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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

It is very interesting to read Zimbabwean situation from the inter-denominational lens within the perspective of liberation, reconciliation and national healing. My nationality and involvement as a faith consultant and pastor in Zimbabwe has influenced me to engage in this research. This study is born out of a problem that affects the human life and human dignity in Zimbabwe. The researcher will focus on liberation, reconciliation and nation healing from Zimbabweans' previous and current wounds. Liberation, reconciliation and national healing require different role players, but in this study the researcher will focus on inter-denominational faith leaders and leaders of Christian churches. Thus the role faith leaders and faith consultants played in post-colonial Zimbabwe will be discussed. The researcher will utilize inter-discipline to support the argument of the researcher, since it emanated from socio-economic-political challenges, and how the church can respond to these challenges.

1.1.2 Approach in the Research Study

This research emanates from the socio-politico-economic background of Zimbabwe; therefore, the approach will be from Political theology focusing on Liberation, reconciliation and national healing. This research will be anchored on faith and politics. The approach will be within a Theanthropocosmic (God-human being-and-natural environment).

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM STATEMENT

The research problem statement is that, after thirty eight years of independence in Zimbabwe, the majority of Zimbabweans are still wounded and have not healed. The church leaders have been and are reactive to Zimbabweans' political challenges. There is a very limited liberation and reconciliation in Zimbabwe. The socio-economic-political woundedness of Zimbabweans is the indicator that there are still reflections of colonial governance in the current government.

Zimbabweans emerged from a protracted guerilla war against colonial masters as a wounded people to form the new nation without dealing with post-war trauma. The reality is that, after thirty eight (38) years into independence, there is still no true liberation, it was only political and documented liberation but people were still wounded by the past and were further wounded by the post-independent situation. The period from 1999 to 2014 covers an important and crucial time in the life of Zimbabwean government and the ecumenical theology and churches. Great and earth-shattering events happened between these years such as operations *Gukurahundi* and *Murambatsvina*. Violence and a lot of blood was shed, perpetrated by the Zimbabwean state. It was during this period that the major opposition party MDC was founded. Unfortunately, the voice of the Church in Zimbabwe was divided. One voice spoke for the suffering majority and the other was in defense of the government ZANU-PF. Winn (1992:403) commends on Gutierrez's threefold analysis of liberation as follows:

- Firstly, political liberation. This deals with the liberation of the oppressed masses from those who suppress them.

- Secondly, human liberation. This deals with aspects of liberation of humanity, when humanity begins to undertake sensible responsibility for their own destiny, snatch the reins of their own development, and become the originators of a refurbished society with humankind.
- Thirdly, Liberation from sin. This is the origin of all separation, inequality and cruelty that includes oppression. Unfair circumstances usually do not occur by coincidence; human beings are responsible for them. However, this responsibility is not merely individual, private, and interior: it is also social, historical fact.

This study, rests on the understanding that in Zimbabwe liberation, is just at the first level, it has not yet reached the other two levels of liberation according to Winn's analysis of Gutierrez's threefold level of liberation. The study acknowledges that Zimbabweans are still suffering the effects of colonialism through neo-colonialism. As emeritus Archbishop Desmond Tutu (2012:483-484) said when he participated in reconciliation in Rwanda:

The history of Rwanda was typical of a history of "top dog" and "underdog". The top dog wanted to cling to its privileged position and the underdog strove to topple the top dog. When that happened, the new top dog engaged in an orgy of retribution to pay back the new underdog for all the pain and suffering it had inflicted when it was top dog. The new underdog fought like an enraged bull to topple the new top dog, storing in memory all the pain and suffering it was enduring forgetting that the new top dog was in its view only retaliating for all that it remembered to have suffered from when the underdog had been its master.

The same can be said of Zimbabwe, after thirty seven years, post-colonial Zimbabwe has painful history of the civil strife. Some examples of that are *Gukurahundi* (1983-1985), the fast Track Land Reform Program (2000); Operation *Murambatsvina* (2005); post-election violence in the period of 2002, 2005, 2008, 2013 and repressive media laws that gave people no voices. The once underdogs during the

colonial era who have been made to be top dogs after independence have assumed the behavior of the colonial top dogs through the above mentioned operations.

Gukurahundi is defined as a *shona* expression meaning ‘the rain that washes away the chaff before the spring rains’ (Brand, 1997:91). The North Korea trained 5th brigade that led to a series of bloody conflicts, resulting in scandalous and callous crimes that the new government of majority rule committed in Matabeleland and Midlands. It is alleged that in January 1983, there was mass murder (genocide), beating and destruction of property in most parts of Matabeleland and Midlands provinces and this was caused by the 5th Brigade. Furthermore, within a period of fourteen days, over two thousand civilians were murdered; their homesteads were reduced to ashes. People were killed through public executions. The government went silent on this report and both vice presidents are implicated on the operation of 5th brigade probably as a reward. These operations have wounded many people in Zimbabwe and the effects of these operations are reflected in the church and society today. The post-colonial government was built on this foundation and did not make an effort to engage in liberation, reconciliation and national healing.

There was also Operation *Murambatsvina*, whose main vendetta was to do away with all “illegal activities” in towns and growth points. Vending, illegal structures and illegal farming were some of the activities that the operation dealt with.

The fast track land reform Program of 2000, post-election violence in 2002, 2005, 2008, 2013 and repressive media laws gave people no voices. The country is rich in natural resources, minerals such as diamonds, platinum, gold etc., but sadly people are living in poverty due to the lack of character from the political leadership because

of alleged corruption scandals that are documented (http://www.pacweb.org/Documents/diamonds_KP/18_Zimbabwe-Diamonds - accessed 09/03/2014).

The other problem is also on the woundedness of the Zimbabwean populaces who are the (*imago Dei*) image of God and must have dignity and rights. There are also alleged cases of human rights violations, for example, repressive media laws in relation to the right of access to information, disenfranchisement in relation to citizenship and election rigging. As if this was not enough, cases of human vulnerability that include environmental degradation are still being witnessed. Human dignity has been tempered with, and this can be seen in that the majority of the Zimbabwean populace is poor, have no voting rights and are still living in fear. It is against such a background that this research will delineate the Zimbabwe's ecumenical church's mission especially when day in day out, people are crying out for divine intervention in their plight of protracted crisis of governance. The question that this research is asking is, where was the church leader when the people called for divine intervention? This leads the researcher to assess the Heads of Christians Denominations in Zimbabwe's role in addressing the crisis in question.

The ecumenical church in Zimbabwe have written pastoral letters, made press statements, engaged in social teachings calling people to unite in prayer, but the role of ecumenical Church to condemn evil and uphold righteousness, to speak the truth despite the opposition, be the guardian of the social and moral order, voicing for the voiceless, prophetic engagement and to stand as pace-setter needs to be done more effectively than before (Chimhanda and Dube, 2012:3). There is need for the church to be proactive and not only reactionary in dealing with political issues in Zimbabwe.

The church must also be prophetic in voicing for the voiceless, but there is always laguna in prophetic character of the church. This main problem can be divided into sub-problems as follows:

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION

The main problem statement leads the researcher to the research question, stated as: What can the church do to bring genuine liberation, reconciliation and nation healing of wounded people of Zimbabwe? The sub-questions circulate around the sub-problems of this research study are:

- What are the causes of the wounds imbedded in the Zimbabwean populace and how can they be addressed from a political theological approach?
- How can Zimbabweans journey together to bring about the full cycle of Guiterrerez's threefold liberation levels in Zimbabwe and be the originators of a new and fresh humanity and society?
- What method can be followed to heal the past and current wounds in Zimbabweans through the assistance of heads of Christian churches in Zimbabwe?
- How can the church be proactive rather than been reactive and vulnerable when tested on character by the corrupt government?
- What reconciliation is this study is propagating?

1.4 RESEARCH AIMS

Aim 1: To illustrate from the literature that Zimbabweans are wounded by the colonial and current socio-econo-political situation.

Aim 2: To explore the church's prophetic engagement in uniting Zimbabweans for the good of Zimbabwe through analyzing the link between church and state in socio-econo-political issues.

Aim 3: To highlight God's salvific plan for both the oppressor and the oppressed.

Aim 4: To propose theological framework on the issue of liberation, reconciliation and national healing that can be a springboard for the HOCD.

Aim 5: To advocate for an authentic reconciliation from biblical and extra perspectives.

1.5 HYPOTHESIS

The hypothesis of this research study is to make a contribution to the efforts of the church to find biblical and theological solutions on the issues of liberation, reconciliation and national healing in Zimbabwe, as this will help to uphold harmony and assist us to focus on God's mission.

1.6 METHOD OF RESEARCH

Qualitative research method is what the researcher chose to employ in this research study and this is due to the nature of the participant and the outcome the researcher intended to achieve at the end of this study. Creswell (2013:42-47) identifies the characteristics of qualitative research that include data collection through analysing writings, behaviour observation and conducting interviews. He further highlights a

problem that does not entirely escape the attempts of empirical type of research: it deals with investigating and deducing meaning from anything that can be heard, seen and understood. When this is being done, one's historical influence, upbringing, social milieu has a bearing in how one sees things. Research for this project will involve a combination of library, archives and interviews. We will follow a qualitative "transformative worldview." Creswell (2014:9) refers to a "transformative worldview" as follows:

A transformative worldview holds that research inquiry needs to be intertwined with politics and a political change agenda to confront social oppression at whatever levels it occurs. Thus, the research contains an action agenda for reform that may change lives of the participants, the institutions in which individuals work or live, and the researcher's life. Moreover, specific issues need to be addressed that speak to important social issues of the day, issues such as empowerment, inequality, oppression, domination, suppression, and alienation.

Qualitative research method consists of literature study, interviews and observation.

1.6.1 Literature Study

The study of literature was done so as to enrich the researcher's understanding of the topic at hand and also seeing what his predecessors wrote in relation to the topic. The term "literature" is employed to include anything appropriate to the topic being researched upon. This includes books, letters, journals, church documents, online postings and newspaper magazines. Literature review can be understood as a brief summative presentation of an author ideas systematically organised and presented. Leedy and Ormrod (2005:138) wrote that, the main purpose of reviewing literature is to appreciate what other scholars did, identify the research gap, bring out and critically analysing key issues that came from preceding studies thereby providing justification to the research topic at hand. According to Ncube (2011:13),

literature review shows that one has read widely around his/her chosen topic and it demonstrates the researcher's critical understanding of the topic under investigation.

Bell (1999:34) defines "literature review" as an informed assessment of the existing research on the topic under study. Krishnawami (1993:64) explains the purpose of reviewing literature as to identify data sources used by other researches and learn how others structure their reports. The same sentiments are also shared by Ary et al (1990:464), who reiterate that, "in literature review, the author of the project demonstrates from known to unknown but also how further he or she has grasped awareness of recent developments in the field under study". This section, according to Leedy (1995:5), unearths sources of data which the researcher may have come across. This will intern help me to recognise the gap in knowledge which this research will fill.

A rigorous evaluation of literature linked to the area of study was done. Books, professional journals in education, specialists' reports and newspapers, were thoroughly studied. The DIALOGUE Search at the University of South Africa in Pretoria and Zimbabwe libraries were also done.

There exist standard reference materials on the Zimbabwean history of conflicts and peace talks in books, abstracts, articles in newspapers etc. that will be reviewed. The literature search revealed that there is indeed a wealth of literature on Theology and Prophetic Theology about the situation in Zimbabwe. University of South Africa's library will be utilized to find information from books about conflicts and how these conflicts started and how they were resolved.

1.6.2 Qualitative research methods

Johnson and Christensen (2004:359) state that qualitative research is a type of research that depends on non-numerical data such as words and pictures. It banks on the inductive style of scientific techniques, and the main objective of this type of research is exploration or discovery (Ary et al., 2006:450).

1.6.2.1 Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with several heads of churches, local leaders and village leaders about forgiveness, reconciliation and nation healing in Zimbabwe. The intentions of these interviews was to gain a picture about, how authentic reconciliation and national healing in Zimbabwe can be initiated or achieved by heads of churches in Zimbabwe

1.6.2.2 Observation

Observation was another method used to collect data. Briggs and Coleman (2007:237) assert that observation is a very reliable, malleable, trustworthy method of gathering data. This is because it differs from other methods in that it does not rely on the personal views of respondents but gets clear evidence through observation or through video recordings. It's an all-inclusive method regarding the reflections of daily proceedings and the explanations and construction of meaning.

