualitative. These have gone on to substitute reliability and validity with “trustworthiness,” focussing on four elements:

credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Whittemore, 2001). Also to ensure validity, Davies and Dodd (2002) argue that external validity must be guaranteed through-out and ensuring that the results of the research are generalisable to another situation or a different set of people. In other words, a properly designed research must be able to satisfy the following questions: applicability to another sample, were the findings not dependent on the context, and replicability of a product given similar conditions. Reflexivity as a measure to ensure validity takes care of the possibility of the researcher's principles over-spilling into the explanation of information. There is also what is called audit trail which entails keeping full and correct accounts of everything the researcher did and of the data gathered. According to Winter (2000) and Patton (2002) these accounts should be availed as proof of data gathered when required and as corroboration of the explanation of data.

To ensure validity and reliability of data and the results thereto, all the three data collection tools were used in the same communities and that the provision or call-backs also ensured that all the data was verified through some other means. The research process also ensured truth value, applicability, consistency, and neutrality as it sought to satisfy all the prerequisites of a complete study. During the first phase of the area visits, the researcher to some extent, tried to understand the behaviours, and mannerisms of the participants for easy interpretation of how they relate verbal statements and gestures. Also to ensure internal validity of the study results, it was seen to it that there was a methodological coherence which then guaranteed correspondence between the research question and all the works of the system, developing a vibrant rapport among sampling, information gathering and examination. Another means through which the study was made valid was ensuring an appropriate sample, made up of some of the best participants with relevant knowledge of the

research subject, spending adequate time gathering data, peer reviewing, use of low inference descriptors and choosing cases that are different to the cases under study as a way of confirming data. This is called negative case sampling.

3.14 Ethical considerations

Ethics are moral principles, rules, or standards governing a person conducting research so that during the course, no-one is injured, hurt or inconvenienced by either the process or the outcome. Therefore, adherence to research ethics implies that any-one partaking in a research has a practical prospect that privacy and anonymity are certain and that information given to the researcher is handled in a confidential mode. The other principle that is important in research ethics involves a rational anticipation that participants are told of the scope of the research and can decide whether or not to partake uncoerced. During the study which adopted an absolutist stance, it was ensured that good behaviour was maintained at all times by everyone who played a role and that data was interpreted correctly and appropriately without bias or prejudice.

Prior to the conduct of the research, cautious steps had been taken towards securing relevant authorities' consent. Equally, all the involved respondents were informed of the scope, nature and direction of the research and the implications thereto well before the study so that they could participate fully aware of the programme. The awareness programme was carried out during the first phase of the study visits.

3.15 Summary

This chapter focussed on the methodology side of the research where it specifically presented how the study was conducted through a step-by-step process. It explained several processes like sampling, data analysis, and theories guiding the study and how conclusions were made. It also presented some of the challenges and experiences that were encountered during the data collection processes in Mazowe and Shamva districts.

Chapter Four

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 Introduction

The study is premised on the Deterrence Theory of Punishment by Hobbes, Beccaria and Bentham. The theory was also complimented by a general perception and belief that has been sustained by various scholars; Gelfand (1979), Bozongwana (1983), Haralambos and Holborn (2000), Ffukwa (2001) and Chigidi (2009), that taboos are instruments of socialisation and social control lodged with emotion of fear. It is assumed that the fear of the repercussions emanating from an evil act deters one from engaging in that act. The study also sought to establish the sustainability of the above theories in this day and age.

4.2 Deterrence Theory of Punishment

The Deterrence Theory of Punishment judgementally assesses the role of pre-emption as a goal of utilitarian punishment in the decrease of crime in society. It assumes that if members of a particular society know that whenever they violate a set rule, there is some form of punishment that is meted such that they avoid transgressing at all cost. Proponents of Deterrence Theory of Punishment classical philosophers: Thomas Hobbes (1588–1678), Cesare Beccaria (1738–1794), and Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832) believed that people decide to observe or encroach upon the law after weighing the gains and costs of their actions (Akers, 2000, Moyer, 2001). The theory is founded on the doctrine of freedom of the will, according to which an individual is free to act in any manner that he/she pleases. Society, therefore, takes the responsibility to discipline and ensure that the behaviour conforms to commonly recognised values by giving preventive sentence for violating laws. Deterrence

has two basic functions; to prevent repeated violation of a crime, and to set an example for others to deter from committing violating laws.

The theory relies on three distinct mechanisms: severity, certainty, and celerity. The more severe a penalty is, the more likely that a reasonably thinking human being will abstain from criminal deeds. Certainty of punishment implies that punishment is effected whenever violation of the law is reported. Besides, the penalty must be swift in order to deter future potential violations. It is argued that the closer the administration of punishment is to the commission of the crime, the better the likelihood that criminals will appreciate that violation of the law is bad.

4.2.1 Implications of the Deterrence Theory of Punishment to the Study

Various scholars have viewed this theory differently and so have proffered varying arguments about its applicability in real life. Typically, Beccaria has even argued that extreme harshness of the repercussions will not reduce crime, but will only increase it. He argues that immediate and definite reprimand is the best means of stopping and restraining crime. Others have criticized the theory for its focus on the modern criminal perspective arguing that it may not be relevant in this kind of study. Indeed, the theory leaves too much leverage for the commission of crime before the society takes punitive measures.

4.2.2 Structural-Functional theory

The Structural-Functional theory, developed by Parsons, Weber and Durkheim is a consensus model, which can be used to maintain the social order. Other scholars also believe that the model can be abused by those in power to give good reason for inequalities and describe the significance of their contribution to society. However, in simple, this is just a model for

description of the society: its people, behaviours and modernity. According to Parsons, the origin of social action was voluntarism which he defined thus;

“People act on the basis of their values; their actions are oriented and constrained by the values and norms of people around them; and these norms and values are the basis of social order” (Knapp 1994: 191-192).

Clearly, this meant that whatever actions people adopted, they were out of their conscious choices and not that there were any other forces behind as is explained by the belief behind the traditional taboo systems.

Influenced by Max Weber, Talcott Parsons developed what he termed social actions which are actions considered by an individual and have meaning and that they take account of others’ desires in society (Adams and Sydiue, 2001:349). There are four of these social actions. However, for the purpose of this study, only three will be highlighted for they are the most relevant;

- *“That social action is voluntary or voluntaristic.*
- *That social action is subjective.*
- *Social action is determined by social norms and the values of a culture”.*

Socialization and knowledge acquisition in the child, and subsequent lifetime socialization are the ways by which the norms and ideals of the general public are acquired by persons. This becomes part of a process that ties a person to the entire community system. Whenever this socialization process is successfully completed, it means that the systems and ideals turn out to be internalized by people, and when individuals’ follow-up their personal desires, they also meet the wishes of the entire public. Parsons also highlights the roles of the family in a modern society according to his conception as basically dual; the socialization of children, and stabilization of the adult personalities in society (Ibid). He also defined socialization in

the family as being two-pronged: a means through which individuals internalise group culture and a process through which individuals learn and get ready to assume independent lives. Parsons clearly lays bare the fact that traditional socialisation may be exposing people to archaic systems which may be inappropriate in this age. The theory posits clearly that the behaviours expressed by individuals in society are developed by the same society albeit from the family level and that family socialisation is supposed to regulate society (Ibid).

Structural-Functionalists in society also believe that education plays an important role to the smooth running of society. It is believed that education socialises the public not only to the technique and thinking skills required to exploit their capabilities, but also trains them to be high-quality people and relate well with others.

4.2.3 Implications of the Structural-Functional theory to the current study

Given the conception of the theory as outlined above, it is very important to look at its possible implications to the current study so that it is known how relevant it may still be or not. From the theory's definition by Weber, Durkheim and Parsons, it is evident that the theory was designed in United States of America well back in the 1940 and 1950s focused on a well-established white family that probably did not really feel the importance of either family or societal structures. Therefore, it may be difficult to analyse its influence to the contemporary African family that is characterised by poverty and the effects of globalisation. Similarly, the fact that the theory had in mind a fixed nature of roles, also brings in another challenge in as far as really establishing who would have influenced young people to engage into immoral and violent activities. This is further exacerbated by the confusing family socialisation roles which have ultimately weakened the entire society.

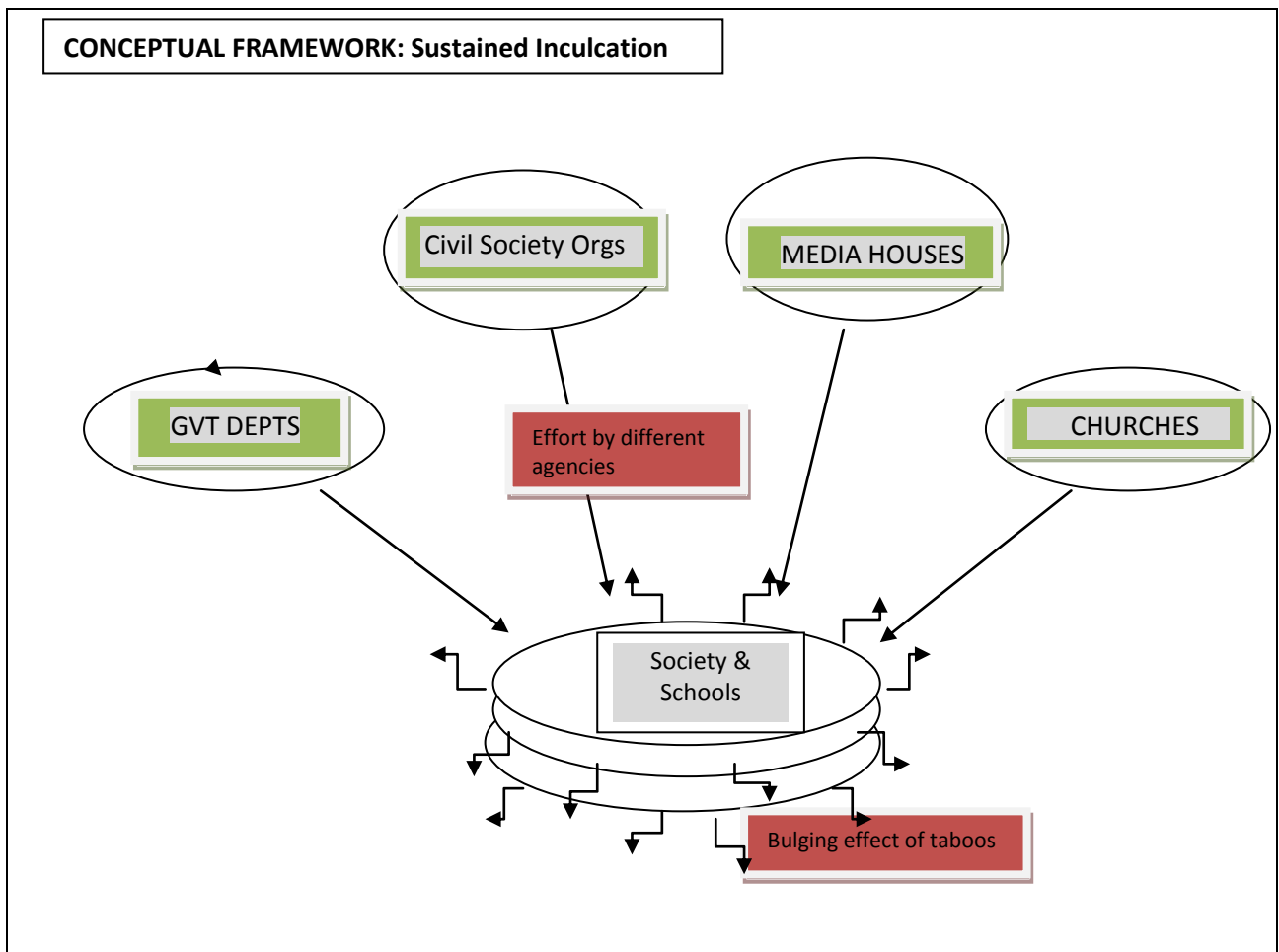
It is important to realise that the theory seriously underestimated the extent of power within the societal structures. What was not taken into consideration is the fact that any member of the society has the potential to change other people's ideology for as long as he/she had the necessary resources materially and or financially. This is in view of the fact that most youth-led raids, robberies, sexual assaults and other campaigns were orchestrated by young people who probably had either beer or some drugs serving as valuable incentives. It therefore becomes difficult in the attempt to allot responsibilities for the conflicts in society. The theory's failure to react to the changes in family and household structures that have occurred in the last 20-30 years may also present another challenge in this study. The fact of the matter is that over the last three decades, African traditional systems and beliefs have been severely affected by globalisation (technology and modernity) so much so that most people have moved away from the belief in deep cultural concepts largely due to rural-urban migration, effects of the media and the advent of an aggressive Christian religion in the form of Pentecostal groups.

The other implication of the theory to the study is that it does not have a defined position regarding the advent of modernity. Clearly, contemporary technological and social changes could promote stability and yet the theory is not flexible enough to capture that new dispensation.

4.3 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is an interrelated string of ideas explaining a certain trend. It works as the foundation for appreciating the underlying trends of interconnections across actions, knowledge, concepts, information, observations, explanations and other issues of experience (Svinicki, 2010). A conceptual framework also helps to interpret events.

Fig. 4.1 Sustained Inculcation Conceptual Framework



It is this research's conception that the picture that is being given in all the theories amounts to an orderly society that is shaped by societal norms and the socialisation role of the family as posited by Weber, Durkheim and Parsons and Hobbes, Beccaria and Bentham. The above theories presented a picture whereby societal order and peace are based on family socialisation and traditional systems. Family socialisation plays a role of building the behaviours of members and regulating their conduct whereas traditional systems serve the role of deterring people from engaging in immoral and illegal activities.

In the conceptual framework above, it is believed that societal order and peace are sustained by four key elements: family, modernity, traditional systems and conscience. Unlike Parson's

conception, the above conception believes that the coming of globalisation and the mere application of conscience should help people build their morals and behaviours so much so that they fear hurting and killing others. This view is also equally shared by Hobbes, Beccaria and Bentham who posit that the punishment that is meted on a violator of law should be restraining enough to others and the rest of the community.

The Structural-Functional theory clearly failed to react to the changes in family and household structures that have occurred in the last 20-30 years whereby the globalisation effects transformed the entire social system to an extent that even the original proponents of the global system are even crying foul over the distortions in their societies. The theory also failed to explain the place of education in the puzzle especially in the contemporary situation.

The other scholars' conceptions: Gelfand (1979), Bozongwana (1983), Haralambos and Holborn (2000), Ffukwa (2001) and Chigidi (2009), which propound that society is regulated by taboos working as instruments of socialisation and social control lodged with emotion of fear, may also be lacking in as far as time and the democracy are concerned. The above argument seems to lean on a thin veil of social regulation based on fear of the unknown. On the contrary, people in this day and age are educated and inquisitive enough to know the real and unreal.

It is therefore this study's conception that contrary to the above, society and especially conflicts and violence is regulated and restrained by several factors other than those cited above. As given in the diagram above, social order and peace in society are built on three basic pillars. The first pillar (not in any order of importance) is society composed of the family as the basic unit of socialisation and friends who add information and harden feelings

and beliefs. This pillar plays a role in regulating societal conflicts and violence. The other pillar is modernity representing the effects of globalisation. It is believed that through education, rural-urban migration, employment, media, and other social networks, people have moved ahead and would not want to re-visit their olden practices like taboos and other superstitious beliefs. Therefore order, especially conflicts and violence are instituted by the fear of legal prosecution and not the unknown.

The final dual pillar is made up of, to some extent, traditional systems and the individuals' conscience derived from one's religion. This pillar holds that traditional systems are not completely eroded from the society but simply overshadowed by modernity. This is evidenced by the belief of such taboos about '*botso*' anti-beating of a mother, '*makunakuna*' anti-incest, '*ngozi*' avenging spirits after a murder and others. The other end of the same pillar argues that individuals in society may only regulate their behaviours especially against conflicts and violence through the 'sixth sense', level of education and to some extent, levels of resourcefulness commonly called conscience. Therefore, there may not be any need to go backward in as far as traditional beliefs are concerned: rather, there can only be an upgrading of the beliefs blending with modernity. This blending should be done over a relatively long period of time.

4.4 Summary

This chapter focussed on the theories that were used to guide the study from inception up to conclusion. It touched on the strengths, weaknesses and relevance of each of the theories in relation to the research's scope. However, it was pointed out that the main theory behind the study is the Deterrence Theory of Punishment. The chapter also devised a possible conceptual framework through which the recommended solutions could be implemented on the ground.

Chapter Five

RESULTS PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

Data was collected from the participants through all the three modes; interviews, focus group discussions and archival material. After the relevant data mobilisation, it was presented in its semi-raw form before analysis. Actually, the data that was collected sought to address the following subjects;

- The identification of traditional taboos in use in the respective research areas;
- Level of societal appreciation of the traditional taboos;
- The eventual roles of the same taboos in conflict situations and
- How the same taboos could be upgraded to meet the contemporary situations.

The same data was presented according to the mode of collection before presentation according to relevant themes so that similar issues and highlights could be brought out for easy analysis and interpretation. In summary, this chapter presents all the data that was collected and analysed to create meanings that could answer the research questions cited in Chapter 1.

5.2 Exploration Survey Results Presentation

The exploration survey was conducted during the final week of January 2014 in all the intended areas to obtain information on the socio-cultural background of the people of the areas. The survey was deliberately carried out in advance of the actual study so that it could inform interviews and FGD questions.

Relevant data was gathered by visiting all the ten areas under study. It was observed that all the farming, mining and townships had almost similar cultures and behaviours largely because of the following reasons;

- All the selected areas are inhabited by people of alien background who, all at some point in life worked either in the farming or mining areas but for the White-men.
- All influenced by alien rituals and ceremonies like ‘nyawo’ or ‘gure’.
- All influenced by mixed cultures; Shona, Nyanja, Sena etc.
- Society characterised by extended family system.
- Marked by abuse of alcohol.
- Strong belief and use of juju and black magic.
- Low levels of literacy and underemployment.
- High cases of single parent-hood and co-habitation.
- Non-relation with the rural areas.
- Low adherence and respect of totems.

Similarly, the survey revealed that in the other rural areas of Chiweshe and Madziva, they are largely Zezuru-inhabited and so follow an almost similar way of life, culturally and traditionally. The survey established that the two areas: communal/rural and farming/mining/townships had completely different languages and language registers so much so that the interview guides had to be structured differently to accommodate such variances. In the case of Mazowe Jumbo Mine, Glendale and SOS farm, transcribers’ and translator’s assistance had to be secured from a Bindura university female lecturer.

For the purpose of physical visits to the study areas, the survey helped in that it established the political temperatures prevailing in respective areas so that the researcher knew in advance the type of literature to take along, apparel to put on and linen to take along for overnight comfort and safety. It was also established that some roads like the following would not be accessible during the actual visits owing to rains;

- Gweshe-Howard road
- Nzvimbo-Gunguwe road
- Musiiwa-SOS loop
- Madziva-Mutumba and
- Some Wadzanai streets

When the researcher set out for the journey driving a low-clearance station-wagon, alternative to walk long distances or hitch-hike public transport had been put in place to ensure completion of the assignment. Therefore, light boots, jeans, a sunhat and a rain-coat had been set aside.

5.3 Main Results Presentation

In carrying out the study, the targeted population and sample that had been identified was visited/contacted as per the given schedules and the distribution is as follows.