According to Cohen et al. (2007:396), the unique characteristic of observation is that it gives the researcher a chance to collect "live" data from naturally occurring situations. It is categorized as open-minded, because the researcher does not seek

to influence the situation or subjects, does not ask questions for the subjects, nor do they intentionally make fresh incitements.

The researcher when observing the site or events of study is either relatively an outsider or in the case of ethnography, a participant. The main benefit of conducting observations is that it is flexible for the researcher to change on his concentration as new information come to light. The main disadvantage may be that the researcher may modify what people say and do as well as how the proceedings unfold. Having footage of the events may sometimes be problematical. Taking notes might not be enough to capture all that the researcher will be observing. From information obtained through observation, the researcher creates an intricate yet combined picture of how people spend their time (Leedy and Ormrod 2001:158 &195). In this case, the observer will observe the situation in Zimbabwe and record the attempts made by heads of churches to reconcile and heal the nation in Zimbabwe.

1.6.2.3 Documents analysis

The following documents will be studied and analysed by the researcher as per researcher aims: Church conferences and synods documents will be studied and analysed to find out what heads of the churches have been saying or mandated to say by their denomination on Zimbabwean situation.

1.6.2.4 Population

The population for this study are the people in Zimbabwe and the Zimbabweans in the diaspora. The people in the rural and urban areas will be observed to assess their conditions of life and how their way of living was affected by conflict in Zimbabwe. The head of denominations are the focal point of the main role players in this research study. Mainline churches and African Independent churches will be the investigative centres for the work done or ought to be done by head of denominations in Zimbabwe.

1.7 SUMMARY

It is evident from the above discussion that the issue of national healing and peace building necessitates a theological paradigm in that in many cases the people who are affected by poor governance are those masses who cannot stand for themselves and the church must act as their voice. This will then be in conformity with the objectives of the Heads of Christian Denominations in Zimbabwe even though practically it's not like that. For political healing and reconciliation to be a reality, necessary steps have to be followed. If reconciliation was possible in South Africa, Desmond Tutu also argues that reconciliation on political issues is also possible in Zimbabwe (<http://www.zimeye.org/?p=6122>. 25/06/09). The idea behind reconciliation and national healing is that people will live in harmony, respecting each other.

CHAPTER 2

THE ROLE OF HEADS OF CHRISTIAN ORGANISATIONS ON RECONCILIATION, LIBERATION AND NATIONAL HEALING IN ZIMBABWE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The researcher in this chapter seeks to make an assessment of the existing literature using a thematic organizational format to Literature Review. Issues of liberation, reconciliation and national healing are going to be discussed from a theological point of view. Technical terms such as, healing and reconciliation are going to be defined and their significance spelt out. The history of the Heads of Christian Organizations in Zimbabwe will be obtained from the constitutions or documentary records of this institution. Issues of national healing and reconciliation will be explored from a historical and theological perspective, as well as, from the use of external sources. This is relevant in Zimbabwe today following the appointment of the National Healing and Reconciliation Commission on 8 March 2016. For Zimbabwe, quite a number of writings have been published but still there is need to deepen the contextual relevancy of the subject, as well as bridge the knowledge gaps between the academia and the practitioner of the process. Many books and articles have been published on this subject but there is need to contextualise this study in relation to what has been researched on prior to this study, recognising any convergence or divergence of ideas in order to address the knowledge gaps. The position of the researcher relative to the literature will be established.

2.2 THE BRIEF BACKGROUND ON THE ROLE OF CHRISTIAN ORGANISATIONS ON ZIMBABWEAN SITUATION

In this section, a brief background of the Zimbabwean situation will be highlighted and discussed intensively. The prophetic witnesses in Zimbabwe will be discussed. Moreover, the relationship between church and state will be discussed focusing on African in general and Zimbabwe in particular. The section will also focus mainly on church and state.

2.2.1 Prophetic witnessing as one of the functions of the Church

From time immemorial, religion and politics have been closely related to each other. Religion intervenes in politics, and in many cases, religion colludes and shows complicity with the state authority. Johnstone (1988:122) says:

Inasmuch as both religion and politics are social institutions and consist of sub-groups, norms, and people, they interact with one another; they sometimes overlap in their functions; they often involve the same people; they seek commitment and involvement from the same people.

According to Carl and Moyo (1998:74-79), church and state relations in many African countries date back to the colonial period. In Zimbabwe and some other African nations, the Christian Church has played a pivotal role.

Sachikonye (2012:148) asserts that Zimbabwe is a society that has experienced both political violence between rival parties and state violence against civilians for at least half a century. The church through such bodies as the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Rhodesia (CCJPR now CCJPZ) was pivotal in collecting and disseminating information about human rights violations and the killing of innocent citizens during the civil war. Sachikonye (2012:148) assists in highlighting how the

State's armed forces trampled on basic human rights, tortured, maimed and killed thousands of civilians, in their war against "dissidents" (Sachikonye, 2012:148).

Mukonori (2012:175) postulates that, the ten years before and after independence in Zimbabwe, negatively affected the Matabeleland and Midlands provinces. The decade prior to independence witnessed an increasingly fierce fighting of liberation, whilst the period after independence caused further hardships and suffering in Matabeleland and in parts of the Midlands through *gukurahundi*. The people in those provinces, who had survived the protracted war of liberation, soon faced yet another orgy of violence, this time being perpetuated by their own government. It was a matter of being thrown out of the pan into the furnace (Mukonori, 2012:75). The Matabeleland people still feel that national healing and reconciliation has not been achieved. The affected people are physically, psychologically and emotionally traumatised even to this day. This pain is inflicted upon them by the ZANU PF government. It is most likely that if the unhealed pains are left untreated are a time-bomb that will explode sooner or later.

Kaulemu (2011:101) indicates that the crisis in Zimbabwe is caused by our political leaders who refuse to publicly accept that the Zimbabweans are in a crisis. When they do, they describe it in ways that exonerate Zimbabweans, from taking full responsibility to resolve their crisis. What Kaulemu is saying is that, if we first accept that we are in a crisis, we will then have the task of identifying the challenges and correct them. This identification will then lead to proper diagnosis being done. Since Zimbabwe is at crossroads, hopes of sovereignty and development are yet to be fulfilled. It is therefore critical to use the above writings to see how best Zimbabwe can move forward.

Aderibigbe and Aiyegboyin (1997:7) claim that, religious conviction is vital in the lives of people. Religious convictions are well-known, and their multidimensional presence world-over cannot be ignored. Strenski, (2006:44-60) quoted a sociologically based definition of religion by Emile Durkheim, which viewed “religion as a unified system of beliefs and practices which unite into one moral community. It also suggests a religious origin to socio-political associations with their set of rules and regulations”.

Ellis and Gerrie (1998:184), assert that religious groups can fall into the danger of being inward-oriented or outward-oriented. An inward oriented religion usually concentrates on the spirituality and worship of an individual. These types of people usually divorce themselves from social activities like voting during elections. On the other hand, an outward-oriented religion is fully active in social issues and such types of people actively participate in politics. The relationship between politics and religion is seen in that religion gives morals to its adherents. The Bible for Christians, Koran for Muslims gives believers a set of morals to be followed (Love 2006: 621). On the other hand, politics is viewed as the acquisition and use of power. As such, politics deals with issues of governance and how the leaders obtain votes.

Love’s (2006:621) definition of politics concurs with the one given by Nkem Onyekpe. Onyekpe (1998:16) defines the term politics as the struggle for power, which itself is the authority to determine or formulate and execute decisions and policies. These decisions and policies must be accepted by the society and it is the struggle for power of governance, especially executive authority. However, Onyekpe (1998:16) gives a caveat to the first part of his definition. According to him, the struggle for or the acquisition of power and the reaction of the society to it, depend greatly on the level of political development of the country. In an undemocratic society, it does not really matter whether the decisions and policies are accepted by

the society. Thus, the value of political power or politics leaves little or no room for the people to have input, except where democracy has already been entrenched (Nkem Onyekpe 1998:16). The same sentiments were shared by Philpott (2007:511) when he says, the relationship between politics and religion is best analysed in the way how religion can strongly influence which party a person votes for, and even campaigns for, and on the religious end, political views can play a major role in religious conversion. In other words, it is not uncommon for people to change religions or denominations in order to find beliefs fit for their political affiliations (Philpott, 2007:511). For example, when one stays within a Christian community, the assumption is that the Christian beliefs will influence and shape the community's view and understanding of life. This is irrespective of whether the people become Christians or not. There is a contagious effect in churches, where the views of church members and church leaders influence other members' actions and beliefs (Gilbert 1993:1).

Chitando and Manyonganise, (2011) claimed that the 1960s and 1970s war of liberation in Zimbabwe divided the Church. This is seen in that, for others, institutional racial discrimination warranted the taking up of arms. The war was justified on the basis that, it has to deal with wicked and obscene system. Some people believed that the church was supposed to be holy, leaving a peaceful life and condemning violence and these people condemned the church for involving itself in the struggle for liberation. Chitando and Manyonganise, (2011) examine the response of the Church in Zimbabwe to the 2008 political crisis that was precipitated by violence, economic decay and social strife. They explored Church-State relations in Zimbabwe stressing the serious waves of violence following Mugabe's defeat at the 2008 polls. Mugabe and his henchman resorted to naked violence.

On the challenges accompanying the Churches engagement with the political crisis, Chitando and Manyonganise (2011:13) argued that Zimbabweans could literally not sing the Christian songs in their own homes, as state agents and the police brought political divisions right into the holy grounds of the church. The Zimbabwean crisis had serious effects even in the sacred sphere. Chitando and Manyonganise (2011:14) argue that preaching in many congregations continued to be heaven centred instead of seriously speaking against issues of political violence which are an essential part of the *mission-Dei* (mission of God). Theological inflexibility forced the Church to neglect its social responsibility by focusing on the next world. The church became other-worldly; it was nowhere to be found for it was supposed to be the voice for the voiceless by challenging the State on political violence. However, the article did not focus on any particular denomination.

Togarasei (2009:149) argues that,

“throughout the history of the Church, the Bible has been read and interpreted to address the existential needs of the Christian community. It has been used to justify slavery, to stop slavery, to justify colonialism, to fight for liberation and even to justify apartheid, as memories of apartheid South Africa tell.”

As such, the Holy book (Bible) can best be termed an all-weather book but the bible need not to be a thermometer but thermostat, it must not only read the temperature without changing it, it must read and change the temperature like the thermostat does. During the 2000 land reform programme, people looked into the Bible for direction. According to Togarasei (2009:149-150), issues of Church tradition were ignored the Church, as a community, the Church re-read the Bible, the Bible becomes central in their teachings. Furthermore, Togarasei (2009:150) argues that,

even though the church did not publicly comment on the land reform, congregants in different churches deliberated about the land reform programme at different meetings. The land reform programme was fast tracked by the Zimbabwe's government and farms were violently invaded. Many unemployed youths joined in the invasion of farms, beating up white farm owners without even understanding what they were doing. Togarasei (2009:149-150) provides an interpretation of the Bible that will assist in assessing the possibility of authentic liberation, reconciliation and national healing of political issues in Zimbabwe. It will be important to link the church and state in general to the African perspective on church and state relationship, because African people have the way they think in all spheres of life.

2.2.2 Africa's perspective on church and state relations

Schreiter and Jorgensen (2013), claim that, there is hope, for the Christian gospel is a significant contributing force to the quest for justice, peace and reconciliation. The Gospel is that the Kingdom of God has come near (Mark 1:15). Witnessing to the Gospel is inseparable from the daily witness Christians are called to give in solidarity and unity for the common good. But sin denies the worth and dignity of human beings, disrupts community, and hampers the flow of life. The sin of human beings contributes to, and belongs within, a wider context: a disorder which affects the whole of creation. Paul expresses this graphically: "The whole creation has been groaning and labours with birth" (Rom 8:22-24). In this context, giving birth can be seen as an aspect of healing. Christians are called to be a healing and reconciling community. Most of the earlier theological literature on reconciliation focused on what has been called the "vertical" dimension of reconciliation, that is, God's

reconciliation with humanity. Indeed, this vertical dimension constitutes the central Christian narrative of what God has done for humanity.

For many Africans, Christianity shapes people's thinking. What this means is that, the Church has the power to influence the socio-political and economic environment of any nation. Lenski (1963:247) argues that the church is vital in that it functions as a "playing ground" to educate and equip people so that they participate in different worldly organisations. The same sentiments are also echoed by Verba et al, (1995:282) who says, "Religious organizations provide critical public skills, which will later give birth to political activity." Furthermore, apart from the skills that one gets from Church, religious institutions nurture worldly undertakings by means of networking. Greeley, (1997:67), postulates that it is from the Church that people are taught about secular volunteering. As seen here, the church is playing an important role in encouraging its members to be actively involved in social voluntary activities.

Hastings (1926:40) argues that it was during the colonial era that the majority of churches were established by missionaries in Africa. Sadly, the origins of these missionary preachers were the same with those of colonisers. These missionaries came from France, Portugal and Britain. These missionary churches were made to be in good books with the government. This later led to the church being identified with the colonisers and missionaries were either voluntarily or forced to align with the State. This benefited both the missionary Church and the State but the State remained with more influencing powers.

During the 19th century, missionaries from Britain, France and Portugal did their best in trying to shape African countries. According to Barrett (1968:86), the massive socio-political and religious power in Africa by white preachers who brought the

Gospel to Africa was similar to that which the Church has in Europe during the middle Ages. The same thoughts were also uttered by Adoyo (1990:27) who asserts that, it was very normal for colonial administrators and missionaries to form treaties and the same treaties would then be made between colonised Africans and missionaries. It was normal for European countries to interfere in African politics as they were encouraged to do so by missionaries. A good example of this according to Gray (1966: 467) was the Church Missionary Society (CMS), a missionary arm of the British Anglican Church which was particularly influential in this case.

Ayandele, (1966:139-140), says, in the then Nyasaland (now Malawi) the white preachers from Scotland played a major role in making Malawi integrated to be a British colony and this did not go well with the Arabs and Portuguese for they wanted to assimilate Malawi into their own empires. Even though European colonisers and the white missionary preachers worked together, it was at a later stage that they thought of learning native dialects, giving guidance to Africans and also interpreting accords to them. This caused some missionaries to gain African trust and these missionaries taking advantage of this, influenced the systems to their advantage. King Moshesh of Basutoland (now Lesotho) is a very good example for he was influence such that he agreed to make Basutoland a Britain colony. This was a bitter pill to swallow for South Africa because its Boers wanted to occupy it. All this was spearheaded by missionaries (Berman 1975: 529).

Even though some missionaries were good to the locals, they failed to resist the powers of colonial governments such that they ended up being puppets of the colonial governments. For Barrett, "the use of religion by colonizers as a way of gaining social control dates back from time immemorial" (1968: 87). Churches were seen as places of indoctrinating the colonised people so that they become docile and

unsuspicious (ibid). Even though they never said it publicly, missionaries approved ways by which the colonisers used religion and the Bible to rationalise their political powers.

Even though missionaries saw and knew the intentions of the colonizers, they could not stop them possibly because they were of the same race (Hastings 1979:94). Some examples of these colonial injustices are seen through the missionaries colluding with British colonialists in divesting indigenous black people of their land. For example, early missionaries (Jesuits, Dominicans etc.) were part of the Pioneer Column and acquired vast tracts of land (mission farms) which were already inhabited by indigenous people. Such action made black people, non-persons and invisible. There are some Churches in many African countries that did not side with the colonisers at all. Churches like Presbyterians, Anglicans stood for the truth and were treated with suspicion by the colonisers. In South Africa, the Dutch reformed was well known to be an agent of colonisation regime but this was condemned by other English speaking churches. These churches were black listed by the colonisers. During the struggle for independence in Zimbabwe and some African countries, mission churches reacted differently when they were encouraged to join hands in the fight for African independence. Churches that had closer relationships the colonial States struggled to join the war of independence as this was going to be seen as betrayal. As such, these churches became apolitical for a moment but deep down, they thought that the colonial States were God ordained and must not be challenged.

Some churches took an anti-racial approach and challenged other members to remove the colonial veil so that they join hands in leading an anti-colonial campaign (Hastings 1979:102). This was popularised by Black African Catholic students who

were in France. These students openly spoke out that it was every Christian's duty world-over to fight colonisation, decolonise those colonised states. This occurred around 1956.

J. Deotis Roberts (2005:108) offered reconciliation as a valid theme for the framework of theology. According to Roberts,

Christians are called to be agents of reconciliation. We have been able to love and forgive . . . The assertion that all are 'one in Christ Jesus' must henceforth mean that all slave-master, servant-boss, inferior-superior frames of reference between blacks and whites have been abolished.

For Roberts, the "black experience" motif does not mean that every Christian is not automatically "heaven bound" due to being black, poor, or oppressed. Neither is a wealthy white person barred from heaven on the basis of financial status. Deotis J Roberts was responding to James Cone's assertion that only black people can define the terms on which reconciliation with white people can be achieved. To this point, Roberts believed that blacks must hold up the possibility of interracial cooperation and fellowship.

The Catholic bishops wrote pastoral letters on the progression of society. The pastoral letters were respected because they were written by bishops and people would respond positively to the implementations proposed in these letters. Some of these letters were "God hears the cry of the Poor". This was written in response to the so called 'Operation Restore Order'. The Zimbabwe Catholic Bishop Commission (ZCBC) also wrote a pastoral letter on National healing and Reconciliation (2009:11). The leaders of these churches were colonials. It was difficult for these churches to have advocacy because of the set structure. Churches were closely monitored by

colonial governments. Churches were being established everywhere so colonial governments were afraid that if churches are not closely monitored, they may turn against the government. The Church was limited into being a social entity only, upon request, providing education or health services. Churches could not deal with political cases and injustices that were taking place.

2.2.3 Church and State relations in Zimbabwe

There are many different religions in Zimbabwean and it is because of these various religions that Zimbabwe has witnessed weak and compromised decision making when it comes to policies. There is also another school of thought that holds the view that says politics and religion must be separated in Zimbabwe; meaning that the two must not interfere with each other. In Zimbabwe the church is actively involved in politics directly or indirectly. The four main church bodies are Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ), Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC), Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference (ZCBC), and the Apostolic Christian Council of Zimbabwe (ACCZ). These four organisations joined together to form the Heads of Christian Denominations in Zimbabwe (HOCDZ).

Lloyd Sachikonye (2011:34-46) traces the roots of Zimbabwe's present-day violence. He also highlights the consequences of *Gukurahundi* violence and the effects of Operation *Murambatsvina*/Clean Up. According to him, the consequences of these events run wide and deep as such any future quest for justice and reconciliation will depend on the country's willingness to face the truth about the violence and hatred that have infected its past and present. The same sentiments were also shared by Kaulemu D (2004:81) who said, "... at independence, Zimbabwe did little to

rehabilitate itself from the habits of violence prevalent during the liberation war. We have assumed that violence is a tool that we can take up, use and drop at any time. History has proved that this is not so..." Such insights from these books will be useful since Zimbabwe needs transformation from damages of violence, trauma and fear. The role of the HOCD will be assessed especially seeing that it has a duty of exorcising demons of violence thereby preaching justice and reconciliation.

Throughout history, the church has closely worked with the State as such; the church has been contributing to issues to do with nation building. The church has been voicing on some of the challenges that the nation has been experiencing in the past. Since the church plays a pivotal role in Zimbabwean politics, theologically, it is proper for it to voice on issues bedevilling the nation even though it must not be political in outlook. According to Skelton (1985: 86), the church's response to the after the 1963 Unilateral Declaration of Independence was not very clear. Denominations differed in the way they reacted. They were divided with some churches supporting the guerrilla war but others against it. Others supported the internal settlement yet some even joined hands with Smith. Bishops Skelton and Lamont of the Anglican and Catholic churches, respectively, took principled stands against the Rhodesian regime and were in support of the guerrilla war (Skelton, 1985:86). When the Anglican Bishop (Skelton) went back to his country, After Bishop Skelton left Zimbabwe, the Anglican Church joined the Rhodesian Society and the two integrated more into the Rhodesian society and became increasingly supportive of the UDI regime (Lapsely, 1986:78).

Mapuranga & Chitando (2008:119-134) state that, it needs to be known that in Zimbabwe church-state relations went from warm to very sharp differences from the time of independence to the re-emergence of nationalism in the country. The warmth

was generated by the feeling that the then Prime Minister, Robert Mugabe had enunciated a policy of reconciliation which was “consistent with Christian teachings on forgiveness”; incorporating the church into partnership with the state.

Maposa (2012:90) feels “churches had proved to be handmaidens of Mugabe’s government since 1980 [even when the ZANU (PF) government] was bent on establishing a socialist society”. Some churches supported the state for fear of state reprisals although some ‘men and women of cloth’ meddled bravely in party politics hiding behind their pulpits, enduring ZANU (PF) ‘green bombers’ violent perpetration”. McLaughlin, (1997) argues that, in the rural wars, the Justice and Peace commission played an important role in talking to the guerrillas during the liberation war. Sadly, those who did the negotiations did so to fulfil their personal aggrandisement of which they should have done the negotiations on behalf of the church. The priests from the Roman Catholic Church sided with the guerrillas because of their church history and the pressures they received from the international community. Terence Ranger (2000:70-78) argues that, main line churches or protestant Churches had many converts and many of these early converts associated themselves with the Methodist Church. The Methodist Church was intrinsically political but reading the situation, the Church sided with Bishop Abel Muzorewa who advocated for internal settlement and was saying no to the liberation struggle. The post-independent Zimbabwean saw the President, Rev. Canaan Banana (an ordained Methodist) and the Prime Minister, Robert Mugabe (a lay Catholic) advocating for unity between the State and Church in building a new Zimbabwe (Herald newspaper, 1982).

In Zimbabwe, churches have made significant growth and are deep-rooted, but their objectives over the past 37 years have changed especially with regard to politics.

From around 1990 to 1997, churches were encouraged to participate in policy making, programs that encouraged education for everyone, (on citizenship, participation in constitution making process and holding the Members of Parliament to account on service delivery), and election monitoring. This is the time when Christian organisations like ZCC thought of having a Justice, Peace and Reconciliation (JPR) desk in 1993. From 1995 onwards, the ZCC and CCJP linked with other civic organisations to form the Church/NGO Civic Education Project. From there-on, the church kept on launching many projects that promoted peace and unity in communities. Such initiatives resulted in the birth of National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) in January 1998.

The church in Zimbabwe has been challenged by its own theological borders and the methods it has employed to understand its mandate within the contexts of these challenges. Hallencreutz & Moyo (1988:16) argue that relations of church-state have never been the same for they varied due to changing circumstances. The First ever referendum after independence was to be held in February 2000 and people were supposed to vote for or against the referendum. In 1999, HCDZ called for a meeting which helped them to come up with a 'united voice' with regards to the referendum. Media reports were quoted saying they were going to encourage Christians to cast their votes against the referendum because they wanted the referendum draft to be amended first (Daily News, 2000).

Verstraelen (1995:192) claims that the idea of forming the EFZ was mooted in 1962, at a meeting in Harare by Clyde W Taylor, the executive secretary of the Evangelical Foreign Missions Association. His message was that in the face of the rising tide of liberalism and ecumenicity, Evangelicals must join hands and hearts in a practical outworking of that spiritual unity that is already there in Christ. The second meeting

in Harare, October 1962, intended to explore the possibility of establishing the Evangelical Fellowship of Central Africa. To pursue the idea, two other meetings took place in 1963 in Lusaka and Choma (Verstraelen 1995:192). The meeting in Choma resolved that the uncertainties of the federation militated against the idea of an Evangelical Fellowship of Central Africa. Members at the meeting agreed that territorial fellowships be established.

When Evangelical of Zimbabwe was launched, Bhebhe (1988:321), listed the objectives of EFZ as follows:

- To provide a spiritual fellowship among evangelical Christians as a means of united action in promoting Bible teaching, prayer and Evangelical ministries in accordance with Evangelical faith outlined in the fellowship's statement of faith, directed towards the perfecting of the individual believers, and the salvation of lost souls.
- To cooperate with other similar Evangelical bodies throughout Africa and other countries.
- To take common action with a view to awakening Christian people to the danger of modernism, false cults, and from ecumenicity that is achieved at the expense of vital Christian faith.

Civic groups like the National Constitution Assembly (NCA), Coalition Crisis of Zimbabwe (CCZ) and many others are the brain children of some leading men of the cloth in the country. One can conclude to say that churches are a fertile breeding ground for political movements in Zimbabwe. Because of their ability to attract masses in the country, politicians take advantage of gaining political mileage through

churches. As a way of attaining this goal, para church organisations were to be engaged by the Church so that the church participates in politics.