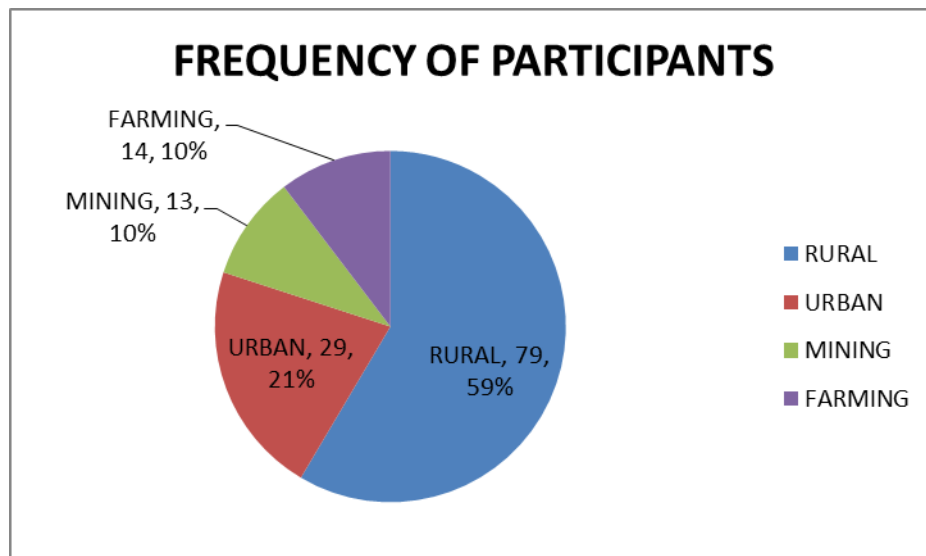
The distribution of centres in different locations, respective respondents and relative frequency.

Fig 5.1 Relative Frequency

LOCATION	#CENTRES	#RESPONDENTS	RELATIVE FREQUENCY
RURAL	6	79	0.59
URBAN	2	29	0.015
MINING	1	13	0.01
FARMING	1	14	0.1
TOTAL	10	135	1

The table shows that out of the initially targeted 150 participants, only 135 were responsive thus giving an effective response rate of 90%. It also shows that there were 79 participants in the rural areas compared to the targeted 90, 29 in the urban areas compared to 30, 13 in the mining areas compared to 15 and 14 in the farming areas compared to the targeted 15. The reduction was experienced in the Focus Group Discussions where some of the invited/sampled participants failed to turn up at the nominated venues. This is presented graphically in the pie chart below.

Fig. 5.2 Frequency of Participants



As indicated in the Research Proposal earlier on, 50 participants were sampled for formal interviews in all the 10 selected centres. All the 50 participants were contacted during the period stated below and successful interviews were recorded. Below is the sex distribution of the interviewees.

Fig 5.3 Interview Schedule

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE					
	CENTRE	MAL	YTH	FEM	TOTAL
1	Gweshe	3	1	1	5
2	Jingamvura	3	1	1	5
3	Bare	4	0	1	5
4	Glendale	2	2	1	5
5	Mazowe Jumbo Mine	1	3	1	5
6	Wadzanayi	2	2	1	5
7	Goora	3	1	1	5
8	Mutumba	3	1	1	5
9	Musiiwa	2	2	1	5
10	SOS	1	3	1	5
	TOTAL	24	16	10	50
		48%	32%	20%	

The distribution table shows that there were 48% male participants in the interviews, 32% youth and 20% females. It was however noted that the following factors were at play in almost all areas;

- Generally men tend to dominate social and political activities in rural areas.
- There were more youth in urban, mining and farming areas mainly due to unemployment.
- There were no youth participants at Bare centre as it was used as a political base where youth persecuted people. Therefore, they were ‘barred’ as a way of healing the wounds and of keeping the hornet’s nest closed.
- Women are less active in social and political lives despite their bigger demographic share in society according to 2012 Zimstats population census figures.
- Emergency sampling covered the gap for the missing participants.

5.4 Interviews

The research embarked on a massive data collection programme in the two districts selected for the study. One of the three means of data gathering was the interview through which a total of fifty participants were involved. The interviews followed a particular order of questions listed in an interview guide for uniformity of responses. On average, each interview lasted about 30 to 45 minutes depending on the mood of the respondent. Not all individual interview discussions were presented in this write-up; rather, the results were presented thematically except for isolated interviews which were selected as case studies with peculiar responses and incidences.

Fig. 5.4 Interview Questions

The key themes were derived from the following questions as listed in the guide;

- What are traditional taboos according to your cultural understanding?
- *Nemaziviro enyu, chii chinonzi chiera?*
- What are some of the taboos that regulate people's behaviours?
- *Kana muchiziva zviera, ndezvipi zvimwe zvamunoziva zvinodzora hunhu hwevanhu?*
 - a) Can they be categorised?
 - b) *Zviera izvi, zvingaisike mumupanda?*
- What effect do these taboos have on people and their daily conduct?
- *Chii chingashandurwe muvanhu nezviera?*
 - a) What could be affecting these taboos' effectiveness?
 - b) *Chii chingave chiri kutadzisa kushanda zvakanaka kwezviera?*
- Do you think any of the taboos had any influence on the experienced conflicts?
- *Kufunga kwenyu, zviera izvi zvingave zviine chekuita nemhirizhonga yakamboitika mudunhu kana iripo?*
- Could there be any potential conflicts that were restrained by any of the taboos?
- *Pangave here paine mhirizhonga dzakadziviswa nezviera?*
- Do you think taboos are still relevant that they may be upgraded to meet today's needs?
- *Maonero enyu, zviera zvingave zvichinebasa muugaro zvekuti zvingachengetedzwe?*
- Can you suggest how they can be preserved?
- *Zviera zvingachengetedzwe sei?*

The themes derived were as follows;

- Identified taboos
- Their social role
- Influence in conflicts
- Relevance
- How they can be either embraced or discarded from the society.

5.5 Mazowe District

Interview 1

According to a respondent identified as *sekuru* G during the interview at one village ‘A’ in Chiweshe, a family was asked to compensate the family of a deceased elderly man who had died at the hands of some politically influenced youth during the 2008 political conflict. Apparently, one youth who hailed from the Choto family (not real name) had struck the elderly deceased man with a log before he passed out at one of the prominent political bases near Nzvimbo Growth point. The family of the deceased demanded a virgin girl child in order to appease the spirit of the dead following what was termed ‘*dandaro revakuru*’ (investigation of the cause of the mysteries) in so many months.

During the official presentation of the girl child to the family of the deceased as compensation (*kuripa*), the village head and one spirit medium present emphasised on the importance of *bonum prolis* (offspring) from the family that was to be established with the coming of a ‘new wife’ in the village. According to the spirit medium;

“*Dzinde remufi rinotarisirwa kusunina nekupfumbira kubva pamhodzi ichasimwa muharanga nehunza*”

(The continuance of the deceased's identity is expected to be realised from the union and reproduction of the girl and man witnessed here today).

The receiving family especially the man who was to directly get (marry) the girl was urged to focus on reproduction as a way of appeasing the spirit of the dead as that was the only way that the avenging spirit could be silenced. However, the village head pointed out that there was a need for the birth of a male child who then could be named after the deceased and pass on the family name.

“Chikuru pamatanho atorwa nhasi kwava kusundaidzira nekuvavarira kuti pabarwe chikomana icho chinzosimudza nekufambisa zita remuchakabvu mukunge atumidzwa. Ndiko kutu mhepo dzizorore”

(What is important from today's ceremony is that the new family endeavour to bear a male child who will be named after the deceased and will carry on the family name).

There was also another call for *bonum fidei* (unity) within the families of both the compensating and the receiving parties and between the two families now that they were joined by the new marriage.

In the Zezuru culture just like in most African societies, children have always been considered a prolongation of oneself and therefore in some way a fulfilment of immortality. Marriages by nature were expected to bear offspring so that the family name could continue to grow. It should also be realised that in the Zezuru culture, marriage is not used for biological purposes alone; it has other religious and social uses.

Interview 2

One participant in Mazowe reported that there were two brothers who belonged to a named political party who had taken part in the torture and rape of other perceived political

opponents. According to the respondent, the brothers believed to be either resident at Chamuka at Mazowe Jumbo Mine or around had been repeatedly warned against engaging in either the heinous acts or other sinful activities against innocent people or risked facing serious misfortunes. Some community elders had at some point even made reference to the traditional taboos' repercussions in the event that they hurt or killed any person. Precisely, according to the respondent of Nyanja dialect, the brothers had been told the following coded taboos; {32, 41}.

The respondent further revealed that after persecuting an unknown number of people for political reasons, they moved to Mvurwi Township in 2003 where they hoped to start on new lives free of bad memories. In 2010, eight years after the political conflict, the elder brother lost his mental faculties and went mad. Initially, close friends and family members blamed it on drug and alcohol abuse. Medical and prophetic assistance were sought from relevant institutions but to no avail. In 2012, the other brother similarly fell sick the same manner the elder brother had fallen and went mad. It was at this point that, according to the respondent, the family diverted their attention towards traditional healers. According to the speaker, traditional healers had described that as '*kupfupira* or *pfupa*' which literally means resistance to medication/ aid. After consulting several traditional healers, the family was told that some years earlier, the two in the company of other friends had killed a mine worker in Mazowe for allegedly doing politics and had dumped the body in one of the disused mine shafts at one of the mines in Mazowe. It was therefore the spirit of the deceased that was seeking revenge. The families were advised against consulting fake healers termed '*n'anga bande*' as they risked losing money and wasting time.

The experience in this situation is similar to those experienced in Manicaland and Masvingo provinces after the 2008 elections where murder perpetrators were eventually asked to pay heavily.

Interview 3

In another interview held at Mazowe Jumbo Mine, Mazowe with a local compound leader identified as Uncle X, it was revealed that in 2001, there was a case of political violence at the mine bar pitting youth from ZANU PF and MDC political parties. About three hours after the violence, an unidentified alleged MDC youth was seen walking towards Jumbo dam and people assumed that he was travelling towards John Lawry area about 14 kilometres to the north. After a while, another group of three alleged ZANU PF youth were also seen following in the same direction.

What surprised the neighbouring community was that at around 2100 hours, the same three youth that had followed behind one alleged MDC youth were seen loitering around the compound. It was eventually observed that the three youth were actually failing to locate their places of residences for almost the whole night. On the following morning, compound elders, according to Uncle X, gathered to establish what had befallen the three youth. Before any possible solution was found, information was already circulating that a body of a dead youth was discovered on the Jumbo dam wall. Police officers later arrived to investigate a possible case of murder. However, village elders eventually established that it was probably the three stray youth who had killed the deceased before they lost their memories on where they lived. According to Uncle X, this was attributed to the work of juju or black magic or '*maloz*a' possibly by the spirits of the deceased youth. The three youth eventually confessed that they had murdered the deceased. Meanwhile after two days, in a manner meant to punish

the three youth, the family of the murdered youth refused to take the confession arguing that their son had died of natural cause. On the sidelines, according to the interviewee, one elder from the deceased's family was heard vowing that there were going to be avenging spirits 'mpepho' retaliating the gruesome act.

'Isu hatirwe, iye muchakabvu ne midzimu vanorwa voga. Hatizvarire kuti vamwe vanhu vabaye zvavo. Ukapha muntu uchita ngozi'

5.6 Shamva

Interview 1

In another village X in Madziva, Shamva, according to one Chief, there was a family called Gozho (not real name) that had deliberately decided to create a permanent relationship with another family as a possible way of mending severed relations. The relations had been severed following an incident whereby a 23 year old lady, a member of one political youth militia had gauged an eye of another young man aged 25 belonging to another political party causing permanent injury. The injury followed a physical fist fight pitting youth members of the two dominant political parties in the area.

As a conflict mitigating measure, the two families had agreed to marry the two as the family of the young man felt that his chances of marrying were in jeopardy following his disability. Similarly, the girl's family felt that since they were in the same neighbourhood and would continue meeting and relating through other activities outside politics, there was need to find a lasting solution. In this case, according to the Chief, it was through marrying the two.

"Mukomana ndiye akatozoti 'mangamadii kuti ndingowane musikana wacho zvinyararwe, ndinomuda zvangu'" (The man suggested that he married the girl so the conflict could be resolved, 'after all I love her')

By the time of the interview with the Chief, the couple had a baby girl and were said to be living and relating well.

It is clear that in the Zezuru societies, marriage is not just between two individuals. Rather, it is a union between two families while in certain situations entire villages or clans are involved. The involvement of the entire family and clan was primarily meant to ensure that everyone gets aware of the union and be able to help monitor any misdemeanours. Besides, it meant to show that families are a collective responsibility which could not be easily shouldered by a single person. In another sense, it simply showed the value in African traditional beliefs in as far as collectivism is concerned.

The African taboo system is also important in the regulation of societal behaviours. This is in stark contrast with Masaka and Chemhuru (2011) who argue that Shona taboos only inflame fright in people, which has no significance, “but is a means to an end” which is good behaviour. The two scholars fail to appreciate the role of taboos in African societies and how these taboos may have been originated. However, Honwana (1999) clearly captured the concept and went on to relate it with other experiences in Mozambique where reference is made to the ‘*Mipfhukwa*’.

While Ngoro (2001) and Maradze (2003), posit that the central role of the African traditional beliefs was washed to the outside edge following the coming of Christianity, Islam and other religions, communities revisit some of the systems and practices whenever they encounter horrific experiences. Even those who do not believe in African traditional religion, whenever there is a social challenge and especially when there are avenging spirits, are quick to consult traditional leaders, traditional spirits or traditional healers for sustainable solutions. What

some societies in Chiweshe and Shamva were going through is synonymous with what other scholars like Eneji (2012) said about believing that it is a fallacy to think that traditional African beliefs and norms had been pushed to the periphery as most communities revisited their traditional cultures whenever they faced social challenges.

Interview 2

A community leader who was interviewed at Wadzanai business centre revealed that it had been noted with concern that most of the people who had been pushed to the forefront during the 2002 and 2008 political conflicts were not staunch political activists but mere residents who were forced to join and partake in the activities thereby infringing their basic freedoms. The respondent could easily recall a political base at Wadzanai Community hall in 2008 where there were over one hundred and twenty youth. Of that figure, the respondent indicated that at least a third (40) were political activists while the remaining had just been coerced into the base. The respondent also revealed that of the total youth in the base, about forty-three (43) were girls and young women. What however irked him as a political leader was the fact that about two thirds of the girls had been forced to participate and were exposed to sexual abuses and drug abuse.

The respondent also reported that in the bases, there were political leadership structures that determined the direction of activities. Unfortunately, these forced youth were not in the leadership structures thus seeing them in the field either collecting food or mobilising people who would have been identified as potential enemies. These 'enemies' would then be either assaulted or sexually abused. When it came to assaulting the accused, the assignment would usually be executed by the forced youth under the direction of the leaders while the sexual abuse would be done by the base leadership. The respondent also revealed that the political

leadership did not seem concerned about the welfare of the ‘other’ youth who were not bona fide members of the party. He gasped with a visible emotion on his face. The only comfort and protection that covered these youth in crime was a strict party policy on secrecy and the need to know principle. At least, according to the respondent, no-one was going to disclose any of their criminal activities even after the conflict period.

What has been prominent in the information coming from the participants is that most of the active youth in all activities and assignments are those youth who were forced into the bases for different reasons. Some of the ‘parroting youth’⁶, eager to impress the leadership and disprove of the levelled allegations against them, would over-step in whatever they did. It was these youth who were in most instances over-zealous, sometimes ending up injuring or killing their victims deliberately or otherwise.

What is however of interest is that when the avenging spirits start to revenge, they target only those who would have directly participated in the loss of blood and never on those who would have initiated or sent perpetrators. This is evident in the case of the deceased Chada at Chidzi Business centre in Buhera, the late Moyo who was murdered at Muti in Birchnough, the late Sibanda of Muti and the murder case in Nemangwe, Gokwe. In all the cited cases, the victims of *ngozi* (avenging spirits) are those who had been sent to execute and never those who sent them.

⁶ In this paper, these youth are termed parroting youth on account of their religious acceptance of orders from the leaders in a typical fashion that parrots take instructions.

5.7 Identified Taboos from the Interviews

From the 45 respondents who were interviewed, it was discovered that there were several taboos that were in existence in most societies. However, nine respondents pointed out that some societies were simply selective in the recognition of these taboos so much so that some were being pushed to the periphery and dying naturally and permanently. The nine participants (three in Mazowe and six from Shamva) gave out that there were some individuals who were choosing to fear some traditional artefacts like cemeteries in their rural areas, mining and farming communities and deliberately ignoring those in the urban areas. What they failed to realise, according to the respondents was that if there was any effect from the cemeteries, then it remained equally harmful regardless of where one was.

It was also established that taboos are understood and termed differently. Some people who originate from the Kore-kore group call them '*zviera-era*', those of the Zezuru call them '*zviereswa*' or '*zviera*' while of the Kore-kore but hailing from Guruve district call them '*muko*'. Similarly, some participants of Malawian and Mozambican origin identified taboos as; '*zodabwitsa*'.

5.8 Taboos' Social Role

The 84% of interviewees or an average of 92% participants who confirmed their knowledge of the taboos indicated that they had a variety of responsibilities in society. Though expressed differently, they all boiled down to the following roles:

- Conscientise people on issues pertaining to health. The classification of taboos meant that each had a particular direction in which it managed society. Some of the critical issues hidden behind some of the taboos included the conservation of resources from people's need to consume in totality.

- Mechanism to regulate and control the behaviours of children when they grew up. Participants gave out that some of the taboos were merely falsehoods which however carried with them vital elements of social regulation and policing instruments for the children so much so that they never dared venturing into some areas reserved for adults like sex, alcohol and smoking.
- Earliest social systems that regulated society. Taboos were regarded as one of the several institutions that controlled the behaviour of people. They also drew parameters and boundaries as to how societies interacted.
- Traditional education system - It was reported that traditionally; Shona people did not have formal education institutions where they could teach their children. Therefore, taboos were one of the several systems that were in use to impart knowledge and good behaviour on the people.
- Have collectively maintained and nurtured peace, harmony and development. The fear of the reported repercussions of the taboo violation in society has over the years helped to maintain and nurture peace and foster development within the Shona people communities. This has been witnessed in the preservation of wildlife through totemism concepts.
- Helped in the management of common grazing areas and natural resources. The concept of totemism amongst other traditional measures like sacred groves, have also helped natural resource conservation.
- Management and administration of local development. Taboos were reported to have played an important role in the administration of local development through instilling fear in people as a way of forcing them to participate.
- Regulation of the ethical use of the environment. Applies as the one above.

- Help people adhere to the expected virtues of humanity. Taboos also ‘forced’ people to adhere to some specified conduct and behaviour in society like respecting basic human rights.
- Discourage people from killing each other. Taboos also instilled fear in people that if they killed each other, avenging spirits would persecute them.
- Set parameters on what ought to be done. To some extent, taboos defined what was right and wrong in society and people had to follow its expectations.

However, the other 8% of participants described taboos as a means to an end as they were only designed to ensure normalcy in society. They indicated that taboos to some extent also enforced the rule of law and personal and community hygiene in various communities.

5.9 Influence in Conflicts

All the participants in the study indicated that taboos had in one way or the other influenced the nature of the conflicts. From one perspective, according to the participants, had there not been some of these taboos, people would probably have killed each other uncontrollably. The most cited taboos to have controlled some of the conflicts are {3, 11, 13, 32, 33, 35, 41, 42, and 43}.

From another perspective, the fact that most people were aware of the element of falsehood embedded in the taboos made them to some extent behave that wildly. According to some participants, some perpetrators of violence really knew that there would not be any negative repercussion if they killed tormented or harassed innocent people in society. This argument was in direct relation to the 2002 Mazowe Jumbo Mine series of murders by some political youth who, according to some participants would dump their victims’ bodies in disused mine shafts around the mine and Storis Mine shafts about six kilometres away.