The main reason for the failure of the church in history is its unchanging approach to a new set of problems. Ezra Chitando, (2005:39), writes on the problem of the church concerning morality in the context of HIV and AIDS. He condemns the church for its 'theological rigidity' resulting in more social and health harms than anticipated. For this reason, some churches ended up being roped up in the business of the state, and thus sharing the same contrasts of the world. Some pastors ended up having huge commercial agricultural land whilst the majority of people remained in poverty. The church has been continuously losing its Christian ideals of "peace, justice, unity, fairness and racial harmony" (Maposa 2012:98), where the poor and landless majority continued to be landless especially women. It thus would be appropriate to say that the Zimbabwean church struggled with its new identity in the new Zimbabwe, and this (Villa-Vicencio, 1992:7).

Bhebhe (1988:325) further states that, the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe embraced a spiritual and an anti-ecumenical stance. The Rhodesian Front Party was very oppressive and the EFZ chose to become inactive about it. EFZ interpreted the struggle for freedom as communism that was sponsored by the Russians. Many evangelicals felt that it was their duty to speak out against communism and the liberation movement. The Rhodesian government was presented as a Christian government that merited the support of all Christians. Christians gathered for prayers, asking God to deal with terrorists and saving the lives of soldiers and all those who were fighting for the liberation of the majority. Nationalists and other Christian organisations condemned EFZ. After independence, the EFZ found itself in a state of confusion as it found itself still haunted by its past.

In post independent Zimbabwe, the Evangelicals limited their engagement with the state on general issues of ethics, society and development. However, by the passage of the time church leaders also argued that the Zimbabwean crisis was indicative of a deeper malaise: the absence of a national vision and agenda. They contended that the sharp polarization in society had emerged because of the failure to develop a prophetic vision of the country. In this respect, they spearheaded a campaign called, 'The Zimbabwe We Want', which culminated in a document, entitled, *The Zimbabwe We Want: Towards a National Vision, A Discussion Document* (ZCBC, EFZ and ZCC 2006). The document undertook a penetrating and honest assessment of the achievements and failures of independent Zimbabwe. It did not spare the church from criticism and invited Zimbabweans to work towards developing a shared national vision. The production of 'The Zimbabwe We Want' document gave Zimbabwean Christians the opportunity to reflect on the relationship between their faith and their civic duties. Unfortunately, this document was watered down by state. Its final draft was doctored. According to Chitando (2002:44),

Whereas many politicians constantly advised Christians to stay away from politics, consultations on the national vision document reminded Christians that they had an obligation to participate in political processes.

2.3 RECONCILIATION IN THE CONTEXT OF ZIMBABWEAN CHURCH AND SOCIETY

Reconciliation means different things to different people and is also understood differently in different cultures. In trying to define reconciliation, it is important to bear in mind that it is both a goal (something to achieve) and also a process (a means to achieve that goal). Bloomfield D., Barnes T. and Huyse L, (2003:12) defined

reconciliation as a means of finding a way to live alongside former enemies. They explain that this is not necessarily to love them, or forgive them, or forget the past in any way, but to coexist with them. This will in turn result in developing a level of cooperation necessary to share our society with them. What this means is that, reconciliation is a method through which a people moves from a divided past to a united present and future.

In trying to bury the past in a reconciliatory way, one has to take cognisance that:

- It is important to heal the wounds of the survivors.
- Some form of retributive or restorative justice is required.
- Historical accounting via truth-telling must not be undermined.
- Reparation of the material and psychological damage inflicted on the victims is again crucial.

These views are of paramount importance especially when one looks at who should take the initiative for reconciliation. This then entails that reconciliation and national healing without confession promotes serious hatred, as such, this book provided some of the basic steps to be followed when real forgiveness is to take place. K. Christie, (1998:55) claims that it is possible that life confession be made which will enable catharsis, and the coming together of previous enemies. This is a very critical point whenever reconciliation is to take place. Such a perspective helped the researcher in digging deep as to what exactly is reconciliation; especially when reconciliation ignores justice.

Rawlings Magede, argues that, Reconciliation is an absolute necessity today. It is a guarantee that the violence which happened in the past will never occur again.

Victims of Gukurahundi as well as the election periods, especially the 2008 vote, have not told their stories. They remain in the abyss of pain and neglect. The truth remains hidden or is being told from the perspective of those in power. The truth told by those in power is one-sided and therefore wounds remain open. Reconciliation, healing and liberation are of paramount importance to unite Zimbabweans in the post-colonial era. Black theology of liberation has rustled with these issues to assist blacks like Zimbabweans to understand how liberation and reconciliation goes together.

In the black theology of liberation, reconciliation has a different connotation unlike in the African theology of de-colonisation. In black theology of liberation, reconciliation is for blacks and whites; meaning it is a two-way street. It depends on what whites will do to make conditions in race relations better as it does upon what blacks will not do. Black-white reconciliation, in Christian terms, cannot be based upon the superordination pattern of whites over blacks. Whites must be ready to work with blacks for better racial understanding. Reconciliation ought to be based upon a oneness in nature and grace between all people upon the principle of equity (Roberts, 2010: ix). In this context, there is a different situation since, in the Zimbabwean context, it is ethnicism and classism that is the problem that separates Zimbabweans. By this I am referring to the struggle between the Shona's and the Ndebele's as well as the rich and the poor. Reconciliation in this context needs to be based on what Roberts (2010) said upon oneness in nature and grace between people upon the principle of equity. This assumption adopted from Roberts, means that, reconciliation assumes that blacks must earn the right to be equal – to be accepted in the society's mainstream, the Shona's and Ndebeles; rich and poor ought to be accepted in the Zimbabwean's mainstream (Roberts, 2010:ix).

Furthermore, Roberts (2010:7) indicates that, black theologians and emerging theologians like the researcher that takes reconciliation seriously ought to work at the task of intercommunication between racial, ethnic and class lines under the assumption that for those who are open to truth, there may be communication from the inside out., but at the same time there may be communication from the outside in. In the latter sense, the Christian perpetrators may be led to understand and work with the victims for liberation and reconciliation on an equal basis. The perpetrators and the victims have been living an unauthentic life in Zimbabwe and elsewhere in the area of race, ethnic and class. The perpetrators have ignored the requirements of “love, justice, and mercy.” They are guilty of malpractice as Christians; they have been hypocritical and involved in the double-dealing in the areas of race, ethnic and class. The words and deeds have not agreed with each other (antithetical). Dishonesty and indifference have been common among the perpetrators even in integrated congregations and denominational bodies. Christian perpetrators have been living and behaving in an unauthentic manner. Victims who have passively accepted the unsharpened end of the misinterpretation and malpractice of perpetrators have also lived an unauthentic existence. It is the goal of a worthy Black theology to lead both victims and perpetrators to an authentic Christian existence (Roberts, 2010:7). Authentic life for victims is a movement through liberation to reconciliation. Therefore, reconciliation between the perpetrators and the victims must henceforth be in deed and in truth, it must be through humanness and liberation, and it must be between equals.

2.3.1 Chronological Tracing of Reconciliation

Reconciliation is one of the critical aspects of the Christian religion. According to (Taylor 1960:15), the term reconciliation is from the Greek verb *al-las'so* and the compound form *Ka-ta l-las'so* (basically to exchange) as used in Romans (5:12). To reconcile means to bring back into harmony or cause to be friendly again. It also means to adjust or settle. Paul used this verb when speaking of a woman's making up again with her husband, from whom she had separated. Biblically speaking, these words were used because alienation has existed, a separation, a lack of harmony and of friendly relations, more than that, a state of enmity has happened between humanity and God or between persons. Enmity exists because God's perfect standards do not allow for his approving or condoning wrong doing (Psalms 5:4, 89:14). Hebrews (1:9), supporting this same concept says, "You loved righteousness and hated lawlessness." Even though God loved Jesus, the fact remains that humanity as a whole has been in a state of enmity towards God. God's love towards the world of was love towards enmities, a love guided by principle *agape* rather than affection or friendship *philia*. God view sin as violation of his express will as such he does not disregard justice.

According to Sifelani (2009:16) peace cannot be achieved without justice, and this is always understood and assumed in the Bible. Reconciliation does not in any way outdo justice but is seen as a manifestation of justice itself. The same sentiments were also shared by Baum and Wells (1997:19) who postulated that righteousness (right relations with God and one another) together with justice are essentially synonyms in Hebrew usage, and when righteousness flourishes and peace abounds we are reconciled with the natural order. In this section, the researcher has

just highlighted the basic biblical derivation of the word reconciliation, but in the next section the researcher will dig into Old Testament the meaning and usage of the word reconciliation.

2.3.2 The understanding of Reconciliation in the Old Testament

The Old Testament concept of reconciliation can only be understood against the background of the Old Testament doctrine of sin (Brown, 1971:150). An offense against Yahweh's covenant laws gives rise to objective guilt (1 Sam 14:2) which sets in motion a destructive force whose disastrous effects fall of punishment on punishment on the miscreant and his affairs. Brown (1970:384) states that, in the Septuagint, Isaiah 9:5 which does not appear the same in the Hebrew version reads, "every garment/measurement that is obtained by treacherous means must be repossessed/Restored (Greek: *Katallasso*) ... (Isaiah 9:5 LXX). Reconciliation in this verse means rotation or restoration and this must be in the context of alienation. There are many other Old Testament accounts that denote a position of enmity but there is reconciliation after. The story of Isaac and Ishmael and that of Jacob and are typical examples. A critical analysis of these issues will prove that the enmity between brothers in these passages was caused by antecedent acts of injustice, and were eventually resolved by a joint recognition of the unjust, the willingness to leave the past behind, and the desire to live in mutual respect. The biblical story of Joseph reconciling with his brothers stands as a model of repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation.

2.3.3 The understanding of Reconciliation in the New Testament

In as much as it is an undeniable fact that reconciliation is theme in the New Testament, very little is said of it in the New Testament. Brown (1971:46) wrote that in the New Testament, *Katallassso* occurs only in the sense of to reconcile or to be reconciled (Matt 5:1ff.). To reconcile is to put to a sour relationship and to substitute it with one of peace and good- will. The substance of the reconciliation lies in the ending of enmity between God and humanity. Hastings (1926:301) contributes to this by saying when Paul used the term reconciliation in the second epistle to the Corinthians; he used it with the context that the previous hostility of mind or heart that used to exist between two people is now part away (Hastings, 1926:301). This process of reconciliation must not be equated with the exercise of conflict resolution. This is so because when doing conflict resolution issues of conversion and forgiveness are also dealt with.

Breytenbach (2010:171) states that, Paul utilises the phrase “to be reconciled to someone” in 1 Corinthians 7:1, reprimanding the alienated wife not to remarry or to be reconciled to her husband. The use of this verb was to denote the alternation from enmity to friendship in an interpersonal relationship. This however is not the same case when the verb is used to denote a change of relationship between human beings and God. In 2 Corinthians 5:18-20 the word in Greek is mediated by the ambassador; it is part of the process of peace making, denoting the change from enmity to peace, from hostility to friendship. Reconciliation can also be seen as the outcome of peace negotiations, part of the cease-fire that is agreed upon. Those in wars came forward for to be proclaimers for reconciliation and peace treaties. The proclaimers are called ambassadors, and they intercede on behalf of their

compatriots they are to propose the reconciliation. According to 2 Corinthians 5:18-20; Paul was entrusted with the message of reconciliation. Paul has to act as an ambassador representing Christ. As if God is inviting through Paul, he begs the Corinthians on Christ's behalf to be reconciled to God. (Breytenbach, 2010:173-173).

According to Koopman (2007:97), the reconciliation that is confessed in Belhar Confession reflects the two dimensions of reconciliation in Paulinic thought. Reconciliation as *hilasmos* has to do with the expiation of wrongs and stumbling-blocks to atonement (at-one-ment). Reconciliation as *katalassoo* refers to harmony in the relationship with the other. The reconciliation of Belhar Confession has in mind the embrace that Miroslav Volf refers to: the embrace of different races, tribes, nationalities, socio-economic groups, genders, sexual orientations, and age groups, "normal" and disabled people. The reconciliation of Belhar Confession pleads for the removal of stumbling-blocks in the way of peaceful living, in the way of the embrace. Reconciliation therefore implies opposition to injustices like racism, tribalism, xenophobia, classism, misogyny, homophobia and ageism. The way Koopman (2007) defines reconciliation from Belhar Confession and Breytenbach (2010) defines it from Pauline letter, is moving close to what is needed in the Zimbabwean context. In the context of this study, the message of reconciliation is entrusted to denominational heads, who ought to act on behalf of Christ in Zimbabwe to proclaim the message of reconciliation just like Paul was invited to proclaim the message of reconciliation to the Corinthians to reconcile with God. Reconciliation with God has the bearing in the reconciliation with one another, as human beings are the image of God, reconciling to one another implies reconciling to God.