Elsewhere in Shamva, another example of weird murders were reportedly carried out around Tafuna by some political youth who doubled as illegal artisanal miners commonly termed ‘*makorokoza*’. According to three participants (6%), it had been informally established that over 20 human bodies had been dumped in identified disused mine shafts around Tafuna while others had been reportedly taken to Chibondo mines in Mt Darwin. Most of these bodies were victims of the 2000 to 2003 land invasion violence and ZANU PF/MDC political violence. However, there was a small clique of participants especially from the urban areas 12 (24%) which argued that while taboos might have played a part in the conflicts, it was inevitable; there was no way people could continue believing in the ‘archaic’ system. They argued that taboos were like religion which only worked if one believed in it; precisely established to instil order in the minds of the people both young and old. According to this school of thought, the taboos had failed to play its expected role in conflict regulation.

5.10 Relevance of Taboos

In view of the above argument, it is safe to say that generally most participants did confirm that taboos could still be relevant in society though in the period under review, they were less relevant. First and foremost, taboos had failed to play their regulatory role mainly because of various factors like modernity, education, passage of time, and civilisation. This view was echoed by more than half of the participants while the other half argued that taboos were no longer relevant in this day and age. This clique argued that trying to re-produce taboos was like ‘rebranding barbarism and upgrading backwardness’, which society as a whole was not prepared to take anymore. There were eight (16%) participants who even suggested that the school curriculum focus on educating pupils on the falsehoods within the taboos’ system so that people could know the truth. In this regard, the participants suggested that a technology-oriented school curriculum be developed to take on board modernity. They also argued that the

taboo system was sort of ‘satanic’ as it was associated with cruelty, revenge, witch-craft, sorcery, magic, exorcism and anger amongst others. The same participants indicated the need for the church fraternity to take a leading role in the destruction of the taboo system from the scene.

5.11 How Taboos can be either Embraced or Discarded from the Society

The question about how the taboos system could be embraced in the contemporary society was answered variedly. Like it has been indicated above, about 16% of the interviewees and none in the FGD out rightly condemned taboos. It could not be established why there were no dissenting voices against taboos within the FGD; probably it was a question of influence or fear of expressing one’s views against the majority. However, for those that supported the taboos’ system, they presented various avenues through which the traditional concept could be improved and re-established back in the society. Some of the means are as follows;

- Identifying taboos with the community
- Packaging the concept within the technology-oriented school curriculum
- Respecting traditional systems and values
- Putting the traditional structures and the people themselves in the frontline in the awareness campaigns paying particular attention to human rights and rule of law.
- Ensuring that government puts up a policy that will support the long term establishment of taboos back into the society.

5.12 Focus Group Discussions

As part of the data collection process, the study also employed Focus Group Discussions (FGD) at each of the 10 selected centres in the two study districts of Mazowe and Shamva.

All the meetings were organised in advance through the help of the previously identified individuals during the exploratory survey of January 2014.

At the beginning of each session, participants were asked to give a prayer before engaging in mental-stretching games involving proverbs, idioms and riddles locally called ‘*tsumo, madimikira, zvirahwe*’ to prepare the participants for the discussion and also acclimatise all the participants to each other and the environment so they could freely express their minds. Participants were also advised that the use of their real identities was optional for safety and confidentiality reasons. Below is a schedule of all conducted Focus Group Discussions in the two districts.

Fig. 5.5 Schedule Of FGDs

	CENTRE	DATE	TIME	ATT	FACILITATOR	VENUE
1	Gweshe	1/2/2014	1125-1235	9	Researcher	Gweshe Pry sch
2	Jingamvura	3/2/2014	1005-1120	7	Researcher	Mhandu B/C
3	Bare	4/2/2014	1120-1155	7	Researcher	Bare Pry Sch
4	Glendale	6/2/2014	1000-1053	11	Participant	Tsungubvi Community Hall
5	Mazowe Jumbo Mine	8/2/2014	1005-1045	8	Participant	Mine creche
6	Wadzanayi	7/2/2014	1005-1055	8	Researcher	Wadzanayi Community Hall
7	Goora	11/2/2014	1000-1040	8	Researcher	Goora B/C
8	Mutumba	13/2/2014	1605-1705	7	Participant	Mutumba B/C
9	Musiiwa	15/2/2014	0905-1000	11	Researcher	Musiiwa B/C
10	SOS	16/2/2014	0905-1015	9	Researcher	SOS Pry Sch
				85		

It is also important to give a schedule of participants’ sex and class distribution at respective centres in both districts.

Fig. 5.6 FGD Sex Distribution

FGD SCHEDULE					
	CENTRE	MALE	YOUTH	FEMALE	TOTAL
1	Gweshe	3	3	3	9
2	Jingamvura	3	1	3	7
3	Bare	4	0	3	7
4	Glendale	5	2	4	11
5	Mazowe Jumbo Mine	2	2	4	8
6	Wadzanayi	2	2	4	8
7	Goora	3	2	3	8
8	Mutumba	2	3	2	7
9	Musiiwa	5	3	3	11
10	SOS	4	3	2	9
	TOTAL	33	21	31	85

The distribution of classes and sex above shows that in respect of FGD, there were 33 male participants translating to 39% of the pool, 21 youth who also constituted 25% of respondents and 31 females who translated to 36% of the participants. The distribution of classes as shown above looks relatively balanced if the following factors are considered;

- Most of the youth have migrated from the rural areas into urban areas in search of employment.
- Some participants failed to turn up because of the agricultural field chores that were a priority during the cropping season.
- Generally men tend to dominate in most public activities in the rural areas.
- There are generally more women in Zimbabwe according to Zimstats population figures of the 2012 census.

5.13 Mazowe

Focus Group Discussion One

Held on 01 February 2014 at Gweshe primary school in a classroom with nine participants (three females and six males) in the district of Mazowe.

Duration of the discussion: 70 minutes (1125-1235hrs)

Facilitator: Researcher

During a FGD at Gweshe Primary school, Chiweshe, it was revealed that out of the over 45 youth who were part of a political vigilante in the area during the 2008 conflict, about 30 were not bona fide political party members. Rather, they had just been coerced to join for different reasons; about 11 had been accused of collaborating with the opposition political party in the area and therefore, were expected to be active as a way of disproving the allegation. The other three who had just arrived in their villages from other areas like Glendale, Harare and Mvurwi were accused of spying for their parties wherever they lived. They were therefore also expected to be active in youth vigilance while the rest had just been threatened with severe assaults, death or their parents' death if they did not support the cause of the political party concerned. These youth were also forced to partake in the looting of grocery shops, from vendors and other households around Gweshe general area. One youth who had stayed at a base described it as any place, residence or ground where vigilante could reside around the clock ensuring that the place was treated 'sacred'. The perimeter of the premises had to be guarded round the clock to ensure privacy and secrecy. Within the premises, there would be what he termed '*posto*' where the base commander lived. Near a '*posto*' would be '*dare*' where suspects would be tried and tortured. At the centre of the base would be a kitchen for food preparation. What it meant was that there would be teams responsible for each of the tasks; perimeter protection, cooking, trials, torture and

elimination, food mobilization, commissariat and overall base management. At each base would also be some girls and young adults executing various roles; catering, laundry, entertainment and sex and espionage. The youth went further indicating that there was a strict recognition of ranks and seniority so much so that even when it came to selecting girls for sexual pleasure, priority would be given to seniors and the most active members within the bases. Equally, according to the youth, some of the girls preferred senior members so that they could enjoy more privileges. Entry into any base would need thorough vetting for security clearance unless one was a suspect. It was also revealed that there were some bases at Nyachuru Primary School, Nzvimbo Guest House, Davaar farm and Hayshot Primary School with an average of 30, 20, 20 and 20 people respectively.

According to the discussion which was held under the most conducive conditions where participants could express their minds and feelings, it was these forced participants who were to engage in the most heinous criminal activities while the real party members served as either leaders or coordinators. It was also revealed during the discussion that a noticeable number of the participating youth (about eight) were either orphans or had no elders in their families to protect them in the event of such threats. Therefore, any threats by the other political youth on either their lives or other family members horribly affected them. A cited case was that of a fierce confrontation between ZANU PF and MDC-T supporters at Gweshe business centre in May 2008 where one of the parties sent most of the youth who had been coerced into the bases in the forefront so they could fight. Indeed, according to one participant during that fight who was also a participant in the FGD, the innocent youth waged a fierce attack before their rivals retreated in thin air. After the opponents had run away, the winning youth made follow ups on residences of all suspected members and sympathisers of the rival political party assaulting everyone they met. During the conflict, four homesteads

were burnt down while two girls and one woman was gang raped by unidentified youth. The speaker began to shed tears in a clear sign of agony and regret. The FGD revealed that after the conflict, thirteen villagers were admitted at Howard Hospital for various degrees of injuries; chop wounds, stab wounds, incised wounds, burns and rape trauma while thousands of dollars worth of property was destroyed in the melee. The youth had used various types of weapons like knobkerries, machetes, logs and stones. The facilitator had to provide with some cold water and a napkin to wipe the rolling tears in a bid to control his emotions.

The group also revealed that whenever the vigilante group wanted anything like food, beer or women for their sexual gratification, it was these coerced youth who were assigned to go out. It was noted that in the majority of cases, the ‘hunters’ did not benefit anything from the catch as it would all go to the leaders. According to the participants, leaders in this area of study were those youth and some members of the former liberation war fighters who preferred to be assigned foot soldiers’ work. These would normally be seasoned party members and or those active and fast enough to appreciate the situation that they could easily manipulate others for their benefit. All the leaders at this centre were never appointed on merit nor had any special academic or professional qualification. They had just been fortunate to find themselves leading the other youth.

Of the nine discussants, five pointed out that in Chiweshe communal area, there were strong beliefs about traditional taboos vis-à-vis violence and the spilling of human blood. The participants reported the following as some of the taboo beliefs about inflicting pain and murdering other people {8, 37, 38, 42, and 43}.

Three male participants and one female reported that it seemed that none of the youth participants and their adult leaders in the main wings of the political structures were conscious of the traditional taboos and their repercussions socially. The respondents indicated that the way and manner in which the youth were inflicting pain on innocent people was just extreme and irresponsible. The perpetrators of violence were never deterred from terror activities by the fear of any potential implications from the taboos. The belief that if one kills another, the spirit of the dead can avenge was not an issue as the perpetrators seemed to enjoy violence.

The participants however noted that most of the traditional taboos were no longer being respected though the effect was still relevant and menacing. They proposed that there be some awareness programme by the relevant departments to conscientise citizens on the repercussions of engaging in violent activities that had a potential to lead to the death of innocent and vulnerable people.

Focus Group Discussion Two

Held on 03 February 2014 at Jingamvura Business centre in a Gazebo next to Mhandu Bottle store with seven participants in the district of Mazowe.

Duration of the discussion: 75 minutes (1005-1120hrs)

Facilitator: Researcher

The discussion was interrupted by heavy rains that fell midway the discussion. However, the seven participants who had been served with some refreshments were free expressing their minds and what they knew about the concept of taboos and violence in their culture. They cited the following taboos {9, 14, 15, 19, 21, and 28} as some of the taboos that they knew.

Of the seven participants, two were former victims of political violence during the 2000 era while the other one was an active youth member with one of the two prominent political parties' during the 2008 political crisis. The two former victims revealed their ordeals at the hands of their torturers. One of them to be identified as Joe gave out that a group of youth militias came to his home at midnight quietly and suddenly demanded to see him. The youth threatened to burn the entire homestead if he did not heed to their calls. After some time of pondering how he could handle the situation, Joe came out and was immediately tied to a heavy log so that he could not flee. He was then taken to a nearby political base near one of the aspiring parliamentary candidates' homestead where he spent the next two days in captivity. There was an average of 20 activists at any given time. On arrival, Joe was interrogated and tortured as the youth tried to extract information regarding membership, campaign strategies and lists of potential assault targets by his 'alleged' political group. At this juncture the youth broke down, terribly shaken by the experiences in a political base. Continuing with his narration, he revealed that at the base, he had observed that there was an assortment of different weapons like axes, knives, knobkerries, machetes and sharp objects, logs, bottles, iron pipes, hose pipes, shovels, *sjamboks*, sticks, brooms-sticks and wooden planks

Joe revealed that he was assaulted with a log before he passed out. He remembered the time he was released to a nearby clinic for medical attention at the instigation of another non-governmental organisation. He had both his arms amputated and a broken right leg, swollen head and had lost three teeth. Joe said he did not know how he had been tortured. He also revealed that before he passed out, he remembered hearing what must have been one of the base leaders shouting to the other youth that the victim should die as there was no consequence and wanted to see who questioned the decision.

“*Dzakutsaku ngarife, tigoona shamwari yebhunu inoti pwee*” (Our enemy should be killed and see any ally of the *Boer* [Whitemen] who questions).

According to Joe, he was not clear as to whether the instruction was directed at him or at some other victims within the base compound as there were others also undergoing a similar torture exercise. He stared in the sky blindly for a while before he continued. He also revealed that at the base, people could stay semi-naked and that the use of obscene language was common. He revealed that there was also another base at Bare Primary School with about 20 activists. After this narration, the group unanimously acknowledged that the youth were not at all deterred by any law, anyone or anything from carrying out their decisions. They were never worried about any possible implications of their acts even after the political crisis.

The other victim to be identified as Peter also narrated his ordeal after he was captured by some youth belonging to one of the participating political parties during the 2002 political period. Peter revealed that as he intended to board a bus to Glendale enroute to Harare for safety, some youth approached him accusing him of belonging to a particular political party. For that charge, Peter was taken to a nearby bush where he was severely assaulted with logs and *sjamboks* of various sizes and nature. He also observed most of the youth were armed with catapults, *sjamboks*, logs, knobkerries and knives. At some point, almost before he fainted, another of the assaulting youth urinated on Peter’s head thus saving him from passing out. Eventually, after passing out, the youth left Peter for dead more than sixty kilometres away from the original scene, in Muzarabani. Peter did not know how he ended up in Muzarabani. However, Peter managed to crawl to safety the following morning before he was taken to Parirenyatwa Hospital for treatment. On his way to Parirenyatwa Hospital, Peter was taken through one of the nearby Police stations so that he could make an official police

report. Peter was however turned away by the officers in the Charge office who indicated that they could not attend to his case as it was 'just a political case' and that police officers were under instruction to keep away from political issues.

The group also noted with concern how lawlessness had prevailed during the period under discussion; where several innocent civilians had been abused while the peace officers simply looked on powerlessly. The group also observed that the most revered part of the society, the traditional leadership and the elderly were also rendered powerless and useless during the period of political violence. Where these constituencies used to intervene and give appropriate advice, during this era, they were turned into some useless and knowledge-less lot. Participants described this situation as "*donga watonga*" (where everyone becomes an authority unto self).

The other participant who was a violence perpetrator during the 2008 era, to be identified as Farai, confessed all his horrible acts during the period pleading for confidentiality and anonymity for the sake of his safety. Farai indicated that he participated simply because he had been forced and threatened with the death of his siblings. Farai had never been a political activist and was just a village unemployed orphan who had no-one to turn to. Capitalising on this desperate background, the youth group had coerced Farai to join and had pushed him to the forefront where he reluctantly performed assigned tasks. Farai further revealed that his close friend was spared from joining the militia because of his Christian background. According to Farai, his friend is of the Jehovah's Witness denomination, which does not allow its members to be politically active; otherwise he might also have been coerced into the youth group.

The FGD agreed that both political parties' youth respected subjects with strong Christian backgrounds and so refrained from forcing them to join politically criminal activities. The group also discussed the weakened role of the elders in society where in some cases; they could be subjected to horrific torture. The group cited a case which they said was quite prominent around Jingamvura, Bhubho Garande and Makope areas where one elderly man estimated to be in his late seventies or eighties was severely assaulted before he was tied to a donkey which was then driven at high speed. During the process, the man failed to sustain the speed of the donkey before he fell and was dragged for over a kilometre while the youth followed behind cheering the donkey to speed up. The old man, according to the participants was badly injured and was denied medical treatment for over a fortnight before an identified non-governmental organisation intervened.

The group acknowledged that the presence of political bases in the area seriously affected the education system as all the schools had literally been turned into bases and pupils could no longer attend lessons. The group also reported that most of the communities in this area were no longer respecting traditional taboos and values which have traditionally sustained peace, harmony and development in Zimbabwe and in particular within the Zezuru culture. It was also pointed out that some of the traditional ceremonies that used to characterise Chiweshe communal areas like '*mapira* (spiritual dance ceremonies), *makuva* (appeasement of the dead), *kudira mombe dzemusha* (enthronement of village bulls), *mukwerera* (rain-making rituals) and *majakwara* (cooperative task works)' were no longer in existence. The group noted that some of these ceremonies united communities, maintained and nurtured traditional values and systems and instilled fear in people so much so that people in general refrained from hurting or spilling human blood unnecessarily.

One of the group participants however pointed out that while some of the community members including some youth were aware of some of the most common taboos like those involving death, incest, theft and health, they did very little to ensure adherence and compliance as per traditional taboo dictates. Some of the taboos that are common in this area are {8, 34, 38, 39, 40, and 41}.

The FGD, after critically touching on all the pertinent areas necessary, felt that some of the taboos and other cultural values and systems were no-longer relevant and serving any purpose in the present day society. The belief had just been watered down so much so that young people, influenced by the media had long established other means of going round the challenges and potential misfortunes. The media and the technologisation of the other facets of society, according to the FGD had severely impacted on the social morals and decomposition of Zezuru cultural values like the respect afforded to the elders by the young, fear of human blood, the need to help those in need, greeting of the elders by the young and treating a neighbour in the manner one would also want to be treated and several others. Similarly, Christianity had since demystified some of the traditional taboos so much so that people, especially the young ones were no-longer afraid of any of the talked about implications and dangers.

Focus Group Discussion Three

Held on 04 February 2014 at Bare primary school with seven participants in Mazowe.

Duration of the discussion: 35 minutes (1120-1155hrs)

Facilitator: Researcher

This FGD was ended prematurely after three of the seven participants had differed with the others on the reasons for the violence that was experienced. It seemed the two factions, as it later emerged, were of the two political ideologies and therefore divergent.

However, during the 35 minute discussion, participants managed to raise important issues pertinent to the subject of research. The woman who gave an opening prayer highlighted the need for tolerance and forgiveness within the discussants as if she knew of what was to transpire latter. Participants traded accusations as to who had led the campaigns for violence in this area since 1980's independence. The three participants (to be called A group) narrated the historical background to the cases of violence in Chiweshe communal areas, Mazowe since 1980. They reported that because Zimbabwe's independence had been attained through a protracted armed struggle, people sharing their ideology had every reason to defend the independence and sovereignty of Zimbabwe from possible betrayal by what they termed 'sell-outs'. The A group also reported that since independence and before the coming in of the opposition political parties; the area had never experienced political violence. Therefore, this, according to the group implied that it was the opposition parties that were responsible for all the violence and conflicts recorded.

On the contrary, the other four (to be called B group) argued that most of the violence and conflicts ever recorded in the area had either been instigated or perpetrated by the ruling party members who felt more protected by the security agencies than the other groups. The B group argued that had the State President taken an initiative to prohibit violence and shown political will to prosecute any perpetrators, the country would not have experienced any violence. Therefore, his silence especially during the 1990 violence involving the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM), 1996 threats of violence on members of the opposition United Parties

(UP) and Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) Ndonga ahead of the 1996 Presidential election, 2001 violence during the Bindura by-election, 2002 violence ahead of the Presidential election, 2005 during the Operation Murambatsvina (Operation Restore Order), and most importantly, the 2008 violence was a clear sign of condoning violence.

Participants within the B group went on to highlight the fact that of the injured, murdered, amputated and displaced members of the society, most were sympathisers of the opposition political groups. To this group, this was evidence enough to show who was behind this violence. One of the female members within group B briefly narrated her ordeal at the hands of some base commanders in the area. She revealed that during the period that she was in captivity in a base for close to a week some members would pass comments about her beauty, which only meant disaster as that would mean that they wanted to abuse her sexually. She would be taken to a torture room (make shift) at the centre of the base, placed on a metal drum lying on its side with her head down and her legs spread and they would rape her in that position. During the process, others would cheer and dance around the shack. “*I was everyone’s woman and nobody’s woman*”. Whoever craved to gratify his sexual desires came on her. At times they would scream *meat! meat!* As if they were bringing her food. Unfortunately, the meat they were referring to was her. At that moment, she broke down and her colleagues continued to trade accusations against group A. However, after noting the flaring of the tempers between the groups, the facilitator had to constantly intervene cooling off the tempers and reminding them that this was simply a discussion to express one’s mind, opinion and how respective participants might have witnessed the conflicts in the area vis-à-vis local traditional taboo systems and values.

The participants eventually, after almost agreeing that the area was during all these conflicts characterised by serious polarisation, agreed to terminate the discussion on account of an unending stalemate. What was however important to realise was that both factions acknowledged the existence of politicised violence which also took some lives and left other people permanently disabled and traumatised. The participants also interestingly acknowledged the existence of what they termed 'effective traditional taboos' which did not take years as is the norm to take effect of the targeted personalities. This was according to the respondents, related to some sacred groves, mountains and caves in the Jingamvura, Banje, Gomo reRushanga, Chiburi and Bare hills where traditional rituals were conducted for various programmes; rain-making, appeasement of national spirits, compensation of national crimes and appointment of traditional leaders amongst others. Participants pointed out that anyone who had killed another was going to be exposed by the angry spirits.

One male participant made reference to the alleged murder of a woman and a youth from the neighbourhood by alleged political youth within a stretch of one week. The participant pointed out that the technique that was employed to kill the two was similar, to some extent confirming that it was probably one murderer. Both victims had been struck by a hard object on the forehead before they were stabbed multiple times on the chest and inscribed the name of one of the political parties on the back. He went on to tell the group that both victims' families had consulted some unidentified healers and within two months from the dates of the murders, the spirits of the dead were already causing havoc to the alleged perpetrators' families. According to the participant, it is believed that both families had sought assistance to resurrect the spirits of the dead so that they could find their killers and possibly fight back for justice. Indeed, according to the participant and confirmed by all the other participants, there are three youth militia and one former liberation war fighter who are now mentally

unstable and roam the streets confessing to the death of the two victims. By the time of the FGD, one of the four families of the alleged killers was in the process of seeking attention from the ‘prophets’ for possible appeasement.

One woman participant reported that some of the residents of this area consulted with spirit mediums and prophets from the two prominent African initiated apostolic churches; Johane Masowe Chishanu Nguo Tsvuku (JMCNT) founded by the late Mutumwa Michael Micho of the Nematombo totem and based at Hava near Nzvimbo business centre and Johane Masowe Chishanu Madzimbabwe (JMCM) founded by James Dzivaguru of the *Shumba Nyamuzihwa* totem who hailed from Mutoko, Mashonaland East province of Zimbabwe. This church is now based at Chiburi village, Chiweshe communal lands⁷. According to the woman participant, these churches strongly believed in miracles, black magic and revenge as an effective conflict resolution mechanism. Therefore, if any family wanted to instigate the spirits of the dead to revenge for the past evils, they simply consulted with prophets within this church.

Focus Group Discussion Four

Held on 06 February 2014 at Glendale Tsungubvi Community hall with 11 participants in the district of Mazowe.

Duration of the discussion: 53 minutes (1000-1053hrs)

Facilitator: Participant

⁷ Dodo O (2016) *Apostolicism and Conflict Resolution: Controversies and Complexities*, (forthcoming), Bindura and Dodo O, Banda G and Dodo G. (2014) African Initiated Churches in Peace-building: Case of the Johane Mosowe Church. *Journal of Religion and Society*. Vol. 16. www.creighton.edu/jrs

The discussion attended by eleven people; four women, five men and two youth was opened by a prayer from one lady who is a community leader in an area called Sisk.

On the existence of taboos; the discussion group agreed that there were effective taboos that were in use and cited the following amongst others {7, 17, 18, and 31}. On the relevance of the taboos in Glendale area during the conflict areas, the meeting noted that while the taboos were in existence very few conflict participants seemed to acknowledge their importance. According to two women vendors at Tsungubvi bus terminus, the youth behaved as if they were possessed when they were in violent activities tormenting their rivals. The women participants described some of the youth who were leading the vigilante groups as extremely violent, drunken like and almost possessed that they expressed no feelings of mercy or remorse. The youth at times could not distinguish their rivals from their neighbours that they tormented anyone they met for as long as they were defining themselves as 'in action'. The same youth were also known for their use of obscene language in public places. In response, the youth indicated that in some cases, they would be intoxicated by various available substances ranging from beer, medical drugs to marijuana such that they could not control their behaviours. They also revealed that there was also a question of political ideology at play as they were described as vanguards of the parties. This therefore meant that they had to do everything in their power to protect the interests of their political movements. One of the youth however indicated that some of the over-zealous youth were those who were being forced to prove that they were not members of the rival groups by over-ill-treating their communities. Most of the youth in these categories fell in those who would have visited their relatives in Glendale or had their parents accused of supporting the opposition and so were asked to clear themselves by taking a leading role. However, there was also another category of youth who were coming from the poor families solely for protection, food, intoxicants and

sometimes the pleasure of free sex within the political bases. The group reported that most of the victims suffered from the following injuries; burns, tramline bruising, spinal cord injuries, brain damage, bruises, swells and broken bones. It was revealed that there were several bases in the district some of which included; Tsungubvi Community hall, a residence in Tsungubvi suburb, Dandamera Primary School, Suoguru bus terminus, Musorodoni farm and Earling Primary School with an average 80, 20, 40, 40, 15, and 35 people respectively.

On the question whether traditional taboos had served any purpose during political conflicts during the period under review, three men indicated that probably due to the fusion of different ethnicities and cultures, the society never seemed to care much about the traditional and cultural repercussions of the conflicts. No one ever thought that killing a person could result in '*ngozi*'. The three men made reference to a case in Tsungubvi where an identified family was being tormented by what was suspected to be avenging spirits following a mysterious death of a young man in 2002 during a political skirmish in Tsungubvi stadium at the hands of a group of rival political youth. Ever since that death, no arrests were ever made till the case died naturally. The tormented family, according to the participants were in the process of consulting different religious prophets and traditional healers in Chiweshe communal areas. The young man who is suspected to have participated in the murder of the 2002 victim was said to have been send to live with one of the religious prophets for healing sessions in a mountain.

The participants pointed out the need for the inclusion of traditional issues in the school curricula if traditional taboos' systems could be sustained. This was in response to a question of the sustenance of the taboos in the contemporary world. The discussion felt that there was a lot of media influence in the present day political games and violence. It was raised that the

television had inculcated in the young people a feeling of invincibility and incredibility so much so that they were prepared to embark on any assignment no matter how heinous it was. The meeting also pointed out that there were however situations that were neutralised by some of the religious leaders who intervened before conflicts erupted. One of the men identified as Mr Zuze of Highway area revealed that it was the responsibility of individual families to ensure that their children and members of the families were safe from those conflict situations either by giving them moral lessons or simply consult traditional healers and apply the medicines secretly as a way of taming the family. Overall, the group suggested that while it may be impossible to re-invent the taboos for this modernised world, the children at tender ages need to know of their existence through the social studies curriculum in schools.

The discussion ended peacefully with an expression of hope that the relevant ministry and departments will note the need for the re-invention and re-production of context-specific and modernised traditional taboos that could be imparted to the children. The meeting, though with some reservations expressed optimism over its feasibility arguing that some of the taboos are still relevant and effective like the following {21, 23, 26}.

One woman and one man from among the participants indicated that the feasibility and applicability of such re-introduction of the taboos largely depended on individual families and their foundations regarding their cultures and traditions otherwise some families no longer recognised some of these traditional cultures and customs.

Focus Group Discussion Five

Held on 08 February 2014 at Mazowe Jumbo Mine crèche with 8 participants in the district of Mazowe.

Duration of the discussion: 40 minutes (1005-1045hrs)

Facilitator: Participant

This meeting was mobilised by the senior crèche teacher who was also in attendance together with the other three women. Two other women were vegetable vendors and they have been vending for the last 28 years. Of the four men in attendance, two were political activists while the others were ordinary labour activists. Of interest to note in this attendance was that four of the eight originally came from Mozambique and Malawi. The meeting was held in the crèche and was, like the others opened through a prayer by the crèche teacher. Before the introductions, all members were served with some refreshments.

The facilitator introduced the discussion and asked for tolerance, patience, calm and friendliness during the meeting pointing out that people were free to express their views and feelings for as long as they did not offend others deliberately. The meeting was asked to discuss the taboos that they felt were still relevant and effective in their society to which they cited the following {2, 16, 20, 21, 22, 27, and 30}.

The meeting further revealed that though there were several of such traditional taboos, very few were still effective largely due to the influx of modernity and mining/urban migration.

‘Zviera hazvichashanda nekuda kwechirungu nekuendwa kumataundi uku’.

The participants also defined some Shona terms into Nyanja so that the researcher could easily follow the proceedings as follows in Appendix Taboo Definitions.

However, one of the women vendors revealed that within the mining compound, permanent residents were still recognising the importance of traditional taboos as they had seen some of their fellows languishing after failing to adhere to the expectations. She added that some people had been affected after they had either stolen from some elderly men from Mozambique or impregnated children of some alien families. This point was supported by another man who said had lived with someone from Guruve who eventually suffered mentally after he had stolen a bicycle from one Malawian mine worker back in 1988. He also made reference to two brothers who belonged to a named political party who had taken part in the torture and rape of other perceived political opponents around Chamuka grocery shop at the mine before they relocated to Mvurwi around 2009/10. However, according to the speaker, misfortunes and avenging spirits finally caught up with them. The group revealed that most of the mugging victims around Jumbo Dam suffered deep cuts, internal head injuries and scalp bruising, bruises, swells and broken bones. The crèche teacher told the meeting that there were various bases in the district; Jumbo dam, Shavarunzi hills, Ceasar Primary School and John Laurie farm with about 20, 15, 40, and 15 activists respectively.

Asked to discuss their views on how traditional taboos could be mobilised, re-invented and re-introduced into the society so that they serve their traditional roles of behaviour regulation and modification, the meeting seemed to fail to come up with a position. However, all the labour activists present pointed out that there was need for a re-definition of some social etiquette that had worked towards the erosion of some of the traditional cultures and taboos. Most cited were the following;

- Marriages outside of the traditionally defined boundaries (*kuroorana vematongo*)
- Marriages within the same clan or totemic lineage (*kuroorana vemitupo mimwechete*).

- Public consumption of alcohol (*kumwa zvinodhaka paruzhinji uye pane vana*).
- Indescent dressing especially by women (*kupfeka kwakafumuka kuvakadzi*).
- Uncontrolled use of vulgar and obscene language in public (*kutaura mazwi akafumuka paruzhinji*).
- Neglect or destruction of the extended family concept in times of poverty and need leading to theft and dishonest (*kusachengetana pahukama mumatambudziko zvinokonzera kuba nehutsotsi*).
- Media depiction of violent movies associating blood with heroism, victory and success (*nhepfenyuro dzinoburitsa mabhaisikopo ekurwa achiratidza ropa nekuuraya sehugamba nekugona*).
- Transborder migration for economic reasons (*kubuda kwevanhu munyika vachitsvaka upfumi*).
- Western biased education system that undermines traditional systems (*dzidzo yechirungu inoita kuti vanhu vavenge chivanhu chavo*).
- The use of English language in most spheres there by eroding or overshadowing traditional systems some of which may not have proper terms in English language (*kushandiswa kwechirungu pese-pese zvinoita kuti mamwe mashoko echivanhu atadze kuiswa kuchirungu ozongokanganwikwa*).
- Allowing trials with some of the taboos thereby exposing weaknesses and untruths (*kuyedzwa kwezvimwe zvierwa nevanhu vozoona kureruka kwazvo kana kunyeperwa*).

It was suggested that there needed to be a deliberate policy and effort by traditional leadership and local governance structures at all level to ensure that from the most basic family level, people and especially children were re-oriented in their traditional systems through the use of family trees and structures like the uncles, aunts and grandfathers and

grandmothers. It was pointed out that the church institution could also help re-institute such traditions citing the role that the African initiated churches of the likes of Apostolic churches of Johane Masowe and Johane Marange were playing towards the sustenance of the traditional taboos and systems. Someone however pointed out that the contemporary Pentecostal church was on the front line demonising some of the traditional systems and hence could not be considered in this regard. Another speaker suggested that there possibly be some massive campaign by the relevant Ministry of Local Government through the printing and distribution of literature in this area to all the concerned institutions so that communities are suffocated with that information till they see some 'light'.

After a healthy discussion, one member suggested the session ends citing the need to attend another meeting within the compound. At that point, the senior crèche teacher closed the meeting through a prayer, and people dispersed.

5.14 Shamva

Focus Group Discussion One

Held on 10 February 2014 in Wadzanai Township with eight participants in the district of Shamva.

Duration of the discussion: 50 minutes (1005-1055hrs)

Facilitator: Researcher

The first focus group discussion in Shamva was held at Wadzanayi Community hall in one of the recreational rooms as a way of moving away from constant disturbances by other people wanting to use the same hall for other activities. The meeting was attended by four women, two men and two youth, all drawn from Wadzanayi Township and Shamva Gold mine

compound. The facilitator asked the meeting to discuss their views regarding the essence and relevance of traditional taboos vis-à-vis political conflicts in their area.

On the question of the existence of taboos; the discussion group agreed that there were effective taboos that were in use only that society was choosing to ignore their importance in times of conflicts. They cited the following taboos; {9, 10, and 19}.

Amongst the attendees were two men who had effectively participated in the 2000 to 2002 political violence in Shamva and Bindura districts. The identified men presented their stories regarding their involvement in the political violence that was experienced during the land invasion era and the 2001 By-election in Bindura following the death of the incumbent Member of Parliament Boda Gezi.

One of the men identified as Moses narrated that in 2000; he led a vigilante group of about 45 activists around Tafuna commercial farming area in Shamva which was responsible for flushing out white commercial farmers who were resisting evictions from their farms. During the operation, Moses revealed that he allowed his group to harass all perceived enemies especially the white farmers, their domestic workers and any other moderate farm workers who were suspected of collaborating with the whites. Moses confided in the group revealing that he also allowed his group to sexually assault some of the victims, loot property and consumable goods from both homes and shops as a way of rewarding them. Moses also confided in the group that though he did not participate in the killing of people, he was aware of some groups that looted goods and raped women before murdering them. The deceased would be dumped in the disused mine shafts around Tafuna hills and other mine shafts in the vicinity. As Moses presented his case, it could be noted that the issues might have really

affected him personally and emotionally as he was almost shedding some tears. He added that some victims were dumped in the mine shafts alive so much so that their voices could be heard screaming as they went down to plunge on the hard and rocky surface. He added that his group would be armed with knives, knobkerries and sharp objects, shovels, axes, chains, sledgehammers, and bows and arrows. Moses also gave out that there are instances when he sees visions of some of these heinous acts especially when he is asleep or moving at night. The facilitator had to ask Moses to take some relief by resting and taking some water before he proceeded with his narration.

After a brief rest, Moses went on to explain his role in the 2001 political conflict at SOS pitting a vigilante group from Bindura against his from Shamva. In this conflict, according to Moses, three people were admitted at Shamva hospital after sustaining deep cuts on their heads. Moses also revealed that there were several other instances when he was directly involved in political violence which left other people either injured or raped.

The other man identified as Tongai gave his narration of his participation in politically motivated violence during the 2001 Bindura by-election. Tongai reported that remembered a scene when his group raided women who were bathing and washing their clothes along Pote River near Tafuna cotton plant before they raped them several times. The group was armed with knives, *sjamboks*, bottles, axes, and golf clubs. Some of the women sustained bruises, abrasions and lacerations. According to Tongai, some of these events were simply motivated by the hatred of the opposing political views. To them, anything anti-their political party was an enemy and deserved to die or face embarrassment. According to Tongai, during the times of these events, they never thought of any repercussions or the effects of avenging spirits. These thoughts only came in some of their minds well after the offences so much so that

others simply deserted and never participated again. However, those thoughts of any after effect could be easily associated with traitors such that if one decided to either run away or simply watch, they risked being labelled traitors and enemies. In the case of Tongai, soon after the incidents, his family immediately took him for some traditional cleansing so that any spirits of the dead or other misfortunes could not harm him or his family. Therefore, Tongai had not encountered anything to do with bad omens relating to his evil past.

During the time when Tongai was presenting his case, two of the women were sobbing as they reflected on who might have been the rape victims. At this juncture, the facilitator asked one of the women to give another prayer as a way of controlling tempers and asking God to forgive everyone in attendance for their past crimes and preparedness to disclose of their heinous activities. One of the women in attendance reported that she knew of some youth who had killed another man who had visited a relative at Shamva Gold Mine in 2008. It was revealed that there were various bases at SOS Primary School, Frontline Institute, Enterprise Primary School, and Musiiwa with about 25, 15, 15 and 20 activists respectively.

On the issue about the relevance of taboos, the group reported that while they all knew about some of these taboos, in Wadzanayi urban area, no-one had bothered to reflect on their effects during the times of the conflicts. However, it was revealed that most of the misfortunes and avenging spirits' cases so far reported involved people of alien origin especially those from Malawi and Mozambique who were known to be strong believers of juju '*uroyi bande/mbande*' (who went to buy juju from across the borders) and the taboo concept. One youth, supported by two other women cited a case of a man who went to steal vehicle parts from a parked lorry in Wadzanayi but failed to leave the scene till the following morning leading to his arrest. The lorry apparently belonged to a strong member of a rival

political party and stealing the parts was meant to disable his lorry from effectively transporting party members during political campaigns.

One woman also reported that there was a prominent alien traditional healer who was famous for silencing avenging spirits that were persecuting suspected perpetrators of political violence in the previous years. It was reported that on average, about two clients per month visited and stayed at the traditional healers' residence seeking some help. The meeting agreed that if such cases were being experienced, then to some extent, it was an acknowledgement of the existence of the avenging spirits and the concept of exorcism on the part of the perpetrators. On the question of how some of these taboos could be embraced in the contemporary world system, the meeting strongly felt that it was primarily the responsibility of the families to teach their children the role and relevance of taboos despite the influence of the media. The meeting also challenged local governance structures to ensure that some of these traditional systems are nurtured and sustained for future generations either through the school system or through the art industry.

Focus Group Discussion Two

Held on 11 February 2014 at Goora Business centre with eight participants in the district of Shamva.

Duration of the discussion: 40 minutes (1000-1040hrs)

Facilitator: Researcher

The eight participants (three women and five men inclusive of two youth) were mobilised by one local businessperson who had been approached two days before. The purpose of the

meeting/discussion was explained and everyone was asked to express their consent to their participation freely and without any bias.