2.3.4 Desmond Tutu's Model for Reconciliation in Zimbabwe

Thorneycroft (2007:34-39) said Tutu argued that the quiet diplomacy pursued by the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) had not worked at all. This was because of Thabo Mbeki's attitude in his capacity as mediator in breaking a settlement... as commissioned by SADC. Tutu then appealed to Britain and the West to pressure SADC to set firm deadlines for action, with consequences if they were not met. Tutu, who is known to always criticize Mugabe, described the president as an "autocratic leader, a certain figure of an archetypically African dictator. An autocratic leader is more of a dictator, one who does not appreciate other people's ideas and uses authority and power to get job done.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (T.R.C) helped in reconciling people, for it advocated for compensation of all who suffered because of apartheid. The aims of the T.R.C were:

- to return to victims their civil and human rights,
- to restore the moral order of the society,
- to seek the truth, record it and make it known to the public,
- to create a culture of human rights and respect for the rule of law, and
- To prevent the shameful past happening again.

This was to be achieved in South Africa because the (T.R.C) established a complete picture of the causes, nature and extent of the extreme violations of human rights which were committed during the period from 01 March 1960 to 05 December 1993. The TRC act of facilitating the granting of amnesty to those persons who made the

full disclosure of all relevant facts was healing and reconciliation at its best. The TRC also compiled a comprehensive report on the findings of the commission and recommendation of measures to prevent the future violations of human rights. Even though there is a big criticism pointing to the failure of the Tutu led TRC in South Africa, at least that process took them to somewhere.

If ever reconciliation is to be archived in Zimbabwe, there must be a committee that must be established. The committee must comprise of those who are well versed with human rights issues. This will enable victims of *Gukurahundi*, Operation *Murambatsvina* and the 2008 alleged post-elections violence to go and tell their stories freely. The reports of the outcome will then be forwarded to an investigating unit which will then take measures to help. The same committee must also have a sub-committee that will deal with amnesty and forgiveness. There must also be a psycho-support committee that will be offering psychological support, helping the victims to forgive their perpetrators.

2.4 HEALING THE WOUNDS IN THE CHURCH AND SOCIETY IN ZIMBABWE

Mukonori (2012:75) postulates that, the ten years before and after independence in Zimbabwe, negatively affected the Matabeleland and Midlands provinces. The decade prior to independence witnessed an increasingly violent war of liberation, whilst the post-independence decade caused further hardships and suffering in Matabeleland and in parts of the Midlands. The people in those provinces, who had survived the protracted war of liberation, soon faced yet another orgy of violence; perpetuated by the government. It was a matter of being thrown out of the pain into the furnace (Mukonori, 2012:75). Such utterances from Mukonori are going to be

useful in this thesis since the Matabeleland people still feel that national healing and reconciliation have not taken place. The affected people still suffer from psychological, economic and physical wounds inflicted upon them by their own government. The unhealed wounds if they are not treated are a time-bomb that will explode sooner or later. The process of healing will be further discussed in the next section.

Moyo (2015:13) indicates that, healing is a complex process that includes the ventilation of great pain and the possible resolution of negative memories and trauma which individuals and communities may have experienced during long periods of violence and wars. During the period of violence and wars, human beings found themselves broken and bruised in many ways. From time to time, human beings found themselves in need of physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual restoration. Healing presupposed that human beings have lost something they once enjoyed and that it is possible to regain what human beings have lost. In the Zimbabwean context, the healing process attempts to create space for the wounded to tell their stories and be listened to. In this process the victims and the perpetrators will be able to partake in the healing of the past and present wounds if invited to do so. The healing of memories are linked to the whole process of reconciliation, transformation, empowerment and peace-making (Moyo, 2015:13). Reconciliation means restoration of relationships and forgiveness. Reconciliation and healing is the pillar to sustainable peace for all Zimbabweans, the process should be genuine and frank in respect of individuals and all groups involved. Reconciliation and healing as the pillar to sustainable peace and justice needs the church's intervention. Reconciliation can only materialise when selfishness and superiority complex have ceased; reconciliation is operating with humility and embracement (Moyo, 2015:14).

The process of healing memories is sometimes described as a project aimed at creating an opportunity for the wounded to tell their stories and be listened to. The project also concerns the role of pastoral and community care and church leadership in trying to attend to the severe trauma of these individual members of the community and faith community.

The researcher will use Bloomfield, Barnes and Huyse (2003:77) definition of healing that states that it is a strategy, process or activity that improves the psychological health of individuals following extensive violent conflict. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as not merely the absence of disease and infirmity but a positive state of physical, emotional and social well-being. Psychological health is understood by the WHO as encapsulating, among other factors, subjective well-being, perceived self-efficacy, autonomy, competence, inter-generational dependence, and self-actualization of one's intellectual and emotional potential. Psychological, emotional, physical and social health is not only interlinked but interdependent. It is with such an understanding that it then becomes vital to seek for strategies, processes or activities aimed at rehabilitating and reconstructing local and national communities more broadly that are also integrally linked to this process. Healing is not just about helping persons to deal with their mental health needs in an isolated way, but is based upon and fundamentally linked to mending and reconstruction of communities and the social context. This implies restoring a normalised everyday life that can rebuild and confirm people's sense of being and belonging.

Van der Kolk (1987:987) on the other hand says trauma can be understood as the destruction of individual and/or collective structures of a society. It is through faith that there is order and continuity in life. Trauma occurs when one loses the sense of

having a safe place to retreat within or outside oneself to deal with frightening emotions or experience. In this sense, it is not only vital to assist people deal with the effects of the conflict on them, to help them through, for example, a grieving process in a constructive way. It is also of paramount importance to deal with the roots of the distress and the symptoms. What needs to be “healed” is therefore the multitude of individual, political, social and cultural responses to a traumatic situation and its aftermath. National healing then refers to the concept that the whole nation has been wounded in one way or the other and therefore needs to be healed from the wounds that have been inflicted in its psyche.

2.5 THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN SOCIETY

Banana (1991:2), asserts that the role of the church is to reconcile all man and women and to bring them into union and fellowship with one another across cultural religious, racial and regional boundaries. He further writes that the church has a mission in society, the mission of renewal, reassurance and reaffirmation of basic human rights among the oppressed and the marginalised. According to his views, the church has a strong and a positive role to play in national development. Thus, it must exercise a prophetic voice and democratise that voice in the sense that it becomes an expression of popular will of its entire membership. In a nutshell, the church must have the concerns of people at heart.

In terms of the church’s evangelism, the good news must not be restricted to certain people or certain groups. God is for all humanity, He loves all people regardless of race, colour, age, sex or status. God’s care and love is for all and the good news, the gospel, is for all. We cannot and must not make the reception of the proclamation of

the gospel into a sort of an obstacle cause for people to overcome. The gospel demands that the local Christian community finds ways and means for spreading the message in a variety of ways to a variety of people.

Banana (1989:29-38) also alluded that Zimbabwe will only develop when colour, tribe, sex, language and region are no longer of consequences in determining how wealth is to be distributed. Thus, Christians and non-Christians must march together in their struggle to better the world and the world should be looked upon as the agenda of the church.

2.5.1 The church in Zimbabwe today

The history of the church in Zimbabwe is believed to have come in the spirit of imperialism. It worked side by side with the State and marginalized the black converts. By going along with the policy of racial segregation, the church alienated itself from itself. Since then, there has never been any conscious effort to recover Christ's teachings on human relations. It is of significance that Christianity in contemporary Zimbabwe be understood as located in both a global and local context. The process of globalisation has brought changes "in the patterns of relations between the church, State, nation and civil society" that has altered the way scholars and practitioners look at relationships between church and state (Casanova 2001:424).

There is a considerable debate and uncertainty about the role of leaders from Christian denominations in Zimbabwe. However, it would be a mistake to equate the churches' social action simply with protesting against the powers that be. Much of

the commentaries on contemporary religious activism in Zimbabwe would focus on this as a litmus test of Christians' commitment to social justice, and in this case liberation, national healing and integration. Principally, it argues that the church remains as much part of the problem as it is part of the solution.

Dowden (1980:135) commented on the possibility of liberation, reconciliation and national healing. He recalls the speech uttered by Robert Mugabe on Independence Day which he described as magnanimous. Calling for reconciliation and rejecting revenge, Mugabe said:

The wrongs of the past must now stand forgiven and forgotten. If ever we look to the past, let us do so for the lesson the past has taught us, namely that oppression and racism are inequalities that must never find scope in our political and social system. It could never be a correct justification that because whites oppressed us yesterday when they had power, the blacks must oppress them today because they have power. An evil remains an evil whether practiced by white against black or black against white...

It is now thirty-seven years into independence, and indeed this is a good example of a spurious and superficial approach to reconciliation. Mashingaidze (2010:78-81) traces the "Zimbabwe illusive national healing and reconciliation processes from independence to inclusive government 1980-2009" and concludes that the major deficiency in the contemporary conciliatory political milieu is the lack of clear binding instruments for achieving national healing and reconciliation. Individuals and interests that fomented violence in the past remains powerful and still control some levers of the State and this forecloses meaningful national healing. The acclaimed national healing process did not promise any new future without impunity for Zimbabweans. What this means according to Mashingaidze is that if the truth is said, justice exercised and restitution done, this will indeed heal all the mental emotional and physical injuries of Zimbabweans.

The same sentiments are also expressed in a pastoral letter by the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference (ZCBC) (2009:14) which states that, no one's heart can be at rest as long as people are haunted by evil memories, never acknowledged and straightened out. This is the real situation in Zimbabwe and this has torn the nation apart. The letter further attests that this crisis can only be resolved if the people of Zimbabwe confess their sins, fully forgive each other and once more commit themselves to work together in solidarity, justice and peace will be achieved. This article informs the study on the resolution of conflict.

Banana (1980:135) reiterates that it is his task to interpret the Christian gospel to victims of a hostile society, those who have been denied the development and legitimate enjoyment of the fruits of their being, stripped of their humanity and reduced to level of chattels, the prisoners of human inflicted pervasive poverty (Banana, 1980:135). By proving the gravity of an arrogant society, Banana advocated for a society that does not promise a pie in the sky. This gives a place for Banana's book in this study.

The same sentiments are shared by George (2000:4), postulated that, a relevant church must deal with practical issues of human existence. The book was dealing with many different issues but its main thrust is that a church cannot continue to claim relevance if it ignores the issues that are challenging the societies today (George, 2000:4). A relevant church must be following the day to day events that are challenging the nation, trying to look for solutions or possible means of helping people to come out of such critical issues. Such an understanding encourages me to look for possible ways of dealing with reconciliation and national healing in Zimbabwe. The important point that this study is going to utilise is that for as long as we live, there is no way that one can divorce himself or herself from the day to day

operations of the society and this is the aim of contextual theology for it strives to respond to the signs of the times.

This same debate is also taken up by Dumas (2001:11) who argues that, the church called together and raised by a universal God is inevitably involved in politics, if politics is about a concern for the active co-existence of all people (Dumas, 2001:11). The above scholars all contend that the church must infiltrate every sphere of life because the Christian message is addressed to everyone. This then calls into scrutiny the role played by the Heads of Christian Denominations in Zimbabwe in advocating for liberation, reconciliation and national healing in Zimbabwe.

In a newspaper *USA Today*, Archbishop Desmond Tutu lambasts African silence on Zimbabwe. Desmond Tutu said that the quiet diplomacy pursued by the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) had not worked at all and appealed to Britain and the West to pressure SADC to set firm deadlines for action, with consequences if they were not met. This was in reference to the conflicts that were there between President Mugabe's ZANU PF party and the opposition movement for Democratic Change. Tutu who is known to always criticise Mugabe described the president as an "autocratic leader, a certain figure of an archetypically African dictator." Bishop Desmond Tutu was quoted saying "reconciliation in Zimbabwe can be achieved." He was arguing from the point of view that President Robert Mugabe paved a way forward for post-independence by proposing the principle of reconciliation. For Tutu, South Africa used the principle of the truth through the truth and reconciliation commission which allowed people to express their emotions, meeting those who had committed horrendous crimes, and searched for answers through sharing their stories.