The village head of Shangwa narrated how Goora area operated during most of the election periods since 1990 when he became a permanent resident following his retirement from DAPP in Shamva. The village head revealed that the area dominated by members of the Johane Masowe Vadzidzi led by Gomo alias Wimbo also a prominent ZANU PF member was known for its support for the ruling party ZANU PF. Whilst the majority supported ZANU PF, there were isolated elements who sympathised with the opposition political parties and who consistently faced victimisation and terror from the majority party. The group gave out that there had been a discovery of several political bases in the district; Corner store, Madziva Skills centre, Chindunduma School, Chihuri Primary School and Chidembo Primary School with an average 30, 30, 20, 20 and 15 people respectively.

The village-head went on give out that some youth from the Chihuri and Kange general areas had become a menace in the area tormenting all suspected members of the opposition political parties allegedly at the instigation of one identified political contestant. He also gave out that there were reports of some youth who were forcing some people to be intimate with their relatives; father sleeping with daughter, mother sleeping with a son or brother sleeping with a sister. He said in the Shona culture, this was taboo and probably one of the most revered sacred act describing it as '*makunakuna*' in society. The Head-man disclosed that such cases used to be handled by local Chiefs who tried the cases and demanded some beasts as compensation to both the community and the spirits responsible for the area as a way of averting natural calamities like droughts, famine and heavy winds amongst others. Another participant who identified herself as an elder in the Vadzidzi apostolic sect concurred with the

village head on the levels of political violence perpetrated by some youth. She however gave out that there were also some ladies and girls in the area who were influencing unruly behaviour as they would court love from both prominent political camps subsequently leading to heated contests and fist-fights. The female participant further revealed that some of these girls were active in the Johane Masowe Vadzidzi sect where they spent time during the processions called '*zambara*', '*choto*' and '*misi*'. During these ceremonies, according to the participant, worshippers either spend nights or some days in the wilderness purportedly praying. The participant expressed concern over how some of these girls were abusing such events to meet with boys and married men. Because of such immoral activities, the participant revealed that some of the girls were now suspected of having engaged in intoxicating substances like marijuana, glue, and some medicinal drugs.

The two youth present in the FGD gave a chilling account of how they had witnessed some of their youth within the political circles terrorising some strangers who had visited the area to seek medical help from Wimbo. One of the two youth to be identified as Tom gave out that some of their friends had met some three strangers; two women and a man who were going to Wimbo's religious shrine for medical assistance. Upon establishing their agenda, the five youth forced the strangers to walk about two kilometres away from their intended destination towards Mt Darwin into Dick Hackey mountain range. On arrival, the man was tied to a tree before the women were gang raped at least twice each in full view of the tied man. After the ordeal, the victims travelled to Mt Darwin Police station where they reported the case. To their surprise, they were referred back to Madziva Police station. On arrival at Madziva Police station, the officers in the charge office advised them to first go and identify the suspects before police officers could attend to the scene. After a lengthy argument between the police officers and the victims, another senior officer intervened and politely informed the

victims that the station had no power to go and arrest any political youth for any political crime. According to the youth, they got to know of further details after the incident at Goora where the strangers were force-marched away, after the man had returned to Goora to proceed with the religious consultation minus the two women who had rushed to Bindura hospital for medical attention. The youth indicated that though he knew the five youth who had raped the two women, he could not report for fear of reprisals. According to the youth, by the time of the FGD, no arrests had been effected and the perpetrators were still free.

The discussion noted that while the area was characterised by a Christian society, there were serious cases of terror that had been reported and experienced during the period under review. The other male participant however differed with the rest of the discussants on some of the cases and motives of violence. The participant to be identified as Peter gave out that there were no cases of political violence in the area arguing that if any case had been reported to the Police, then it was just as normal as any other period of the year. Peter further pointed out that while Madziva and Goora in particular was a stronghold for a known political party, the other political parties were only moving in to instigate violence. He added that Goora was also known to be an area for the apostolic sect belonging to Wimbo who was publicly known to be a staunch follower of a certain political party. Therefore, if Wimbo supported that particular party every other member was also expected to support the same party. One female participant interjected pointing out that some of the terrorists in most political violence cases were bona fide members of the Johane Masowe Vadzidzi apostolic sect who doubled as political youth militia as well. Peter stressed on the point that it was members of the other political parties who came in to Madziva with the intention to provoke violence and attract media attention. He therefore pointed out the need for what he termed 'minimum terror' on provocateurs as what actually happened on the ground during the period.

Peter went on to defend Police inaction during the period under review. He pointed out that the political leadership had realised that some of the Police officers had been recruited and penetrated by the opposition political ideology and so there was now some need to neutralise some of their powers and place them into the politicians' domain. Peter revealed that during the 2008 era, a certain political party wielded more law enforcing power than the Police force and therefore could not arrest without consulting with politicians. Peter went on to argue that there was need during that period for the policing powers to be placed in the hands of a particular political party as a way of safeguarding the country's sovereignty from alleged external interests. In his argument, Peter indicated that the principles around morality and the sanctity of life had become irrelevant; what was more important was the issue of Zimbabwe's independence and control of its resources. Asked by another woman participant whether he believed in avenging spirits, Peter acknowledged but was quick to defend some of the political actions and decisions that were taken then as 'very' necessary as 'they were in self-defence'.

On some of the traditional taboos that were still in existence in the area, the group generally agreed that the area no longer respected some of the taboos largely because of the concentration of the apostolic sect in the area which is a Christian church. However, all the three women discussants concurred that African social morality impressed on the value of human life. These women indicated that according to the Zezuru culture within Madziva area, previous trends had shown that if one spilled human blood, avenging spirits tormented the family of the murderer till traditional compensation had been paid. Reference was also made to a homicide case that was allegedly committed in 1999 when one man allegedly raped a minor till she suffocated. The perpetrator was eventually asked to compensate the family of the victim in-order to silence the avenging spirits.

The discussants also pointed out that the area was still valuing the concepts around traditions to do with elderly respect, food rules and farming rules. It was noted that some of these taboos were being reinforced by the existence of the apostolic sect which forced its members to adhere to some of the traditional customs and cultures as some of its endogenous peace-building systems. As a result, most communities did not attend to their fields on Thursday after 1500 hours till Friday 1500 hours as per the apostolic sect's tradition. Apparently, this tradition coincides with the traditional resting day culture of staying at home on Fridays. The apostolic sect's norms require its members to respect their elders so that they may be blessed by God and to keep some foods holy so that they do not invite unnecessary misfortunes. According to the participants, though the sect attaches its norms to the biblical food cultures, there is also an element of resource conservation within communities.

The group also talked about some social taboos in the local cultures which direct people's behaviours. It was given out that one of the taboos was that if a person was on a particular journey and following a path, he/she was not supposed to divert the route lest he/she risked encountering terrible misfortunes. This taboo was, according to the discussion, meant to ensure that one undertook a particular task to its fullest without diverting attention to other issues. In this context, people who diverted their journeys simply because they had met potential robbery targets risked facing misfortunes.

On the issue about the role of taboos in conflict resolution or instigation, the discussion pointed out that while there were traditionally some taboos that served that role, modernity and the type of education that modern children were going through were enlightening so much so that most could now tell where truths and untruths were told. Most indicated that

since taboos were false stories and laws meant to instil fear and order in the people, some people had since realised that nothing bad could befall anyone in the event of an infringement. However, one of the youth participants was quick to mention that once you develop strong beliefs in a particular view or object, it most often became a reality in life. He emphasised that some of the most believed and adhered to taboos had almost become God-made laws like the following; {2, 8, 10, 21, 23, 24, and 26}.

Focus Group Discussion Three

Held on 13 February 2014 at Mutumba Business centre with seven participants in the district of Shamva.

Duration of the discussion: 60 minutes (1605-1705hrs)

Facilitator: Participant

Seven participants were mobilised by an identified school head of Mutumba School to meet for the focus group discussion behind one of the identified grocery shops in the late afternoon. Amongst the attendees were the School Development Committee Chairperson, two local businesspeople and three youth activists. Of all the attendees, only two were women.

The first issue to be discussed was the existence of taboos and their relevance in this day and age. In response, the meeting agreed that indeed traditional taboos existed and were operational in all spheres of their society. To support that argument, the meeting cited some of them as follows; {3, 11, and 25}

On the issue about their relevance and role in social and political conflicts, the SDA chairperson quickly pointed out that the entire area, i.e. Mutumba political district had never

experienced any political conflict neither were there any incidents that were motivated by any of the cited taboos. From his tone and the other members' reaction, the researcher felt that the SDC chairperson must have been a very influential personality in the community that he could direct the tone of the discussion and so the discussion was immediately re-directed to how these taboos could be made more relevant and time specific. One of the local businesspersons pointed out that while communities still knew about the taboos, it was imperative that some efforts by the traditional leadership be directed towards that. He challenged the chiefs to address that issue during the chief's weekly courts and monthly councils. As the speaker was talking, the researcher realised that no-one was interjecting as if the discussion was being stage-managed.

At this juncture, the researcher decided to move back to the previously evaded question about conflicts and taboos but this time focussed on other areas and not Mutumba. The three youth activists gave out that they had heard of violence and conflicts in other areas but not theirs and those communities were being torn apart with some people dying. One of the women in attendance interjected pointing out that in year 2002; a youth activist from Chigega village had been murdered by unknown assailants armed with axes, knobkerries, spears and logs allegedly for political reasons. She said that news about the murder had spread like veld fire around the district. Another man added that such reports of political conflicts had been rumoured around areas like Chihuri, Goora, Nyarukunda and Kasimbwi where there was a known black-smith who made axes, spear-heads and machetes for gardening purposes. He completely ruled out the occurrence of such conflicts in his area.

Realising that the discussion was not yielding the desired results, the facilitator pointed out that his burning questions had all been answered and thanked the school head for successfully

mobilising such a cooperative group and the grocery shop owner for providing with a conducive venue for the discussion. The meeting was closed through a short prayer by one of the women in attendance.

Focus Group Discussion Four

Held on 15 February 2014 at Musiiwa Business centre with 11 participants in the district of Shamva.

Duration of the discussion: 55 minutes (0905-1000hrs)

Facilitator: Researcher

The meeting organised by a local traditional leader was convened at the business centre in Musiiwa hotel with 11 participants (three women and eight men) all drawn from the villagers. One of the women gave an opening prayer before refreshments were served.

The facilitator introduced the scope of the discussion and urged all the members to be tolerant, calm, objective and truthful in their discussion and avoid hurting others as this was only an academic research programme and not meant to be taken to anyone or institution. The facilitator asked the meeting to discuss the existence of traditional taboos and their relevance in society. The traditional leader told the meeting that taboos existed in most societies and had played a meaningful regulatory role though presently, some people were treating them with some doubts. He even cited some which he said were still valid and feared by even those who claimed to be religious, modern and educated. He gave out that there were some taboos which, even some people who doubted the existence of mermaids had dreaded simply because of the alleged repercussions. He cited the following; {3, 11, 12, 15, 25, and 28}.

Other members of the group supported his position that taboos really existed and had controlled societal behaviour albeit with an element of falsehood. Two women and three other men gave out that had there not been traditional taboos and their element of threat to humanity, tens of people would have been murdered and injured in the area mainly for political reasons. It was given out that there had been serious hatred in the community over political ideologies so much so that some people got to fight physically injuring each other, destroy each other's property and homes, and false report rivals to the police for cooked up charges.

The facilitator asked the group to clarify on the role that taboos played to regulate society to which one man responded;

'Muna 2001, kwakauya mota ichibva kwaNyava yakazara vanhu pakati peusiku vakapakata mapanga, mvuu, tsvimbo nemabhema. Yakati yasvika, vese vakajitika vachiti ndipo pano, ndipo pano! Hozu yaivepo yakatungidzwa moto. Patakamuka nemhuri yangu, adzimai vakashevedzera kuti anongotiponda yangu ngozi inotanga pano nhasi! Aitoshevedzere achichema izvozvakyatyisa vanhu vaye. Vamwe vakadzokera mumota vamwe vakatizira musango ndokuenda. Ndokupona kwatakaita ikoko'.

(One evening in 2001, a truck full of people armed with knives, *sjamboks*, knobkerries and sharp objects drove from the direction of Nyava Growth Point. On arrival, everyone disembarked shouting that my home was their intended target and immediately torched my granary. As soon as we woke up, my wife went out screaming that whoever killed any member of the family, the avenging spirits were to start wreaking havoc on the morrow. This frightened the strangers so much so that some jumped back into the car while others fled into the bush and left. That is how we survived).

The man attributed the fear of the avenging spirits on the part of the marauding intruders to have saved the family's lives.

Other members of the group also indicated that the fact that the area is also inhabited by people of alien origin makes it safer as some of these 'aliens' are known to believe in African magic and juju as retaliation to wrong-doers. They also gave out that there used to be cases of theft of agricultural produce in the fields until the 1990s when one thief from Chinhambhora was found roaming around the field the following morning by the owners of the produce. The owner was originally from Mozambique and is still popular for strong beliefs in traditional customs. One case was cited of a mentally unstable former youth member with one of the prominent political parties, who was reportedly ill following a spate of thuggish activities around the area disguising as a local political base activist. It was further revealed that some of the base activists had repeatedly robbed and looted goods and groceries from local shops and vendors. In some cases, according to the participant, the youth could collect what they termed 'base levy', which was meant to sustain political bases.

The facilitator also asked the group to give out their views on how taboos could be used to regulate society or how they could be improved to remain relevant if ever there was need. The group was divided with five participants indicating that there needed a lot of effort to re-brand and re-shelf the long abandoned taboos back in the society. It was pointed out that most people had realised the element of falsehood in taboos thus likely to affect their re-creation. However, the participants suggested that government made use of traditional structures in the rural areas to embark on a massive awareness programme whereby people and especially children got information or rather propaganda on taboos. It was pointed out that the government should not expect immediate results given that the same taboos were eroded over

a long period of time. The other six members rubbished the possibility of bringing traditional taboos back equating that attempt to ‘upgrading ignorance and barbarism’ in the face of globalisation. It was also given that with the pace at which modern Pentecostal churches were mushrooming in view of poverty, illnesses and unemployment, and how communities had embraced them, it was an uphill task for any attempt at resurrecting the taboos. They also said that Zimbabwean community needed to adapt with time and catch up with the rest of the world in terms of beliefs.

Realising that some members were restless, an indication that they wanted to go and attend to some other chores, the facilitator thanked the group for a frank, objective and friendly talk before asking another woman to give a closing prayer.

Focus Group Discussion Five

Held on 16 February 2014 at SOS Farm Primary school with nine participants in the district of Shamva.

Duration of the discussion: 110 minutes (0905-1015hrs)

Facilitator: Researcher

The meeting at this centre delayed to start after some of the invited participants had not yet returned from the fields. However, as soon as alternative replacements were found, the meeting kicked off, this time without a prayer due to the present diversity of religions; Christians and Muslims. Out of the nine people, seven were men inclusive of three youth.

The facilitator introduced the objective of the meeting asking for tolerance and friendliness during the discussion. Everyone pledged to take the talk as an academic forum and not to

seek retaliation. The group was asked to discuss their knowledge about traditional taboos to which they cited the following taboos; {9, 14, 15, 19, and 28}.

One male of Islamic background narrated that taboos existed in most societies including his native area in Malawi, which he left in 1946 as a young boy. He pointed out that back home, elders used to say out frightening statements that would keep young people out of possible danger and truancy. As he moved with his friends to Zimbabwe in search of employment, along the way, there were also taboos that kept them secured and anyone who transgressed, risked failing to reach the destination. To his surprise, upon arrival at Shamva Gold mine in the 1940s, the same taboos that were recognised in Malawi were the same that were in practice. That made his adaptation easy. Another member gave out that while taboos '*zodabwitsa*' were in existence; their effectiveness depended on one's level of belief. However, that position was disputed by another woman who argued that even if you did not believe in taboos, if you killed a person, avenging spirits still haunted you. The debate raged till they agreed that there are some taboos which are naturally effective and others which appear to be deterrent only. However, the group pointed out that it was just difficult to test the levels of their differences in real lives as no-one really knew the eventual repercussions.

On the issue about the role of taboos in conflicts in their area, the three men gave out that the area had lived peacefully since independence till the land reform period. It was during this era, according to the men, that conflicts were experienced in the neighbouring farms pitting the indigenous blacks against former white commercial farmers. The conflicts were mainly based on the following, according to the three men; economic classes (rich white against poor blacks), racial (whites against blacks), political (ZANU PF against MDC) and ethnic (black Shona against alien farm workers). The men further revealed that the complexity of the

conflict created a variety of hostilities and retaliatory measures on the ground; physical assaults, rape as a fighting weapon, spouse grabbing, illegal entry and theft, housebreaking, witch-craft, displacement, arson and murder. It was pointed out that to some extent, the gravity of violence was controlled by the fact that generally most people never move around armed with weapons like knives, knobkerries, machetes, spears and clubs to attack. Carrying weapons, according to the young adult, was never associated with one's background or lifestyle; most cases were a response to peer pressure and the need for immediate security against rivals. The only weapons that people carried included axes, walking sticks and catapult which apparently all have some social and economic role in in the execution of some household chores as aptly indicated by the respondent.

'Ndinofamba nerekeni zvimwe ndinoona hanga kana tsuro ndikasvika kumba neusavi' (I carry around my catapult, in case I encounter a guinea fowl or a hare and take home some relish).

The youth present reported that as some of the participants during the conflicts, they were pushed by their political leaders and political ideology to commit heinous acts which were still haunting them up to that day. In most instances, the youth confided, they could not hide or run away from the assignments due to the volatility of the tempers then both at local and national level politically. The situation was further perpetuated by the advent of the MDC on the political scene wresting power from ZANU PF. The men reported that while there may be talk of past conflicts, no-one has made an effort at permanently addressing and reconciling former rivals. It appeared people still harboured anger in their hearts which could be addressed both politically and socially. The men further said that there were some potential conflicts that were restrained by the fear of the taboos like committing murder, theft, adultery and rape and forced confiscation of property. Some conflict perpetrators feared that if they

committed some of these offences, the repercussions were heavy especially given the fact that there are more 'aliens' who had a stronger belief in traditional systems than locals. It was revealed that there are at least two cases of people who are now insane due to the avenging spirits of the people they are believed to have murdered. However, that could not be ascertained medically during the research period. It was revealed that there had been political bases at Wadzanayi Community Hall, unidentified residence in Wadzanayi, Chakonda and Madziva Primary School with about 100, 20, 15, and 15 activists respectively.

On how taboos could be preserved for future generational uses, the group indicated that there was need for concerted effort starting from the family level towards educating people on the relevance of taboos. It was also reported that people had a tendency to select taboos which they felt were relevant to their lives, needs and circumstances like those about beating up their mothers, theft, death, and adultery. One of the men reported that it only needed one example of a person experiencing the effects of an infringed taboo to turn the entire society back on the right track. The groups also acknowledged that modernity and the type of education in schools was partly playing a part in the erosion of some of these taboos. It was therefore suggested that the Ministries of Education and Local Government adopt a deliberate policy aimed at restoring, re-establishing and reinforcing taboos in society. There was consensus that the achievement of such a situation required lots of resources, time and patience and political will.

Asked whether there were local traditions that promote peace in community, six responded affirmatively citing such practices as the traditional dances, songs, proverbs, taboos and rituals that were used to promote peace. Asked where they acquired these practices, four

indicated that they were brought up through such customs, while two indicated that they heard of them from their parents and grandparents.

After realising that members were tired of the talk, the facilitator thanked them for their time, attendance and will and asked them to end. Opaque beer and some soft drinks were served before dispersing.