Gifford (1996:46) argues that, Christianity must create space for others and promotes good governance. The church must always be there to support the government and applaud it when it is performing as per the Biblical standard and it should also be in a position to condemn the government when it misfires. In addition it should encourage the government to come back into the right track when it misses the way. This means that if there is bad governance, the church should voice, but the question is, will the voice of the church be heard and respected in Zimbabwe today? The ecumenical church has to be proactive in the politics of the day rather than it being responsive only. The role of the church is to continue with the mission of Christ on earth. Michael Gifford's thoughts are useful in this study in that looking at the relationship that is there between the government and the church, the writer is going to assess and see if the church (Heads of Christian Denominations) is the rightful organisation to advice the government in articulating justice in the Zimbabwe.

Christie (1998:55) claims that it is possible that life confession be made which will enable catharsis, and the coming together of previous enemies (Christie, 1998:55). This is a very critical point whenever reconciliation is to take place. This view is of paramount importance especially when one looks at who should start to confess. Such a perspective will help in that confession typically presupposes a constellation of notions about the private self-tormented by guilt and the private conscience exposed to self-criticism. This view will help a lot in that reconciliation and national healing without confession promotes serious hatred, as such this book will help in providing some of the basic steps to be followed when real forgiveness is to take place.

If ever Zimbabwe is going to unite as a nation, reconciliation must be the first exercise. Banana, reminded people that reconciliation means more than a mere

handshake that tries to eliminate past wrong. In our culture as Zimbabweans, if one is sorry about his/her sins, that person must show signs of being ashamed and apologetic. In the Shona culture they say, "*mushonga wengozi kuripa*" (the best panacea against vengeance spirits is reparation. Shona culture has rituals for reparation. The person's confession of being sorry must be seen in that person's repentance (Banana, 1989:80). Such a perspective will help me in digging deep as to what exactly is reconciliation especially when that reconciliation ignores justice. Furthermore, taking it from Banana, I am going to investigate as to what type of reparation must be done by the perpetrators to the victims or relatives of victims since a mere handshake accompanied by a smile are not enough. Such an understanding makes the writer to engage Macquarie.

Macquarie, (1978:77) reiterates that, people must be agents of peace, reconciliation and that we be politically and socially responsible. He further encourages humanity to pray, for peace and exercise restraint in attaining material standards of living. Such a view by J. Macquarie is critical in that some people verbally preach peace but practically support violence. Though Macquarie lived a century ago, in a different part of the world, the cry he made then is the cry of Zimbabwe even today. The idea of humanity being agents for peace is going to be critically used in this writing since the manifestation of true reconciliation is seen in people enjoying peace. According to Baum and Wells (1997:31):

We need to tell one another stories. It is perhaps the only basis for gaining an understanding of both ourselves and the hopes and fears of others. It is perhaps the only basis in which different stories and different histories can emerge as the basis for an inclusive nation building exercise.

This perspective is going to help a lot in that reconciliation and healing are needed in Zimbabwe but the challenge is on how to attain them. Baum and Wells address this

issue. One of the many ways of telling our stories is through writing, but can one freely write a book on his/her experiences of rape, torture, and many other forms of persecution and be trusted? When Daniel Arap Moi was the Vice President of Kenya, was giving an opening speech on a five-day meeting of general secretaries of Catholic Secretariats at St Thomas Aquinas Seminary in Nairobi, he was quoted in the Daily Nation newspaper of 20 July 1977 saying,

Church leaders and the laity should not be afraid to speak out if society has gone wrong. Local church leaders and the laity must be the conscience of society in which they live.

According to him, the institutional evils can manifest in different forms, for example, apartheid in South Africa and *Gukurahundi* (refers to the Matabeleland and Midlands atrocities of 1980-1988- CCJPZ and the Legal Resources Foundation document "Breaking the Silence, building true peace" 1997). *Gukurahundi* according to C Brand (1997:91) refers to the rain that comes after threshing or it is that rain which washes away the chaff before the spring rains. In light of this thesis, *Gukurahundi* refers to the 1980-1988 atrocities done by the North Korea trained 5 brigade that resulted in a series of bloody conflict and led to scandalous and callous crimes that the new Government of majority rule committed in Matabeleland and Midlands. Again, there was *Murambatsvina* (Operation restore order) in Zimbabwe. Asmal and Suresh (1997:46) argue that, confrontation of the roots of poor governance is a way of achieving genuine reconciliation and this is what people must do if they are to celebrate reconciliation for many years to come (Asmal and Suresh, 1997:46). Seeing this suggestion as noble, I am going to try and identify if any, the people who may be able to confront the roots of poor governance in Zimbabwe. . It however remains to be seen if this proposal can work in Zimbabwe.

Thielicke (2000:26) argues that the church must involve itself in people's difficult situations. It is mandated to challenge all injustices which threaten the establishment of peace and human development. He postulates that the church cannot refuse its duty to represent the poor in all spheres of life because it is part of its pastoral ministry. The impression is that the church must be present or must place itself in the midst of the Zimbabwean society to challenge the current political and socio-economic situation so that it may not succumb to the present state of affairs unconsciously and uncritically.

Raftopoulous (2005:44) points out that as a nation, Zimbabwe has a lot of unresolved conflicts that can even be traced back to colonialism. The book has very sad stories of how property was vandalised. It also contains mass beatings and death that happened since independence. He emphasises that the atrocities were very serious and that only a few were not affected. In trying to argue his point, he asserts that nothing was done about the massacres that took place in 1980 although they were known. The Mugabe regime did not respond to the above survey report up until today.

Auret (1992: vii), postulates that to refuse social justice is to refuse to accept the wholeness of the nature of the human being. The members of the commission clearly felt a deep sense of injustice when their fellow human beings were denied their rights. The commission performed many things in order to ease the burden brought upon ordinary human beings. They shared anxious and fearsome moments with those who were involved in the struggle. They were concerned about the plight of the ordinary people. As such, this book will add value to this research.

An interesting insight to this whole discourse was forwarded by Halleneereutz and Moyo (1988:48) for they contended that, the church and state in Zimbabwe is not really a virgin field in scholarly studies of religious development in Zimbabwe. It is particularly within the framework of the government's national development plan that new relationships have emerged between Church and State after independence (Halleneereutz and Moyo, 1988:48). Studies upon the church and state relations touch upon dynamics of religion and socialism. Therefore, I am going to analyse the relationship stated in this book to establish whether there has been deterioration, improvement or amendments to Church and State relations in Zimbabwe.

Chimhanda and Dube (2012:268) demonstrate how the Roman Catholic was proactive in the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishop's Conference (ZCBC) pastoral letter on Zimbabwe elections of 2008. They argue that, the Catholic Church assisted ZCBC a lot in setting up a viable structure for voter education and also in encouraging people to participate in constitution making. They also argue that the church is a prophetic voice that must challenge the powers that are behind violence. Schreiter (1992:6) in relation to the task of the church in advocating for reconciliation as a missionary task says, "Reconciliation as hasty peace tries to deal with a history of violence by suppressing memories and ignoring its effects". He further postulates that, if forced forgetfulness is applied, those would be reconcilers will underestimate the pain of the oppressed and are therefore complicit in lasting subjugation. Such insights will be useful in the following chapter.

2.6 THE WOUNDEDNESS OF THE NATION IN POST-COLONIAL ZIMBABWE

There is no dispute that Zimbabwe's accumulated history of socio-political unrest, antagonism and animosity has had a profound and continuing effect on different categories of people in society. The process of integrating the people of Zimbabwe requires a multi-faceted solution that involves the conscious involvement of all people and cultures.

2.6.1 Gukurahundi

The earliest catastrophe that hit the post-colonial nation-building project had to do with ethnicity and the integration of military forces. The crisis began in the military ranks; involving open exchange of fire between the ZANLA that was Shona dominated and the Ndebele dominated ZIPRA (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009:180). This occurred in Connemara and Entombing and some other assembly points as well and it became a rehearsal for a severe reign of state terror in Matabeleland and the Midlands regions. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009:180) further claimed that, "The reign of terror that became known as the *Gukurahundi* campaign was ostensibly meant to seek and destroy some ex-Zipra combatants who had defected from the Zimbabwe National Army to embark on a life of dissidence." In the wake of the dissidents' menace, the Government then formed a "special anti-dissident force to combat the malcontents who were unleashing a reign of terror." The crack squad was called "*Gukurahundi*", a term the Shona understood as the atrocities amounting to ethnic cleansing.

According to Brand (1997:91), *Gukurahundi* refers to the rain that comes after threshing grain. *Gukurahundi* (washes away chaff) is the rains that signal the onset of the rain season. *Gukurahundi* is descriptive of how the Shona experienced the 1980-1988 atrocities done by the North Korea trained 5th brigade that resulted in a series of bloody conflict as well as scandalous and callous crimes that the new Government of majority rule committed in Matabeleland and Midlands.

According to the ZCBC Pastoral Letter *National Healing and Reconciliation* (Monday 5, 2009), “5th Brigade was ordained to become the most controversial army unit ever formed in Zimbabwe”. It is alleged that within weeks of being mobilised at the end of January 1983, 5th Brigade was responsible for mass murder, beatings and property burnings in most parts of Matabeleland and Midlands provinces. Within a space of two weeks, more than 2,000 civilians died, hundreds of homesteads were burnt, and thousands of civilians beaten. Most of those who died were said to have been killed in public executions.

2.6.2 The 1987 Unity Accord in Zimbabwe

The Unity Accord was signed by ZANU (PF) and PF. ZAPU on 22 December 1987. Fran’s J. Verstraelen (1998:45) claims that this accord put an end to the disturbances that ravaged great parts of the Midlands and especially of Matabeleland during the period 1982-1998. This fight by the government against those they called “dissidents” nearly plunged Zimbabwe into a civil war. The Peace Accord was advocating for peace and reconciliation. This led the government to declare 22 December an official national holiday in 1997.

Sadly, a critical analysis of the Unity Accord of 1987 will lead one to conclude that no true peace was established since the dreadful things that happened in Midlands and Matabeleland in the 1980s have not yet been addressed by the government. A lengthy report, entitled, *breaking the Silence: Building True Peace*, by the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe (CCJP) and the Legal Resources Foundation (LRF), analyses the 1982-1986 experiences. They said, "The people still have open wounds, physically and psychologically disturbed. Though the Unity accord was signed, a lot of issues still need to be addressed for example, in Harare there is a popular building named "*Karigamombe*" and the word *kariga* is from *kuriga* meaning causing to fall and *mombe* means cow. Joshua Nkomo's political symbol was that of a cow so by saying *karigamombe* (something small has caused a cow (bull) to fall or to be defeated). In the case, it will mean that Nkomo has been defeated by Mugabe.

2.6.3 Land reform

A United Nations Development Program (UNDP) technical report on the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) in January 2002 noted that the programme was

affected by cumbersome consultations and decision-making processes involving numerous district, provincial and central government actors... Problems of weak capacity and poor co-ordination have led to numerous errors in processing the acquisition of properties.

Among farms listed for resettlement there are properties totally unsuitable for agricultural purpose, including land flooded under dams, land already resettled, or land currently used for industrial purposes. The team commented that even after recent amendments to the law, the land acquisition process was complex, cumbersome and tedious to execute.

The former President Mugabe and his government fought hard to make sure that the Zimbabwean land belong to the real owners but the means by which that happened was a source of agony for many people. The resettlement programme came with pain especially if one looks at the criteria which would make one eligible for resettlement. A peasant was supposed to be:

- effectively landless, that is, have no or too little land to support self and dependents;
- neither employed nor should the spouse be poor;
- the intention is to reach the rural poor;
- married or widowed with dependents;
- aged 18 to 55 and able to make productive use of the land allocated;
- prepared to give up all rights to land in the communal areas, or
- a returned Zimbabwean refugee who is given special consideration or
- An experienced or master farmer who is willing to give up land rights and wage employment elsewhere (Zimbabwe Intensive Resettlement Programme, 1985:23-24).

2.6.4 Operation “*Murambatsvina*”

Martin Westgate Barrister, (2007:16), reiterates that, the operation took place against a background of rapid urban growth in Zimbabwe in the years since independence in 1980. By 2004, Zimbabwe had developed a large informal rental sector, with some settlements, and it was estimated that the informal economy accounted for some 40 per cent of employment. Central and local government largely adopted a relaxed approach to the enforcement of planning control and this was placed on a statutory footing. In May 2005, the Government embarked on a radical solution sharply at odds with their previous approach. This became Operation *Murambatsvina*. The evidence available does not give any indication that this was preceded by any consultation or debate or any attempt to evaluate the seriousness of the situation, assess alternatives or discuss the situation with those who were later to become victims. In addition, a number of evicted vendors had valid licenses and some destroyed properties had been erected in compliance with the relevant building regulations and the owners had been paying taxes and possibly utility bills. Some of those who were evicted also appear to have held leases directly from central or local government. The operation was executed with great speed and brutality. It is described in the UN Report as being carried out in “military style” and as executed in a “militaristic manner”.

According to a report by the UN envoy, Anna Kajumalo Tibaijuka, the Zimbabwean government under the headship of President Mugabe embarked on a clean-up operation of its cities and the operation was known as “Operation restore order or *Murambatsvina*”. *Murambatsvina* is a name the Shona gave to describe their experience. By implication, human beings were reduced to dirt. The main vendetta

of operation *Murambatsvina* was to do away with all “illegal activities” in towns and growth points. Vending, illegal structures and illegal farming were some of the activities that the operation dealt with. According to Tibaijuka;

It is estimated that some 700 000 people in cities across the country lost their homes, their source of livelihood or both. Indirectly, a further 2,4 million people have been affected in varying degrees. Hundreds of thousands women, men and children were made homeless, without access to food, water, sanitation or health care. Education for Thousands of school aged children was disrupted. The vast majority of directly and indirectly affected are the poor and disadvantaged segments of the population. They are today, deeper in poverty, deprivation and destitution, and have been rendered more vulnerable.

The operation was a disastrous venture based on a set of laws from the colonial period and colonial policies that were used as tools for segregation and social exclusion. The operation was carried out in an indiscriminate and unjustified manner disregarding several provisions of national and international legal frameworks. By and large, the operation to restore order seems to have affected the already impoverished and marginalised. Operation *Murambatsvina* demonised fellow human beings. Upon encountering various traumatising experiences, people were left destitute. Even though some were taken to Caledonia farm near Harare Sports, oval in Mutare and other places in Bulawayo, only a few were comfortably accommodated there. The situation was worse for non-Zimbabwean immigrants from countries such as Malawi, Mozambique, and Zambia who have lived in Zimbabwe for a long time and who have unknown relatives in their nation of origin to return to. Many families broke up, whilst children dropped out of school, and those with legally structured

houses had their rentals doubled or tripled. It's now ten years since the operation happened and many people have not recovered and it will take many years for people to recover from the shock and loss of accommodation as well as business premises that were their sources of income and livelihood.

2.6.5 Theological implications of Pre and Post Elections violence

Many ordinary people in Zimbabwe are still haunted by the traumatic experiences of elections. Emotionally and psychologically, many Zimbabweans are still wounded and this is due to the brutalisation that they experience before and after every election period. Since 2000, elections were held in Zimbabwe but could not change the standards of living of the people; it is generally assumed that the general polls worsened the political and the socio-economic situation in the country. Political violence was rampant in the country. People were killing each other because of political differences, but most of the victims were from the main political party, the Movement for Democratic Change [MDC-T]. Their sources of livelihoods were taken and sometimes burnt or destroyed, their homes destroyed because they were accused of selling the gains of the liberation struggle. The situation was so catastrophic; it divided people in societies (<http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Docum 27/08/2015>).

The Zimbabwe Election Support Network also alleged that there were irregularities before and during the polls, and these including voters roll discrepancies, intimidation, late opening of polling stations, slow pace of assisting aspiring voters in some urban polling stations, high number of assisted voters recorded in rural areas, shortage of ballot papers in some wards and the denial of first time voters the

chance to vote as they were not appearing in the voters roll. It was because of these discrepancies and irregularities which caused the MDC-T and its allied NGOs to offer a joint statement to repudiate the election results. On the other hand, the AU observer team raised their concern over irregularities which they called “grave concerns”. In addition to that, the election results were rejected by the western community, the EU and its partner the USA. (thinkafricapress.com/Zimbabwe/Zimbabwe's-election-2013-moreconfusion. Zimbabwe: confusion and uncertainty in the aftermath of Elections 13/10/2015).

If ever true or authentic liberation, reconciliation and national healing is to be achieved, there must be an accountability of all criminals; deterrence and punishment can also help. Platforms must be provided for the purposes of telling the truth as what South Africans did with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRCs). In many cases, psychological healing is achieved if any victim of abuse is given the opportunity to recount his or her suffering to a supportive non-judgmental audience. In order for people to come to terms with their traumatic past, the perpetrators must at least acknowledge their wrongs. This will in turn promote forgiveness, reconciliation and national healing.

2.7 THE ROLE OF CHURCH IN RECONCILIATION AND HEALING IN ZIMBABWEAN SITUATION

The researcher argues that the church has got enormous strengths and power to change things in Zimbabwe. The church continues to play an influential role in Zimbabwe. It is estimated that more than 80% of the Zimbabwe population belongs

to Christianity. It forms the majority of the population in Zimbabwe so if it speaks with one voice it is bound to be listened to. The church on the other hand can be considered to be connected worldwide and has got the voice which can easily be listened to by the world at large. It is easier for the world to render their assistance, when it is needed, via the church. The office of the church is easily identifiable by any opposing politician. Its intervention can easily be accepted by any feuding parties. When the feuding parties face stalemate, it is easier for the parties to seek counsel from the church. However, it is the church which is supposed to take the leading roles in solving or engaging these feuding parties and find solutions for the country.

The church has been playing a critical role in the social, economic and political life of the people in Zimbabwe. It cannot be separated or divorced from the challenges Zimbabwe is facing today. Historically it was involved in the liberation war and its ministry, its presence and its social role today play a meaningful role in bringing the Zimbabwe crisis to an end (Raftopoulos 2005:258). Raftopoulos believes that for this to happen the church needs to be fearless, have the courage to confront the perpetrators of injustice, influence, and must have the capacity and experience in dealing with complex political issues (2005:259).

The perpetrators or victims of violence are both members of the church, especially in the rural areas, or they both live in a community where the church is represented. It becomes relatively easier for the church to meet both and build a common ground which can lead to a lasting peace. This can be and has been achieved in the past by summoning and engaging both the victim and the perpetrator of violence. When one has got access to both, the perpetrator and victim, strategies to find lasting peace could be found.

2.7.1 The Unity of the Church as the hope for reconciliation in society

Although the church, through its leaders of the main Christian groupings, had played an active role in efforts to defuse and resolve the Zimbabwean crisis, the effectiveness of its engagement had been limited by a number of challenges as the church itself was and is still not united. The three main Christian groupings whilst seeking peaceful solutions, some of their leaders choose to support the ruling party's destructive policies. The government responded to criticisms by promoting the other church leaders who were more favorable to it. The Church leaders who have come out in support of Mugabe and his policies receive positive coverage in the national press and also officiate at national events. These leaders include representatives of the African Initiated and Pentecostal Churches as well as a few other mainline protestant leaders (National vision of Zimbabwe: Zimbabwe we want 2010:13). This divided the Church into two broad groups- those in favour of Mugabe and those opposed to his continued use of violence to ensure ZANU Pf continued stay and grip on power. The same strategy was used by the Ian Smith's led government where some heads of the church were seen to be in support of the government. It was a case of obedience to the government rather than being the salt and light to the nation some of these church leaders have been accomplices in some of the evils that has brought the nation to this condition. It is against this background that the researcher argues that had the church leadership been united, the push for a democracy and peace could have been achieved.

2.7.2 The Priorities of the Church in general and in particular in Zimbabwe

Wellford mentions two important priorities of Christians that is, to research for the truth and offer services to the world. In searching for the truth, a Christian is expected to take a live interest in events around them. The church should be receptive as well as critical in her approach to new ideas (Pope Benedict XVI 2003:210). This is an indication that a church must understand what makes up the communities it operates in for example, their behavior, culture, traditions. The Church should be in a position to be able to critique and correct where correction is needed. It should rebuke and teach so that it becomes the salt of that community in which it resides. It is against this disunity which is in the church that the true church must now stand up and represent the truth so as to stop the killing of people, promote peace even to the extent of approaching the perpetrators of violence and demand an immediate stop to carnage. Churches can also hold these perpetrators of violence accountable to any form of politically motivated violence. This is one of several parts of what is missing in today's church.

Service to the world entails the Christian to participate in voluntary work for the community exercising their rights to vote in support of those policies which can be judged to be honest, realistic and in accordance to the genuine needs of human beings. It is sad that the church today discourages Christians to participate in these and yet if all Christians do participate it means only godly leaders will be elected whilst good morals Laws will be passed. God fearing individuals can be identified and elected to take up leadership positions in the community they reside. In case of Zimbabwean, some repressive pieces of legislation like (The Public Order Security Act POSA and Access to information and protection of Privacy Act AIPA Laws)

which existed, inhibited peaceful assembly and the free flow and exchange of ideas, should have been banned as they hinder democracy and accountability of those in power. It is sad that the church keeps being shunned from the participating of elections, but react strongly when the government enacts oppressive laws.

2.7.3 The Church's role on faith and Politics in Zimbabwe

Many Christians in Zimbabwe and their leaders have been blind folded by the call from other quarters that the church must not involve itself in political affairs. The fight for justice, peace, love and joy led by the three Christian groups were regarded as political by other church leaders who chose not to participate in their endeavors. However, these three bodies, ZCBC, EFZ and the ZCC questions on the demarcation of political and non-political when dealing with problems affecting the nation today (The National Vision for Zimbabwe: Zimbabwe we want: 2010:14). The church's involvement in politics dates back to the time of Emperor Constantine where Christian's involvement with the political order started. It only began to lose its power and grip when it started to reinterpret religious values versus political values (Norman 1979:5). In the case of Zimbabwe, it is difficult to separate the church from the people suffering violence and persecution. The church cannot remain silent when acts of violence are being committed by the people and to the people whom it shepherds. The division within the church, on whether the church should engage or not engage in politics together with other doctrinal issues led to splits as some church leaders were seen to be aligned more with the state as there were and are economics and other benefit to be derived from President Mugabe and his ZANU PF. According to Chitando (2010: 47), the reasons why the church has been

weakened vary. Many pastors choose not to publicly involve themselves in political issues because they benefit from the state. These leaders received vast lands from the church, posh cars from the government, preferential treatment on public functions, state protection and these church leaders are promised security in the face of the unstable socio-economic and political environment. Such acts have caused the church to be viewed as a puppet of the ruling government or an extension of the government.

The theological mandate of the church, within its involvement in what may be deemed as politics, as described by the 'Zimbabwe We Want Discussion Document', is that, the gospel demand that Christians be involved in the transformation of the social, economic and political systems or environment in which God's people live (The Zimbabwe we want;2010: 14). This is an indication that a true church in Zimbabwe cannot sit on the sidelines without getting concerned with good governance, justice, love and peace. The church has to stand firm and speak on behalf of the voiceless the poor and the marginalised. The word of God must never be compromised. It is arguably plausible that for a Christian and especially a Christian Bishop [leader] the primary aim is peacemaking in situations of conflict.

2.7.4 The Strategy of the church to fight politically motivated violence

It is interesting to note that the true church stood up, fought and supported the armed struggle just to liberate the majority of Zimbabweans from under the minority racist government when it appeared that the World Council of Church [WCC] was being victimized, tortured, and jailed or negotiated a settlement. It started by negotiating

with the oppressors and when this failed, it resorted to supporting the armed struggle.

The church needs to re-strategize so that it gives the violence-challenged Zimbabwe another ray of peace. What the church needs most are not strong men and women, but strong institutions that speak to politicians and political violence without fear or favour. Zimbabwe needs men and women of the cloth who are neither greedy nor are in search for political favors but are well able to pay the price of speaking prophetically to the current political leadership on matters of violence (The Church and Civil Society Forum, 2012: 11). If one strategy fails one has to go back to the drawing board and re-strategies. This is somehow missing in today's church as it continues to use the old dialogue strategy which has been ignored countless times by state sponsored perpetrators of the violence.