5.15 Analysis of Data

After carefully and thoroughly conducting a study on the role and relevance of traditional taboos in conflict resolution, all the data was collected, sorted and presented following an analysis through Content Analysis method which provided for the analysis of written, audio or photographic material. The Content Analysis method identified key themes and patterns especially: ideas, behaviours, and incidents before they were arranged in coherent categories: chronology, importance and frequency as propounded by McBroom (1992), Babbie (1998) and Patton (2002). Prominent categories that were looked at include amongst others: subject matters, time of the incident, period of the activity and the event itself and the depth of its effect on either the victim or the perpetrator.

A combination of both Latent Content Analysis (structural meaning in the messages) and Manifest Content analysis (surface meaning) was employed to ensure a thorough analysis of all the collected data. In the cases where participants had presented their personal experiences regarding conflicts, the research employed the Phenomenology/Heuristic Analysis which, according to Kleiman (2004) focused on how individuals experienced the world on a daily basis; as they move around, when they meet their victims/perpetrators or in their dreams.

After cautiously coding all the data into readable and analysable units (simply picking one/two key words), the following six themes were developed for ease of interpretation: taboo types, relevance/appreciability in society, age groups that recognised taboos, age groups involved in conflicts/violence, effects of taboos on conflicts and how they could be upgraded to suit modern situations.

Coding schemes for the analysis were developed from Deterrence Theory of Punishment. From the theory, the following six key issues were raised: voluntarism in an activity, consensus by society on an issue, definition of social units by the society, definition of acceptable behaviour by society, subjectivity of order and socialisation in society. To clearly marry the theory and the study parameters, the six themes were redefined to meet the expectations of the study as follows;

- Voluntarism in an activity – were the participants in the conflicts willing or were coerced?
- Consensus by society on an issue – how the society arrived at the taboo concept?
- Definition of social units by the society – how agreeable are different communities on a principle?
- Definition of acceptable behaviour by society – this was fused with the above theme.
- Subjectivity of order and socialisation in society – the structural built-up of a community and how knowledge is passed down to children.

From the themes created during the second stage of the analysis, coding schemes could then be developed after marrying with the key issues that were also picked from the theory as follows:

Fig 5.7 Thematic Areas

Themes from the Study	Themes from the Theory
Taboo types	Consensus
Relevance of taboos	Definition of social units, Subjectivity of order
Age groups that recognise taboos	Particular groups in society associated with taboo recognition.
Age groups in conflicts	Voluntarism, Socialisation
Effects of taboos	Subjectivity of order
Upgrading taboos/Way forward	Definition of acceptable behaviour
Theory implications	Generally looked at the appropriateness and goodness of individual behaviour and personality.

The above stated themes will be developed below individually deriving from the data presented above.

The table shows the distribution of centres in different locations, respective respondents and respective relative frequency. An analysis of the relative frequency of the respondents shows how often each constituency/group appeared. In this case, it shows that the mining sector was the least frequent while the rural was the most frequent sector.

Fig 5.8 Relative Frequency Table

LOCATION	#CENTRES	#RESPONDENTS	RELATIVE FREQUENCY
RURAL	6	79	0.59
URBAN	2	29	0.015
MINING	1	13	0.01
FARMING	1	14	0.1
TOTAL	10	135	1

5.16 Most Cited Taboos

It was established during the research that while there were various traditional taboos in both areas of research during the period under review, there were some prominent taboos that were recorded. In most of the cited taboos at every centre, there were some common taboos that crossed lines of ethnicity, culture, religion and district while others were noted to be more effective in one area than the other. However, listed in Appendix Taboo 12 are the most cited taboos regardless of their relevance in society. They are presented verbatim before translation into English language.

The research established that the majority 42 out of the 50 interviewees (84%) and all the 10 FGD did confirm that they were aware of the traditional taboos and equally appreciated their roles in society. The same participants gave out that while some taboos were still effective socially, others' effectiveness had almost been eroded by factors like modernity, education, time and natural wisdom in the children. The other eight (16%) participants outrightly rubbished them as falsehoods designed to regulate societal behaviour. Most of the identified taboos have been listed in the section titled 'Most Cited Taboos' above and will not be listed again in this section.

The research also established that the belief in taboos was selective and circumstantial as some people chose to recognise the importance of the taboos when they went to their rural homes where there were institutions and artefacts considered sacred. Whenever they were in urban areas, they ignored even the cemeteries that they feared so much in the rural areas.

Out of the 50 interview participants, 42 (84%) and 100% FGD did indicate that they were aware of the taboos and their role in society. They indicated that traditional taboos served as

societal regulatory mechanisms and had managed to preserve the Shona traditions and values for hundreds of years till the advent of colonialism and modernisation.

5.17 Most Cited Reasons for the Erosion of Taboos

The erosion of some of the taboos in the Shona society has been attributed to a variety of factors and reasons. However, for the purpose of the interpretation of this study data, listed below are some of the most cited reasons which were noted to be influencing the erosion of traditional taboos in the researched areas in Mazowe and Shamva districts.

Marriages outside of the traditionally defined boundaries (*kuroorana vematongo*). Marriages outside of these set boundaries meant that some core values and traditions were to be either neutralised or washed away. This is in view of the fact that there are some societies whose beliefs in traditional systems are low if not non-existent at all.

Marriages within the same clan or totemic lineage (*kuroorana vemitupo mimwechete*). Conversely, there were also situations where people deliberately chose to marry within their clans contrary to the norms and traditions. This sheer arrogance is also likely to be extended to the other areas of traditions where people ignore the relevance of taboos.

Public consumption of alcohol (*kumwa zvinodhaka paruzhinji uye pane vana*). Allowing people to consume alcohol in public exposed vulnerable people and children to abuse and obscenity. This had a danger of exposing the same children to some life realities which are supposed to be kept covertly like the value in taboos.

Indescent dressing especially by women (*kupfeka kwakafumuka kuvakadzi*). Traditionally, in the Shona culture, a woman's body is sacred and should never be exposed to the public. However, when women dress in a way which leaves their private parts bare, the relevance of some of the taboos that are supposed to protect them is also weakened.

Uncontrolled use of vulgar and obscene language in public (*kutaura mazwi akafumuka paruzhinji*). When a society uses vulgar language in public, children fail to understand the importance of some of the closely-guarded words and matters in society so much so that they end up abusing same willy-nilly.

Neglect or destruction of the extended family concept in times of poverty and need leading to theft and dishonest (*kusachengetana pahukama mumatambudziko zvinokonzera kuba nehutsotsi*). In the Shona culture, one's child is another's child. This literally means that no-one exists in isolation of the others. This is aptly captured in the concept of 'unhu/ubuntu' where people share in both goodness and difficulties. However, globalisation is growing rapidly and eroding away traditional systems.

Media depiction of violent movies associating blood with heroism, victory and success (*nhepfenyuro dzinoburitsa mabhaisikopo ekurwa achiratidza ropa nekuuraya sehugamba nekugona*). While most of the traditional Shona beliefs discourage the spilling of blood of another human being, the contemporary media seems to be going contrary. As a result, where it is said if one killed, avenging spirits follow, the media depicts a scenario where the murderer is also able to fight the avenging spirits in a heroic manner.

Trans-border migration for economic reasons (*kubuda kwevanhu munyika vachitsvaka upfumi*). This is closely related to the effect caused by marriages. When people move out of their borders in search of economic survival, they tend to ignore some of their traditions as they try to adapt either as a security cover or to impress their potential employers and friends.

Western biased education system that undermines traditional systems (*dzidzo yechirungu inoita kuti vanhu vavenge chivanhu chavo*). Shona tradition protects its artefacts and morals. However, the western education has created some room where the learner has had his/her eyes, ears and brains opened further so much so that they are now challenging some of the wisdom in the taboos. It is important to note though that it may not be entirely blamed on the western education in isolation of technology and globalisation.

The use of English language in most spheres there by eroding or overshadowing traditional systems some of which may not have proper terms in English language (*kushandiswa kwechirungu pese-pese zvinoita kuti mamwe mashoko echivanhu atadze kuiswa kuchirungu ozongokanganwikwa*). There are some common terms in local languages which have not been properly translated into English. This shortcoming has had an effect on the preservation of such terms and institutions. Children see these institutions and terms from an alien perspective and so never attach the deserved sacredness.

Allowing trials with some of the taboos thereby exposing weaknesses and untruths (*kuyedzwa kwezvimwe zvierwa nevanhu vozoona kureruka kwazvo kana kunyeperwa*). The advent of modernity through the media has exposed some people to instances where they would want to experiment with some customs. These trials and experiments have been influenced by the abuse of alcohol and other immoral substances. Once one person engages in an unethical and

immoral activity, the media rushes to publish and other admirers would want to follow suit especially if it has been done by a celebrity.

5.18 Most Cited Conflict Types

It was observed during the research that while there were various types of conflicts in both areas of research during the period under review, there were some prominent conflicts that were recorded. This is not to say some were not important; this is in view of the requirements of the Structural-Functional theory dictates which identifies the most common events and themes from a set of data. Below are some of the identified most common types of conflicts.

Verbal assaults – neighbours and or relatives exchanged verbal assaults. In the majority of cases, these assaults sparked heightened rivalry in communities leading to situations where the most prominent part could hire or sent youth militia or other thugs to persecute.

Fist fights – the youth and any other people could engage in physical fist fighting. Either these fights could be started at the business centre over either beer or a cigarette before it was politicised. There were instances where gangsterism could be experienced in a bid to maintain power in a given area.

Sexual rape – the youth and or other perpetrators could rape women as a punitive measure. There was an identified political base where a known leader could send some youth to find him a lady from the neighbouring villages to satisfy his sexual gratification.

House-breaking and theft – during the raids at night by political enemies, some ended up breaking into homes and stealing valuables. This was common where some well up families could be accused of political charges and targeted for theft at night.

Murder – there were some political bases that were notorious for persecuting perceived enemies and would in the process end up killing people. Some of the murdered people were a result of extended deprivation of either medication or food while in captivity.

Arson- after the perpetrators had ransacked their enemies' homes; they would burn down to ensure that all the possible evidence is destroyed. However, there were also some cases where unknown people could just burn down homes without stealing or taking anything.

Grievous bodily harm (amputation of limbs) - this includes cases where people were tortured physically, injured or had parts of their bodies amputated as a punitive measure. The most common as reported in Dodo and Musorowegomo (2012) involved the amputation of limbs and wrists so that one could not vote alone, instead, they would require someone's help and in the process disclose where he/she would have voted for.

Theft of livestock – there were two types of livestock theft that were noted. The first one is what may be termed genuine theft by thieves while the second one was by political enemies as a punitive measure. In the second one, the stolen livestock could also be directed to the bases as relish for the base members.

Accusation of witch-craft (false) – there were cases where traditional leaders (village heads) could accuse someone of witchcraft and immediately chase them out of the villages and

probably to the cities. During one's absence from his/her home, most of the valuables are also stolen.

Forced confiscation – in other instances, perceived enemies and other political rivals were forced to donate either food or money towards the upkeep of the political bases. The most affected constituency of victims was that of vending. The youth militia would just move around collecting vegetables and other produce for the bases. However, there were instances where some of the robbed produce could be shared for personal use.

However, besides the most cited violations above, there were also some violations that were noted in isolated situations as the following; abduction, attempted murder, death threats, school closure, displacement, disappearance and death threats. Actual statistics for all the violations could not be obtained as the subject was considered too sacred and sensitive to be discussed.

5.19 Most Used Gestures and Expressions

From the data collected through literature review, interviews and Focus group discussions, there were major expressions and body actions that were noted and which some participants did use involuntarily to express their feelings about an activity or some memorable event in their lives. Some of these expressions and body movements have been mobilised and are presented though in no particular order.

Tears dropping as one presented a case. It was observed in some presentations that some participants were either openly or covertly crying or dropping tears. This was considered a mannerism expressing one's remorse over a past evil or a feeling for pity for the others.

Taking a long gasp as one argued a point. As one presented/narrated an event, it could be seen that he/she gasped in a clear display of either emotions or tempers.

Attempting to walk out in pain. There were some instances when participants attempted to walk out of discussions out of anger while others indicated that some events reminded them of their lost relatives.

Staring at either the researcher or in the sky aimlessly. It was also noted that there were people who could freeze in their speeches simply staring either in the sky or the researcher without winking. This was deduced as moments which probably reminded them of the past incidents.

Fidgeting one's fingers trying to drive a point home. In cases where an interviewee started to fidget fingers instead of responding to a posed question, it was taken to mean the following; ignorance, fear of self-implication, emotions or trying to lie.

Unusual winking. This mannerism was also associated with uneasiness and falsehoods.

Maintaining some silence before responding to a posed question. This was also related to a situation where one attempted either to evade the question or would have rewound his/her memory into the past.

Denying sharing refreshments with the researcher. In each FGD, participants were served with refreshments. However, for one to deny refreshments midway or after the talk was taken as a sign of expressing either unfriendliness or regret for past deeds.

Insisting on the production of official documents to prove that he/she was really injured. Some participants would impress on the production of their medical reports confirming the gravity of their injuries during political conflicts. This was taken to mean that they still harboured emotions and had not forgiven nor forgotten the past evils.

1. How Taboos Should Work

According to the data gathered and analysed, participants expressed some of the ways through which they felt taboos should work to regulate society. The participants pointed out that were the taboos following that path, there would not be so much conflicts and immoral activities in the Shona communities in Zimbabwe. The 92% average respondents $\{(84\%+100\%)/2\}$ who expressed knowledge about the taboos presented varying scenarios about their expectations.

- Fear of the spirits of the dead – it was given out that since most people fear the dead, the taboos should have been applied from that perspective whereby the society should have been presented with a case of an existing effective world of the dead watching on the people. Other cases that have been experienced should have been cited as real life examples. The appearance of the dead to the murderer is so traumatising that the perpetrator and the rest of the family are forced to seek amends. There are also instances when the dead can appear as a ghost to several other members of the perpetrator as a way of influencing the entire family to make amends and compensate. In other instances, the voice of the dead can be heard through either the child or close

relative of the murderer stating the demands required to resolve the conflict. Other living examples of the avenging spirits are; spate of unusual deaths in a village at Nzvimbo Growth Point in 2009 (Newsday, 2011), Case 1 in Chapter two involving the spirit of Chada in Buhera following 2008 violence (Maruzani, 2012), Case 2 involving the spirit of Moyo in Birchnough in 2009, Case 3 involving the spirit of Sibanda in Buhera in 2009 (MoB, 2011) and Case 4 involving the spirit of X murdered by the son of a Provincial Governor in Midlands in 2009 (The Standard, 2011, MoB, 2011, Radio VoP, 2011). Others also include Mazowe Jumbo Mine youth who lost their mental stability following a spate of murders at the mine in 2002, the mysterious death of an entire family in Tafuna following a series of murders allegedly by one of the family members, weird ailments in an entire family in Glendale following theft of field produce in 1989, the mental illness by an identified youth in Glendale following a series of physical attacks on former farm workers during the land invasion conflict of 1999-2003.

- Fear of natural calamities – traditionally, society could tell that a taboo had been violated through the unusual existence of a natural catastrophe befalling on either the entire society or on a particular individual. These could be in the form of natural droughts, famine, plagues or unusual whirl-winds. In the cases in point, the participants expressed that the traditional leadership should have played a pre-active role by instituting or igniting some of these measures. At least something bad should have been experienced in some part of the areas as a deterring measure.
- Possibility of mental illness – there are some taboos whose violation is believed to lead to mental illness. It was given out that the fear of such taboos should have deterred would-be violators in society. Though there were cases that were experienced like at Mazowe Jumbo Mine, Musiiwa, Goora and Gweshe, they were not publicised

enough to send the message to other would-be transgressors. These drew from the following taboos; { 16, 32, 33, and 37 }

- Social isolation – taboos associated with incest, murder and witch-craft are also associated with social isolation so much so that violators end up segregating themselves from the rest of the community. Therefore, the fear for possible isolation should have been a deterrent enough to regulate people’s behaviour. Closely akin to isolation is the aspect about punishment as alluded to in the Deterrence Theory of Punishment. Potential violators of the taboos should have been warned of possible punishment in the event that they transgressed. However, in this case, the theory’s assumption failed to prove its applicability as cases that were restrained because of the fear of punishment were very few.
- Social embarrassment – closely akin to the above point is that violators of some taboos in society end up feeling ashamed of their behaviour so much so that they either decide to leave permanently or to commit suicide. Such taboos could include incest, murder, rape theft and peeping on nude people amongst others. Therefore, for as long as one is in his/her normal senses, he /she must fear the eventuality and keep away.
- Falling sick – there is also a belief that violation of some societal taboos may lead to some illnesses like stress, dizziness, lack of eye-sight, stomach cramps, limp numbness and others. Such taboos are associated with the following; theft from one’s field, theft of pocket wallets, and theft of food from huts, theft of livestock, theft of clothing units like shoes and underwear amongst others. Experiences in other areas should have placed some element of fear in the societies for enough deterrence.
- The need for traditional justice - What is interesting with the avenging spirits is that even if a perpetrator of crime is convicted in a court of law and serves a sentence,

traditionally, some appeasement still has to be done to attend to the soul of the dead and the remaining family. Therefore, no-matter what one does to suppress the spirits ‘*kupinga/kutsipika*’, the conflict remains outstanding and may lead to psychological trauma, mental break-down, strange deaths and weird ailments in the entire family till some traditional corrective measures are applied.

5.20.4 Other Themes

Beside the key themes that were derived from the Structural-Functional Theory analysis, there were other pertinent issues that were raised and deserve due attention. Below are some of the sub-themes which are equally important in this study.

1. Effectiveness of Taboos

The effectiveness of traditional taboos was explained differently by various constituencies. It was obtained from 16 interviewees (32%) that it was generally realised during the election period that children whose parents or guardians were directly victimised in the campaigns had higher rates of antisocial behaviour, aggression, anxiety, and school problems than children whose parents or guardians were political campaigners. These were characterised by exuding unusually high confidence, bullying others and possession of food especially at school when the rest had nothing. According to 15 participants (30%), children tended to experience short- term economic and psychological disadvantages; higher absentee rates at school, and higher dropout rates (with boys more negatively affected than girls); and more delinquent activity, including alcohol and drug addiction. To some extent, these were some of the effects of failing to listen or respect some of the social norms about good neighbourliness and the art of sharing in society

According to 28 interviewees (56%) and 6 FGD (60%), all the participating political parties never had a clearly pronounced policy regarding taboos in the areas that they were operating in. This apparent lack of a policy on taboos opened space for abuse and transgression. What was however noted was that during the 1970s liberation struggle, all the participating liberation movements had high respect for the local taboos which they attributed to part of their successes. What was observed to have played a role was an element of deterrence on the part of the combatants. With deterrence (Akers, 2000, Moyer, 2001), if the punishment is severe, definite, and instantaneous, a normal person will measure the gains and losses before engaging in delinquency and will be deterred from violating regulations if the loss is greater than the gain. Therefore, these combatants might have weighed between the need for sex and the prospects of being killed. However, youth behaviour especially regarding their social register could not be influenced by traditional taboos potential repercussions. They continued to use obscene language in public places without regard for ‘*unhu/ubuntu*’ as defined by Haralambos and Holborn (2000) and Giddens (2001). Some of the taboos that were revered during the liberation struggle included the following in Appendix Taboo 13.

2. *Political Ideology vis-à-vis Taboos*

Of the 50 interviewees, 35 (70%) and five FGD (50%) indicated that political parties were supportive of the programmes that prevailed while six (12%) interviewees indicated that the campaigns’ violence programmes were not on official agenda but simply individuals’ desires for some ulterior motives. The other four (8%) interviewees and one FGD (10%) did not comment on that aspect. However, of the 50 interviewees, 33 (66%) and six FGD (60%) indicated that one of the parties had deliberately crafted that strategy so that it could target its opponents. Because of the crafted campaign strategy the other party was then on the defensive. It was now during this tug-of-war between the contesting parties that traditional taboos were unnecessarily sacrificed.

3. Age Groups that Recognise Taboos

Participants (36%) reported that youth and children were motivated into the political conflicts by a variety of reasons; emulating elders and role models, excitement, ignorance, material need, jealousy and criminal mentality, peer pressure and coercion and artificial courage growing out of lack of effective taboos. Most of these influences (emulating elders and role models, ignorance, peer pressure and coercion), according to the participants played a role during the early period of the conflict. As the conflict intensified, influences transformed mainly to excitement. Twelve interviewees (24%) and five FGD indicated that some children and youth were forced into the campaigns to execute some of the assignments that they were given for fear of reprisals on their parents. This was very common with families that would have been accused of being supporters of another party. The traditional fear of blood that normally defines the Shona people was silent. Most of the interviewees and FGD highlighted the fact that most of the over-zealous youth involved in criminal activities were non-members who had been simply coerced into the structures of politics to commit heinous crimes.

From the participants, it was obtained that to a large extent, it was the minors (youth and children) who transgressed the taboo boundaries though it could be seen that there would have been a lot of adult influence in the form of incentives, fear and deceit. Most minors reported that part of their participation in conflicts and transgression over taboo boundaries was to some extent forced as they feared the repercussions of some of the taboos that they knew like the following; {2, 4, 8, 17, 18, 26, 29, 32, 33, 37, 39, 40, 41, and 43}.

It was also noted that there were some adults who chose to ignore the effects of taboos so that they achieved their desired agenda of either persecuting others or dispossessing others of their property. However, from the FGD and interviews, it was reported that there were some

personalities that were now mentally deranged following their evil activities. Such cases were recorded at Goora, Gweshe, SOS, Mazowe Jumbo Mine and Musiiwa.

It was also obtained especially through interviews that a number of elderly people could not remember any taboo. Others simply showed their ignorance about the taboo concept while others indicated that they only learnt about taboos when they were in school. To some extent, this explained why the concept is fast eroding and why some sections of the society do not respect taboos at all.

4. Effects of Taboos' Violation on Humanity

From the data collected, it was established that there were some real cases where some personalities had either developed mental illnesses or were experiencing some mysterious events in their lives following their evil past. There are also instances when the ancestral spirits can come in to help regulate social behaviour and relationships in society. This is sometimes done through sending illnesses to deviants and offenders. Such cases of deviants were recorded at Goora, Gweshe, SOS, Mazowe Jumbo Mine and Musiiwa. Some of the victims of avenging spirits were reported to have at some points consulted the following religious and traditional healers;

- Mutumwa Micho of the Johane Masowe Nguo Tsvuku apostolic church in Chiweshe.
- Mudzidzi Wimbo Gomo of the Johane Mosowe Vadzidzi apostolic church in Madziva in Shamva.
- Traditional healer Svikiro Svembere of Guruve.
- Madzibaba Gondo of the Johane Masowe Jerusalem apostolic church in Goteka in Guruve.
- Traditional healer Mbuya Bhunda of Howard area in Chiweshe.
- Sheik Amini Jowa of the Islamic religion at Tafuna mining mill in Shamva.

According to the participants and most consulted archival material, the traditional taboos had a vital responsibility in most societies the world over. According to such scholars as Gelfand (1981), Bozongwana (1983), Osei (1995), Thody (1997), Tatira (2000), Pfukwa (2001), Madu (2002), Masaka and Chemhuru (2011), Dodo et al (2012) and Chiwara et al (2013) amongst others and contacted participants, most taboos served the following purposes;

- Conscientise people on issues pertaining to health
- Mechanism to regulate and control the behaviours of children when they grew up.
- Earliest social systems that regulated society
- Traditional education system
- Have collectively maintained and nurtured peace, harmony and development.
- Helped in the management of common grazing areas and natural resources.
- Management and administration of local development.
- Regulation of the ethical use of the environment.
- Help people adhere to the expected virtues of humanity
- Discourage people from killing each other.
- Set parameters on what ought to be done.

This research has established that some taboos have progressed to regulate maternal health. It has revealed that intake of some prohibited foods during gestation was a way of controlling unusual weight gain of unborn babies, which could cause injury to mothers during labour. That olden antenatal and postnatal system is still being employed by traditional healers and midwives in many parts of the developing world. If the traditional medicine practices and

food taboos were set of rules established to regulate the nutritional habits of humans and worked well, why abandon it today?

The research also established that traditional drugs are still being used to cure most non-acute ailments that do not need emergency intervention. Besides, it was unanimously presented that traditional taboos also provided preventive health care. On the mental health front, taboos play an important part in the management of neurosis and helps re-trace a patient's life from its metaphysical past to how it interacts with the present and the future. Taboos, as established from this study, afford a relationship between a patient and the patient's own cultural, social, and intellectual environmental background. It was noted that the statistics of common psychological disorders recorded among patients visiting traditional healers and exorcists was double that recorded for those attending health institutions, especially Howard hospital in Chiweshe, Mazowe Citrus hospital in Mazowe, Bindura hospital, Shamva hospital and Madziva clinic in Madziva. It was reported that post-2008 political conflicts, the identified traditional and religious healers cited in this chapter had on average attended to over 30 cases each (not referring to cases visiting several healers concurrently).

The study brought out some aspects which were either silent or hidden in our societies. It revealed that sex was traditionally an act of affection and passion to women, not for abuse and disrespect as it has now become. To some extent, this has been revolutionised by the media. What the Shona society now witness is a situation where people engage in sex simply for either abuse or as a weapon of conflict, which in legal terms becomes rape.

To the Shona tradition, taboos are as good as the Mosaic Ten Commandments which Christians religiously follow and never sacrifice them for anything. As the education system

transformed and globalisation took effect, the Shona people through some government enacted laws should have preserved some of their values like taboos as they were critical in the development of being. The Shona people should never sacrifice some of their taboos for anything if they play a so important role like respecting the elders, parents and restraining people from conflicting and killing each other amongst others.

5. *Erosion of Taboos' Relevance*

The erosion of some of the traditional taboos and their deliberate neglect was to some extent perpetuated by government and its policies. This is coming from incidences in the political bases where some youth were encouraged and technically sponsored to commit heinous crimes against their relatives and the community. Typical examples were noted at Gweshe, Jingamvura, Tafuna, Wadzanayi and Goora areas. The youth were 'rewarded' for persecuting their enemies and perceived threats. Closely akin to the above were recorded cases where the Police was technically broken down so much so that it could not carry out its legislated mandate. This was wide-spread as was noted from some of the interviews, FGD and literature (Dodo and Musorowegomo, 2012). Further, it was also established that there were several other factors behind the erosion of traditional taboos;

- Marriages outside of the traditionally defined boundaries
- Marriages within the same clan or totemic lineage
- Public consumption of alcohol.
- Indecent dressing especially by women
- Uncontrolled use of vulgar and obscene language in public
- Neglect or destruction of the extended family concept in times of poverty and need leading to theft and dishonest
- Media depiction of violent movies associating blood with heroism, victory and success

- Trans border migration for economic reasons
- Western biased education system that undermines traditional systems
- The use of English language in most spheres there by eroding or overshadowing traditional systems some of which may not have proper terms in English language
- Allowing trials with some of the taboos thereby exposing weaknesses and untruths.
- The death of the wise elderly members of the community who are endowed with the knowledge.
- Dearth of recorded knowledge/practices literature.
- Lack of a deliberately designed education curriculum focussing on traditional values. While the school encourages conflicting thinking, inventiveness and distinctiveness which tend to challenge the traditional method of doing things, it does not encourage children to challenge their adults on issues about principles. It is therefore necessary to review some of the Shona concepts like '*kunyepa*' (lying) and see how it can be turned sacred to the children. Actually, it is a taboo for children to accuse adults of falsehoods thus making it possible for adults to educate little ones on traditional matters without raising questions.
- The existence of political bases. It was established that at almost all the bases, there was a lot of immorality taking place ranging from prostitution, theft, and consumption of illegal intoxicants. Whenever base activists brought an accused, they never respected one's age as per the dictates of '*unhu/ubuntu*' system which requires young ones to respect elders and related traditional systems. The fact that youth lived in large numbers helped erode conscience and morals such that they could easily torture, torment or abuse their captives without regard for one's feelings, innocence and the potential repercussions of violating traditional taboos.

However, about half the interviewees argued that taboos were no longer relevant in this day and age. It was argued that trying to re-produce taboos was like ‘rebranding barbarism and upgrading backwardness’. There were eight participants who suggested that the school curriculum focus on educating pupils on the falsehoods within the taboos’ system so that people could know the truth. They also argued that the taboo system was sort of ‘satanic’ as it was associated with cruelty, revenge, witch-craft, sorcery, magic, exorcism and anger amongst others.

5.20.5 Re-generation of Taboos (Way Forward)

The study established that traditional taboos were an important cog in the lives of the people the world over ever since time immemorial. It was observed that most of the order, harmony, peace, and development were a result of these taboos. It was noted that for as long as the other taboos were still effective, most of the others were still capable of reclaiming their societal position albeit with serious challenges. However, it was also noted that with the passage of time, modernity and education amongst others, traditional taboos were losing relevance and recognition within the societal structure so much so that they were now exposed to extinction in the foreseeable future. Of interest is that while taboos were still relevant and in existence, they were being overshadowed by other institutions of socialisation.

To clearly understand how this debate could be unravelled, it is paramount to first and foremost understand what evil was in the traditional sense of the Shona people. It is an act of doing harm to others like adultery, killing, stealing, and incest, disrespect for elders, telling lies, and cruelty. It is therefore the case that the wicked, no matter who is involved, is

frowned at by every righteous sensible Shona not because of the fright of the gods and the apparent costs, but for the pleasant co-existence of the people in general, which is defined in African communalism.

However, the study established some of the ways which were recommended, suggested and raised as possible ways of re-establishing, recreating and rebranding some of the taboos so they could remain relevant and effective in the regulation of peoples' behaviour. Some of the ways are below.

- 'Sustained inculcation' approach of the taboos in the society. This approach is a long term effort which seeks to convince the minds of the children that taboos are really vital so much so that they have to be embraced again. This process is a multi-stakeholder initiative which calls for the efforts from the relevant Ministries of Education and Local Government to embark on a massive propaganda like programme to win the peoples' minds.
- It was primarily the responsibility of the families to teach their children the role and relevance of taboos despite the influence of the media.
- Preservation through the school system or through the art industry so that people, especially children develop an interest in them.
- Church institution could also help re-institute such traditions by impressing on the important roles played by the spirits of the long dead relatives. This is common in the African initiated apostolic churches like the Johane Masowe affiliates and the Johane Marange Church.
- 'De-satanise' taboos and make them more acceptable in a religious society that Zimbabwe has become.

- Resuscitate the spirit of homeland '*kumusha/ekhaya*' whereby families meet periodically celebrating their traditional artefacts and ceremonies like appeasement of the dead '*kurova makuva*', enthronement of village bulls '*kudira mombe dzemusha*' rain-making ceremonies '*mukwerera*' and spiritual dance ceremonies '*mapira*' and initiation, title-taking, marriage ceremonies, and memorial ceremonies.
- The media could also highlight issues to do with taboos in good light so that people see the positive side of them.
- Marriages within the acceptable parameters and circles so that relevant taboos could be preserved.
- Maintenance of the extended family system which does not give room to out-cast and poverty which usually lead to desperation.
- Use of proper register in all spheres of life. The society should abide by morally and acceptable rules of language use which do not expose children to vulgar language.
- Sanctioning deviants. It is prudent that there be a deliberate policy supported by genuine political will to severely punish all transgressors in this regard. It is only possible with a legislated law and reinforced by an effective statutory body. It could also be considered that any transgressors of such defined taboos be investigated and possibly displayed to the public so that they are exposed and embarrassed. This is similar to the sanctions that are effected on a person who beat up a mother and is making amends.

'Usarova amai, unoita ngozi'.

Thou shall not beat your mother, you face misfortunes.

The person according to the Shona traditions is required to dress in old dirty sacks, moves around the village asking for food like a mentally ill person. During the process, women will be splashing dirty water and ashes on him/her before they offer

some ‘*rapoko*’. At the end of the village parade, the ‘*rapoko*’ is used to brew traditional beer which is then used to appease the spirits from the mother’s side. Besides, the person is also expected to pay some livestock and apologise to the mother otherwise the misfortunes continue to dog his/her life.

- Some participants suggested that society simply adopts an approach which seeks to tell the truth about the potential implications of engaging in evil deeds rather than trying to lie to a learned community. According to the participants, this is what they termed ‘*kutaura chokwadi*’, whereby elders had to tell their children what they expected in the event that they committed a crime as follows;

‘*Ukaba unosungwa nemapurisa*’ (If you steal, you get arrested by the police).

‘*Ukabata mukadzi chibharo, unogona kubata utachiwana*’ (If you rape a woman, you may contract sexually transmitted diseases).

5.20.6 Other Issues

There were other issues outside of the study’s scope that were picked from the data which may be of importance in the understanding of society and the youth. Amongst some of these issues include the existence of political bases in the two districts as alluded to by RAU (2012) and Dodo and Musorowegomo (2012). Below are some of the identified bases, their locations and approximated resident activists. Note that some of the statistics given may not be accurate as they were obtained from people who were never to the bases while others often fluctuated due to various reasons. Statistics were calculated from the movement of people in and out of the bases and from those who moved around either raiding or collecting levies. However, sex distribution could not be established as base registers could not be established from either of the political parties. The bases given are the only ones that were identified; some might not have been identified during the study.

Fig. 5.9 Identified Bases

	MAZOWE	POP	SHAMVA	POP
1	Nzvimbo Guest House	20	Wadzanayi Comm Hall	100
2	Tsungubvi Comm. Hall	80	Wadzanayi residence	20
3	Tsungubvi residence	20	Corner store	30
4	Suoguru bus terminus	40	Madziva Skills Centre	30
5	Jumbo dam	20	Tafuna	45
6	Shavarunzi hills	15	Jiti Sec School	15
7	Jingamvura Primary Sch	20	Chindunduma Sch	20
8	Dandamera Pry Sch	40	Musiiwa	20
9	Bare Pry School	20	Madziva Pry School	15
10	Gweshe Pry School	45	Chidembo Pry School	15
11	Nyachuru Pry School	30	SOS Pry School	25
12	Davaar farm	20	Chihuri Pry School	20
13	Hayshot Pry School	20	Frontline Institute	15
14	Earling Pry School	35	Enteprise Pry School	15
15	Ceasar Pry School	40		
16	John Laury farm	15		
17	Msorodoni	15		
	TOTAL ACTIVISTS	495		385

- The study established that most youth were motivated to join political bases because of various reasons; forced conscription, poverty, fear of victimization of either self or another family member, criminal mentality, the need for security, adventure and the desire for free sex and prostitution amongst others.
- It was also established that most targeted vendors and grocery shops that were forced to donate towards the base sustenance in 2008 were at the following centres; Glendale, Riverside, Gweshe, Nzvimbo, Rosa, Kanhukamwe, Bare, Jingamvura, Goteka, Howard, Mvurwi, Msoenedi, Bell-Rock, Dandamera, Dorking, and Davaar. In Shamva, the affected centres were; Wadzanayi, Musiiwa, Tafuna, Goora, Madziva, Kasimbwi, Bradley, Corner Store, Chindunduma, Madziva Teachers' College,

Chidembo, Mutumba, and Jiti. In most cases, the most common commodities that were demanded from the shops were; money, beer, sugar, milk, bread, butter, tea leaves, cooking oil, salt, soya chunks, capenta, meat, tinned foods, and washing powder. From vendors and other individual households, goods and food stuffs that were demanded included the following; money, vegetables, mealie-meal, livestock, and chicken. However, some youth who collected commodities on their own and for personal enrichment would even demand clothes, and other electrical goods which they would either sell or send to their homes.

- The study revealed that cases of prostitution and irregular sex (same-sex) were rampant at the following bases in Mazowe; Tsungubvi, Jingamvura, Mazowe Jumbo Mine, Dandamera, Suoguro and Ceasar Mine while in Shamva, the bases were at the following; Tafuna, Wadzanayi, Corner Store, Chakonda, Musiiwa, and Madziva contrary to the expectations of traditional systems.
- Carrying a weapon is a sign that one anticipates threats and is insecure. In the areas under study, some people carried weapons and never used them; but simply having this device of violence affects feelings of individual security and hence can change behaviour. It was noted that besides youth and other political activists who were involved in violence, generally no other people carried weapons like knives, knobkerries, machetes, spears and clubs. Carrying weapons, according to this study, was never associated with one's background or lifestyle; most cases were a response to peer pressure and the need for immediate security against rivals. The only weapons that people carried included axes, walking sticks and catapult which apparently all have some social and economic role in in the execution of some household chores as aptly indicated by one young adult at SOS, Shamva.

‘Ndinofamba nerekeni zvimwe ndinoona hanga kana tsuro ndikasvika kumba neusavi’

(I carry around my catapult, in case I encounter a guinea fowl or a hare and take home some relish).

- It was established that there were various types of weapons that both political youth used either for self-defence or to attack opponents. Such weapons included; knives, *sjamboks*, knobkerries and sharp objects, bottles, iron-pipes, hose-pipes, shovels, axes, belts, sticks, broom-sticks, metal pots, wooden planks, bricks, chains, hammer, and bow and arrows amongst others.
- There were also cases of sodomy in the bases as was noted in Mazowe district. Traditionally in the Shona culture, it is taboo for a man to have sex with another man.
- It was established from the data that proliferation of weapons had various negative implications on development and society as follows; loss of lives and injuries, either retarded or halted development, affected public health, contributed to gender inequality and violence against women, erosion of family structures and disturbance of the availability of basic facilities upon which children and youth rely on and increase in crime rate amongst others.
- It was established through this study that the conflicts in question involved several parties; youth, security services, former liberation war fighters, traditional leaders and others from the urban areas like Harare who sneaked to attack local bases.
- The study established that issues around human rights and rule of law were being ignored in most societies. This was mainly because of lack of strict adherence to constitutionalism.
- The study established two more classes of taboos; peace and fighting over and above these; food, health, environment, safety, unhu and death.

5.21 Hypothesis Analysis

It is this study's conclusion that the Deterrence Theory of Punishment might have failed to prove its total utility. However, it did to some extent provide cases where some potential conflicts were restrained due to the fear of the repercussions of the taboos' effects. There were cases according to some participants that were either neutralised or completely restrained by the direct fear of the eventualities in the event that blood and property were lost. The theory to some extent allowed too much leverage for the commission of crimes before either the society moved in or transgressors felt the punishment. Deterrence theorists believe that if the penalty is severe, definite, and immediate, a sane person will measure the gains and losses before committing a crime and will be discouraged from violating regulations if the loss is greater than the gain. Therefore, it is this research's submission that had the penalties from the traditional taboos been definite and immediate, probably cases of violations would have been either reduced or completely avoided. However, to some extent, this theory was relevant to this study.

The general perception and belief sustained by various scholars; Gelfand (1979), Bozongwana (1983), Haralambos and Holborn (2000), Ffukwa (2001) and Chigidi (2009) that taboos are instruments of socialisation and social control lodged with emotion of fear could not be proved in totality. Rather, it was observed that society has become selective in the recognition of taboos and other sacred artefacts. Selectivity in the recognition of taboos to some extent depended on the following amongst others; level of education/literacy, level of development and civilisation, type of media used at home, area of residence, type of church affiliated to and family background regarding culture.

The Simmel Organismic World view, which argues that conflict is functionally constructive to correct challenges in society might have been proved right as it was reported by some participants that some violence and actions were merely perpetuated to instil fear, pain and revenge in the rivals rather than to effect societal change.

In as far as using taboos as a conflict restraint measure in this study; the Structural-Functional theory has also failed to confirm its hypothesis explained in Chapter Three. Instead, what has been proved to have worked in this study was that the theory was abused by those in power to give good reason for inequalities and describe the significance of their contribution to society. The argument by Parsons that the origin of social action was voluntarism was not visible in this research as some conflict perpetrators confessed to having been coerced into conflicts by various factors; poverty, need for security, need to disprove a claim, and physical coercion. Again, (Knapp, 1994)'s assertion that people's actions are oriented by values and norms around them is out of the question as no social action was ever influenced by norms and values of any culture as he had claimed,

What is also worrying with this theory is that while Structural-Functionalists in society believed that education plays an important role to the smooth running of society, in this case, it has actually helped erode some of the societal ideals leading to the eruption of conflicts. The theory does not, according to this study, not socialise the public to the technique and thinking skills required to exploit their capabilities, and train them to be high-quality people relating well with others, it also socialises people into violence as a corrective measure as was noted in the study under review.

5.22 Summary

In this chapter, results that were obtained from the ground were presented, analysed and interpreted accordingly. All the data that was gathered in the field was presented thematically and in line with the research objectives. A critical analysis of the results was conducted in line with the key themes that had been identified earlier. After the analysis, the same results were interpreted thematically as well. Realising that there were new issues that were established in the results, they were noted. At the end the guiding theories were analysed to see whether they were relevant and feasible in as far as this study is concerned.

Chapter Six

CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

6.1 Introduction

This chapter simply focuses on the conclusions that have been deduced by the study. It also looks at the recommendations that are made in respect to each objective and research question. Finally, the chapter also presents some of the noted areas for future research in this area of endogenous conflict prevention and resolution.

6.2 Conclusion

The study supported by various findings, established that taboos are a system of setting apart a person, an object, or a place as sacred to achieve conservation, respect and continuity. In view of the conflicts that were experienced in the areas under study over the period, the study also observed that to some extent, it was necessary to explore the rationale of employing some of the taboos to restrain some of the conflicts.

From the literature in chapter two, various scholars; Thody, Pfukwa, Tatira, Gelfand and Kilonzo and others presented conflicting viewpoints about their understanding of taboos. However, the study concludes that taboos are both an effective regulatory mechanism and a measure made of falsehoods to control the behaviour of people. It is further concluded that ultimately, taboos achieve the same end goal: that of achieving peace, harmony, development and tolerance. Various potential cases of violence were controlled by the taboos.

It is further concluded that while taboos are still relevant and in existence, they are being overshadowed by other institutions of socialisation. This is evident in their daily usage in

most households in a manner where the general picture depicted is that of domination by other cultures like Christianity and institutions of socialisation like churches and schools. Taboos are still in existence and only need to be extracted from other dominions to ensure visibility and relevance.

It can further be concluded that the belief in taboos is selective and circumstantial as some people chose to recognise the importance of the taboos when they go to their rural homes where there are institutions and artefacts considered sacred. Whenever they are in urban areas, they ignore even the cemeteries that they fear in the rural areas. It is further concluded that the fear and value attached to some of the taboos depend on the area, time and people involved. If the taboos were applied in the mining and farming areas where there are people of either Malawi or Mozambican origin, they carried more weight as these people are associated with either black magic or stronger traditional beliefs. On the contrary, if the same taboos were applied either in the urban areas or some other places, they carry no value as most people cared not about the taboos' in the urban areas and that there are no particular groups of people who are associated with strong traditional beliefs except in exceptional cases.

Another conclusion that can be made is that traditional taboos are an important facet in the lives of the people, the world over ever since time immemorial. This is in view of the fact that most of the order, harmony, peace, and development were a result of these taboos. The study further concludes that such an important social practice could not just be thrown out for the sake of modernity. What perhaps is needed is to develop the taboo system in tandem with the prevailing times by considering metaphors and signs that are pertinent and accustomed to today's young people through some sustained approach.

6.3 Recommendations

This section of the thesis presents recommendations based on the research findings. The study recommends that the belief in spells could be applied through socialisation by employing such establishments as; the family, traditional religious structures, schools and other effective civil society organisations. This is in view of the fact that most Shona people fear curses and have a strong belief in supernatural powers. However, it is recognised that with the advent of globalisation, societies need to move with time and embrace modernity through the recognition and respect of some of the basics of contemporary conflict resolution approaches.

It is further recommended that it be the primary responsibility of the families to teach their children the role and relevance of taboos despite the influence of the media. Similarly, children could also be re-oriented in their traditional systems through the use of uncles, aunts and grandfathers and grandmothers so that they do not forget their traditions and systems. This is in view of the fact that there are some communities especially Chiweshe and Madziva communal areas that still have a strong belief in traditional and cultural values. Therefore, a complete removal of the taboos' belief may be a challenge. The study also recommends that the church institution could also help re-institute such traditions as important in society rather than demonise as satanic. The same effort could also be complimented by traditional leadership in respective communities.

The study further recommends that the society, supported by relevant government systems could embark on what is termed 'sustained inculcation' of ideologies into the masses. In the long term, some of these traditional taboos could find their way back on the scene though acknowledging that not all taboos are still relevant. It only requires some political will and a

positive policy pronouncement on the part of the authorities. This is not to say that order will only be restored if society reverts back to the ‘glorious days of the dark continent’ as some of the taboos no-longer have any place in the 21st century Zimbabwe. It is further recommended that there be a modification and re-engineering of some of the taboos so that they are more palatable to the intended class of minors only as a restraining measure. This could be achieved by designing some as;

‘Ukarara nemukadzi asina kubvuma, unoora nhengo dzako’

If you rape a woman, your private parts rot.

‘Ukarara nemumwe murume uri murume, unokokonyara musana’

If you become intimate with a fellow man, your back gets deformed.

‘Ukarara nemusikana uchiri mudiki, unorwarwa nebande’

If you have sex while you are still young you will suffer from herpes.

This re-engineering and modification is in view of the study’s earlier realization that taboos are ‘traditional falsehoods meant to regulate society’.

6.4 Areas for Further Research

The study sought to establish the nexus between traditional taboos and conflict prevention. Indeed that enquiry was completed and several issues, controversial and non-controversial were raised. However, after an analysis of all the data, it was observed that there is an area which the study had not answered. Though it was not at the core of the study objectives, it may be necessary to have it explored for the benefit of future researchers, scholars, policy makers, traditional leaders and the entire society at large.

A research could be conducted to establish how modernity and traditional taboos could be modified to merge so that they exist side by side for the purpose of preserving taboos from

extinction. It is acknowledged that modernity has come so fast and powerful that taboos may not stand a chance, but if researched, there must be a solution that marries modern technology to the taboos' existence and relevance while also recognising human rights and the rule of law.

There could also be another research on how the Zimbabwean education curricula could be re-designed to accommodate traditional system so that children could start learning about taboos from an early age in pre-school right up to tertiary education. This curriculum could be modelled along the same lines that Citizenship Education and Conflict Transformation is designed and imparted in all tertiary institutions in Zimbabwe. The idea behind curriculum re-design is to ensure that most of the contemporary basic needs and practices are included.

6.5 Summary

The chapter focused on the conclusions that were deduced by the study and the recommendations that were also made in respect to each objective and research question. The chapter also presented some of the noted areas for future research in this area of endogenous conflict prevention and resolution.

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APPENDIX 1

PARTICIPANT CONSENT

STUDY TITLE: Taboo Systems, a Conflict Restraint in the Political Feud in Zimbabwe. An Exploration of Mazowe and Shamva Districts, Post-Independence.

RESEARCHER: Obediah Dodo

Dear Participant

I am a PhD Conflict Resolution student at the University of Lusaka. I want to conduct a research study in the area of traditional taboos with a view to understand the role of taboos in society and especially in conflict situations. Precisely, the study intends to find out if taboos have any place in either instigation or prevention of conflicts in local society. This study is also a prerequisite to complete my degree of study.

As one of the identified participants, I therefore seek your consent to go ahead with my interviews. However, your participation remains voluntary. Your identity will not be used in the write-up and the data will be handled confidentially.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Participant's signature: ----- Date: -----

Researcher's signature: ----- Date: -----

APPENDIX 2

CONSENT FOR AUDIO RECORDING

STUDY TITLE: Taboo Systems, a Conflict Restraint in the Political Feud in Zimbabwe. An Exploration of Mazowe and Shamva Districts, Post-Independence.

RESEARCHER: Obediah Dodo

Dear Participant

I am a PhD Conflict Resolution student at the University of Lusaka. I want to conduct a research study in the area of traditional taboos with a view to understand the role of taboos in society and especially in conflict situations. This study is also a prerequisite to complete my degree of study.

As one of the identified participants, I therefore seek your consent to record on tape this discussion using my cellular phone for later transcription on paper. The use and storage of the data will be confidential.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Participant's signature: - ----- **Date**-----

Researcher's signature: ----- **Date** -----

Appendix 3 (Letter)



UNIVERSITY
OF
LUSAKA

Plot No. 37413, off Alick Nkato Road, Mass Media, P. O. Box 36711, Lusaka
Ph. +260 211 233407, 258409, Fax. +260 211 233409, E-mail: ictar@zamnet.zm, unilus@zamnet.zm

All correspondence should be addressed to the rector

935 Unit F Seke
CHITUNGWIZA

+263 772 910 482
obedodo@gmail.com

20 January 2014

The Provincial Administrator
Mashonaland Central Province
BINDURA

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Cc: District Administrators- Mazowe
Shamva

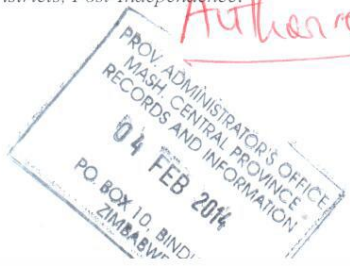
PERMISSION TO CONDUCT AN ACADEMIC RESEARCH ON TRADITIONAL TABOOS IN MAZOWE AND SHAMVA

The above subject matter refers.

I am a Doctoral student at the University of Lusaka, Zambia pursuing a Doctor of Philosophy in Endogenous Conflict Resolution. I would like to conduct an academic research in your province specifically looking at the role of traditional taboos in regulating people's behaviour and possibly establish how taboos could be made relevant in this regard.

My thesis topic reads: *Taboo Systems as a Conflict Restraint in The Political Feud in Zimbabwe. An Exploration of Mazowe and Shamva Districts, Post-Independence.*

Authorised



The duration of the data collection period in the districts is expected to last -2 months and will be done in liaison with the respective traditional leaders. Data will be collected through formal interviews and Focus Group Discussions with participants in the selected areas through snowballing and emergent sampling methods. At each centre, 5 people will be interviewed and at least 1 FGD will be conducted. At the end of the study, a draft compilation of the findings will be availed to your office for your information. All the areas that will be covered and the target population are shown below. Also find a copy of the questions that will be asked to participants attached on this letter.

	CENTRE	DATE	POP	FACILITATOR	VENUE
1	Gweshe	Upon approval	15	Researcher	Gweshe Pry sch
2	Jingamvura	U/A	15	Researcher	B/C
3	Bare	U/A	15	Researcher	Bare Pry Sch
4	Glendale	U/A	15	Researcher	Tsungubvi Community Hall
5	Mazowe Mine Jumbo	U/A	15	Researcher	Mine creche
6	Wadzanayi	U/A	15	Researcher	Wadzanayi Community Hall
7	Goora	U/A	15	Researcher	Goora B/C
8	Mutumba	U/A	15	Researcher	Mutumba B/C
9	Musiiwa	U/A	15	Researcher	Musiiwa B/C
10	SOS	U/A	15	Researcher	SOS Pry Sch
			150		

Thank you in advance.

Signed: 

Obediah Dodo (63-922058-X18)

APPENDIX 4



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OF
LUSAKA

Plot No. 17413, off Alick Nkata Road, Mass Media, P. O. Box 36711, Lusaka
Ph: +260 211 233407, 358409, Fax: +260 211 233409, E-mail: ictar@zamnet.zm, unilus@zamnet.zm

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20 January 2014

The Provincial Administrator
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Cc: District Administrators- Mazowe -
Shamva

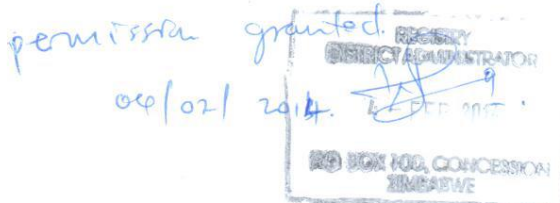
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10	SOS	U/A	15	Researcher	SOS Pry Sch
			150		

Thank you in advance.

Signed: 

Obediah Dodo (63-922058-X18)

APPENDIX 5



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OF
LUSAKA

Plot No. 37413, off Alick Nkara Road, Mass Media, P.O. Box 36711, Lusaka
Ph: +260 211 233407, 258409, Fax: +260 211 233409, E-mail: ictar@zantnet.zm, unilus@zantnet.zm

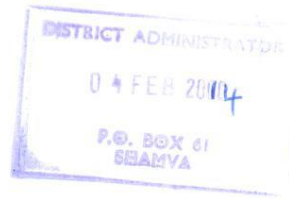
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935 Unit F Seke
CHITUNGWIZA

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The Provincial Administrator
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Cc: District Administrators- Mazowe

— Shamva —

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Appendix Taboo Definitions

'ngozi' – 'mpepho' (avenging spirits)

'Utsinye' – 'choipa/nkhanza' (cruelty)

'Uroyi – kuloza/ufiti' (witch-craft)

'Kuuraya – kupa' (murder)

'Kuripa – kuripira' (compensation)

'Kutya ropa – gopa gazi' (fear blood)

'Zviera – zodabwitsa' (taboos)

'Muvengi – mdani' (enemy)

'Kugarisana – kukhalitsana' (good neighbourliness)

'Mutorwa – wakunja/wachilendo' (stranger)

APPENDIX TABOO LIST

1. '*Gandanga haridye derere rinozotsvedza*' - A combatant does not eat okra; he/she will become sleepy and get exposed to an enemy.
2. '*Mukadzi anenhumbu, haonechitunha*' - A pregnant woman does not view a dead body.
3. '*Mukadzi wemunhu haarohwe, zvinoera*' - A married woman cannot be beaten by another man, it's sacred.
4. '*Murume haabvumirwe kurara nemukadzi mumunda, haazokohwe*' - It is forbidden for a man to have sexual intercourse on a farmland
5. '*Muuto haarare nemukadzi ari musango, anozotadza kunzvenga mbumburu*' - A combatant is not supposed to engage in sexual contact with a woman otherwise he will be killed by an enemy.
6. '*Remekedza midzimu yenzvimbo, kuti utungamirirwe*' - Respect local traditional cultures and systems so that you are protected and guided.
7. '*Remekedza vanhu vakuru, unoita munyama*' - Respect elders or you face misfortunes.
8. '*Ukaba unozvimba dumbu*' (Shona) - If you steal, your stomach bulges. - '*Ukaba utuba mimba*' (Nyanja)
9. '*Ukagara pamukova unoita mamota*' - If you sit on the doorway, you develop boils on the buttocks.
10. '*Ukananzva banga unoora mazino*' - If one licks a knife, teeth will rot.
11. '*Ukanhongwa mari unoita mamota*' - Do not pick money from the ground which is not yours, you develop boils.

12. '*Ukaona chamupupuri tiza, chinokutakura kunjuzu*' - Avoid whirl-winds, or it blows you to a river with mermaids.
13. '*Ukarova amai unotanda botso*' (Shona) -If you beat your mother, you face misfortunes. - '*Ukamenya amai, ukala wamusala*' (Nyanja)
14. '*Ukasvetuka mumwe, unokura musoro*' - If you jump over someone, he/she grows a big head.
15. '*Ukatundira mutsime, rinopwa*' - If you urinate into the hearth, it dries up.
16. '*Usabe mumunda memuvakidzani, unozvimba dumbu*' - Do not steal from a neighbour's field, you grow a bulging stomach.
17. '*Usabe, zvaunenge waba zvinonamira mumusoro wakazvitakura*' - Thou shall not steal or the stolen goods will get stuck on your head.
18. '*Usadongorere vanhu vasina kupfeka, unoita shohwera*'. - Do not peep into naked people; you develop pimples on your eyes.
19. '*Usadye wakarara, unomera muswe*' - If you take food lying on the floor, you develop a tail.
20. '*Usafamba negotsi, unenge uchizviendesa kuguva rako*' - Do not walk backwards; you will be directing yourself to your grave.
21. '*Usagara mumugwagwa, uniota mamota kumagaro*'. - Do not sit on the road; you develop boils on the back.
22. '*Usagara paduri, unouraya mukadzi wako*' - Do not sit on the pounding jug; you may kill your wife.
23. '*Usagara pamapfihwa, hauzoroora mukadzi*'. - Do not sit on the heath, you may not marry.
24. '*Usagare pachikuva unouraya mai vako*' - Do not sit on the hut clay-pot shelve, you may kill your mother.

25. '*Usagare padanda unouraya mukadzi*' - Do not sit on a log, otherwise you will kill your wife.
26. '*Usarova amai, unoita munyama*' (Shona)- Do not beat up your mother or you invite misfortunes.- '*Ukamenya amai ukala tsoka*' (Nyanja)
27. '*Usarova amai, unoita ngozi*'. - Thou shall not beat your mother, you face misfortunes.
28. '*Usatambidzane munyu mumaoko, munozovengana*'- Do not pass on salt directly into the others' hands, you create hatred.
29. '*Usatora chemumhu usina kupihwa, unoita munyama*' - Do not take someone's property without permission, you encounter misfortunes.
30. '*Usatore chinhu usina kupihwa, unoita jambwa*' - Do not take someone's property without consent, you face misfortunes.
31. '*Usauraye mumwe munhu, inoita ngozi*'.- Thou shall not kill another or avenging spirits get angry
32. "*Mukauraya munoita ngozi*" (Shona)- If you kill, avenging spirits will torment you.- '*Ukapha muntu uchita ngozi*' (Nyanja)
33. "*Musadeure ropa munotora mweya yakaipa kana kupenga*" - Don't kill or you face misfortunes like mental illness.
34. "*Mwana mudiki haatarise vakuru mumaziso*" - Children do not look directly into the eyes of elders.
35. "*Ukaba kana kutora chisiri chako unoita mhemherera*" - If one steals or robs, he/she goes mad.
36. "*Ukaba kana kutora chisiri chako, unoita munyama*" - If you steal, you face misfortunes.

37. “*Ukaita utsinye unoita munyama*” - If one is unnecessarily cruel, he/she invites misfortunes.
38. “*Ukaponda munhu unoita ngozi*” - If you kill a person, the spirits will seek to revenge.
39. “*Ukaponda unotevedzera zvaiita munhu wawakaponda*” - If you kill a person, you adopt mannerisms/ behaviour of the deceased.
40. “*Ukarevera mumwe nhema, unotsva kudenga*” - If you lie against another, you go to hell.
41. “*Ukatarisa munhu akafa mumaziso, anokutevera*” (Shona) -If you look into the eyes of a dead person, you continue seeing him/her thereafter. - ‘*Usayangana mtembo maso*’ (Nyanja)
42. “*Ukauraya munhu asina mhaka, unomuona kuhope*” - If you kill an innocent person, you see him/her in visions and dreams.
43. “*Ukauraya, unoripa nemwanasikana wako*” - If you kill, you compensate by surrendering your virgin daughter to the victim’s family.