The church in Zimbabwe can learn from Rev. Martin Luther King Jr and make a change in Zimbabwe. The true church should be counted among the liberators of the majority who are suffering from the hands of the oppressors of Zimbabwe (Inhausti 2005:101). As for the black Americans, they held numerous non-violent demonstrations fighting for social justice in America despite several arrests and shootings which took place. Eventually, America was liberated from racial discrimination (Inhausti 2005:101).

Similarly, the church in Zimbabwe really knows and understands the sources of Zimbabwe problems and what is left is for it to develop a strategy of addressing these problems. The church can come up with several documents and presentations but if these are not directed to the perpetrators of violence then the church will miss the target. It is desirable for every Christian to be involved.

Martin Luther King Jr. used the non-violence method. They were bombed in church but in their thousands they marched none violently without fear against the police who were supported by vicious dogs and armed soldiers (Inhausti 2005:105). The non-violent root has a higher probability of working and is most likely to receive support and respect all over the world. Demonstrations have been the tool of the unarmed and voiceless to air their grievances. The church leaders cannot continue to try and engage in discussions with the perpetrators of violence whilst leaving the victims behind as this can be misinterpreted to mean that the leaders were not representing anyone but themselves.

2.7.5 The call of the church for justice

The church in Zimbabwe made several attempts to stop ZANU Pf from committing acts of violence between 1980 and 2014. It has issued pastoral letters condemning violence. It has also met with various political leaders but without success to try and stop the violence at both inter-party and intraparty levels since independence. All its efforts have not been very successful and yet, it keeps on using the same method of engagement to the same perpetrators of violence with very little headway. In this case, the church is found guilty as it continues with the same method which has been failing. The researcher turns to agree with the Church and Civil Society in that the church should not always rely on one strategy but should come up with different strategies in its fight for a democratic space in Zimbabwe, justice and peace.

The Gukurahundi atrocities carried out by the notorious 5th Brigade wiped out more than 20 000 human beings according to a report titled (Breaking the Silence Report: 1992). It is well known that the ruling party used the same tactics of the 1960

Rhodesian regime, that most of the elections in post-independence have been accompanied by violence. The ruling party's most motivating factor in the deployment violence and rigging is the grabbing and retention of power by hook or by crook (Sachikonye 2011:86). The people of Matebeleland and Midlands are still calling out for justice to be done and the victims to be compensated for both the lives and other losses incurred during that period of what others term as a period of mere madness by the state sponsored military wing of the 5th brigade.

According to Isaiah 61 vs 8, "God Loves justice", as such, the church cannot sit back and allow injustice to prevail without it protesting. Sitting back and doing nothing can be regarded as a total failure in one of its theological mandate. It is the duty for the church to continue speaking about the injustice Zimbabwe is being subjected to by a few power hungry individuals. Injustice is a result of greed and greed leads to corruption. Zimbabwe is ranked high on the corruption index [Transport International] i.e. it is ranked 156 out of the 174 countries whose corruption measurement tool was used. [Http://www.transparency.org/cpi2014/resultdid21/10/2015](http://www.transparency.org/cpi2014/resultdid21/10/2015). It is an indication that Zimbabwe is a very corrupt country and one would like to see the church taking centre stage on preaching against injustice greed and corruption. Transport International claims that conflicts in Zimbabwe are largely triggered by corruption and human rights abuses perpetrated by senior government officials and other authorities. The researcher is tempted to suggest that preaching about the evils of greed and corruption is another way of fighting against violence. A message which is regarded as missing in today's gospel.

2.7.6 The missing message of reconciliation in Zimbabwean Church Today

The message of injustice has not found peace in the Zimbabwe church today. It is not common to preach about injustice in Zimbabwe's society today. It is regarded as political and the government has always intimidated the church not to talk about what it regards as political. This has led the church to be cowed into submission by the perpetrators of violence. The church has only dwelt on love, forgiveness, idolatry or adultery but rarely does the preacher of today talk about injustice and base of power by those in authority. A number of new denominations coming up are only concerned with what term as the gospel of prosperity; however, a few clergies in the like of the Archbishop of Roman Catholic Pius Ncube have been brave enough to speak boldly against the perpetrators of injustice and violence.

Archbishop Pius Ncube was a Roman Catholic priest and he courageously challenged the Government against violence that was perpetrated against innocent civilians. Sadly, the security forces crafted a plan to silence him and he was blackmailed for sex scandals. These allegations silenced Pius Ncube. The motivational speeches that Pius Ncube gave, that were full of truths, his contributions to the Matebeleland community and to the church at large and his boldness has caused many to see his allegations as controversial. However, he was fighting a lone battle and had it been that the other church leaders were like him, Zimbabwe could have been experiencing peace today. Besides attacks which he directed to the President and ZANU Pf, he also wrote a pastoral letter. 'A Prayer of Hope for Zimbabwe: a concern on the present situation in Zimbabwe', issued on 26 April 2000 where he boldly spoke against the Fast Track Land Reform Program and he fearlessly spoke against racial discrimination (CCIJP 2001:101-3). Archbishop Pius

Ncube criticized violence and challenged President Mugabe to revisit his earlier promises with regards to reconciliation. Pius constantly challenged the police to arrest all culprits who promoted violence or hate speech.

A closer look at Pius Ncube's fights with the government is a clear indication that he identifies himself with the poor and the marginalised which the church in Zimbabwe and its various leaders should do. The ruthlessness in which the state security agencies dealt with Pius Ncube cowed most of the church leaders who then resorted to the less effective ways of dealing with the crisis. It also made the church to redefine what is meant by being political and not political. One may be tempted to conclude that the church views violence committed by Politicians to be political and so the church should not intervene. The departure of Pius Ncube from the forefront of a fighter of injustice and peace left a void which to date has not been filled.

The majority of the suffering Zimbabweans who desperately pray for peace in Zimbabwe wish that God raise much courageous men like Pius Ncube who can act as the prophetic voice of their time. Pius is one of the few courageous leaders that the church needs to challenge the state with regards to state sponsored violence. Many people have a feeling that the majority of today's pastors are full of fear, are self-centered and always think of themselves rather than the congregants and the nation at large.

2.7.7 The Church Compromised by the politics of the country

In Zimbabwe, through observations, one can conclude that the church has been compromised to such an extent that it no longer has the capacity to challenge the

state when it comes to issues of political violence. In the process, failure to stand for and take sides with political violence victims meant that the church is unintentionally supporting the perpetrator of this violence (Civil Society forum 2012:17). Rev Wakatama quoted in Civil Society forum expressed that the church has been infiltrated by the state agencies that compromised it to the extent that church leaders only attempt to address the symptoms rather than the causes of violence. Civil Society forum (2012:17) the church, out is fear, no longer confront the perpetrator but end up helping the victims by providing shelter, food, clothing and medication which is not enough.

There has been a tendency of church leaders sapping with the politicians who happen to be the instigators of politically motivated violence in Zimbabwe and pay a blind eye on the evils these politicians do on fueling violence (Civil Society forum 2012:17). Other church leaders, who started their government aligned denominations, actually capitalised on violence for personal gain. This has led the ZANU PF to dismiss all those Church leads who are critical to their misdeeds (Civil society forum 2012:17).

2.8 Summary

This chapter has managed to review related literature on issues of liberation, reconciliation and national healing. The above literature review has shown that, C. S. Banana and P. George complement each other on the issue that Christianity (as represented by the HOCD) must voice to the people living in a hostile society. This becomes a theological paradigm in that in many cases, the people who are affected by political violence are the masses who cannot stand for themselves, as such the

church must act as their voice. The literature review in this chapter showed that the church in Zimbabwe has been trying to engage the perpetrators of politically motivated violence in its attempt to find peace in Zimbabwe. However, unlike the church in the 1960s, it has not done enough in terms of the use of different strategies in their approach to stop politically motivated violence.

This chapter also shows that the church has been cowed into submission to the perpetrators of violence and is not able to stand up fearlessly to defend the victims of violence who mostly include the poor, women, children and the marginalised. This will then be in conformity with Gifford and Christie, who reiterated the importance of good governance that promotes peace, healing and reconciliation. For political healing and reconciliation to be a reality, J. Macquarie provided some of the necessary steps that have to be followed and since Macquarie is a theologian, he agrees with G. Baum and M. Wells, together with K. Asmal and R. Suresh that the reconciliation of people must be amongst the major tasks of the church. Even if the TRC is a highly contested issue, South Africa is commended for at least having made an attempt at reconciliation and national healing despite the TRC shortcomings. The idea behind reconciliation as what J.G. Dube highlighted is that people will live in harmony, respecting each other. This according to B. Raftopoulos goes beyond a mere handshake and a smile, but proper procedures must be taken. The literature review showed that perpetrators of violence will do whatever it takes to remain in power. Therefore in challenging them, the church needs to be fearless and be in a position to risk the lives of its members for it to achieve its goals of bringing peace to the community. The following chapter is going to discuss the methods and methodology.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter has presented the literature review that was conducted to analyse the impact of church leadership's (HOCD) involvement in advocating for liberation, reconciliation and national healing in Zimbabwe. The purpose of this chapter is to present the methodology as well as the methods used to gather data.

O'Leary (2004:85) wrote that,

Methodology can be described as the framework associated with a particular set of model assumptions that can be used to conduct research.

Because of the nature of the topic, a multi-dimensional methodology using mainly qualitative method with a bit of quantitative method will be used. The discussion in this chapter provides the research design, population sample, research instruments and data collection procedures for the study. The chapter will also discuss the population together with the selection of the sample. The experimental process and the measuring instruments will also be deliberated upon. The criteria for data analysis will be presented and this will be in agreement with the research objectives. Lastly, the chapter will give a summary of the discussion.

3.1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Methodology is crucial in that it assists in data collection and allows me to make authentic research. This will be achieved through using interviews, surveys and

other research techniques, and also the use of documents. The researcher uses the qualitative approach specifically interviews and report analysis. The qualitative method aims at assisting the researcher in understanding behaviours and meanings given to political and religious spheres. In the qualitative paradigm, the researcher becomes the instrument of data collection, and results may vary greatly depending upon who conducts the research (McConney, *et al.*, 2002: 87; Steckler, *et al.*, 1992:146-156). This approach is useful in collecting data that is subjective in nature; gaps will be removed by the use of other complimentary methods.

Using qualitative method is recommended because 'it generates rich, detailed data that leave the participants' perspectives intact and provide a context for health behaviour' (McConney, *et al.*, 2002:86). However, the two main disadvantages of qualitative research are that it is time consuming and labour intensive are (Steckler, *et al.*, 1992:151). The collected qualitative data from the fieldwork highlights the different perceptions on the relevance of church involvement in politics. This will then lead to an assessment of the possibility of liberation, reconciliation and national healing in Zimbabwe as advocated by the HOCD.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study employs qualitative research method due to the nature of the research which is highly subjective and also deals with a hotly debated contemporary phenomenon. This phenomenon is the issue of political liberation, reconciliation and national healing in Zimbabwe. Bailey (1982:104), says, qualitative method gives room for one to dig deeper into the subject matter so as to understand the attitudes and feelings of people in a society. In this thesis, the approach allows victims of

Gukurahundi, Operation Restore Order (*Murambatsvina*), and pre and post elections victims of violence to express their feelings. Qualitative data subscribes to a phenomenological, inductive, holistic, subjective, process oriented and social anthropological world view. Guided by Johnson (1994:174), the researcher found that selecting the research methods was a fundamental aspect in the research process. I am going to use a variety of complementary research methods which are qualitative in nature. The research techniques to be used in data gathering will include interviews, questionnaires, case study, observations and secondary information gathering. Study of literature will help the researcher to gather background evidence of the possibility of reconciliation, liberation and national healing in Zimbabwe, especially focusing on the role played by the Heads of Christian Denominations in order to set the scene.

Case studies will be used to “follow up and to put flesh on the bones” (Bell, 1999:11). Even though some critics have condemned case studies as a way of gathering data, it is “now an accepted method of data gathering” (Simons, 1996:225) and fits the researcher’s objectives of investigating the possibility of reconciliation, liberation and national healing from political issues in independent Zimbabwe. The uniqueness of a case study is seen in Simons (1996:231), who states that, “if one studies the exceptionality of the particular, it is then easy to understand the universal”.

The descriptive survey design will be used to collect primary data required in this study as well. According to Leedy (1993:67), it is the most appropriate design for a study of this nature because it involves looking at phenomena of the moment (political situation in Zimbabwe) with intense accuracy. Descriptive survey affords the

researcher the opportunity to participate as he observes phenomena. Babbie (1985:156), Collins et al (2003:88) and Nachmias and Nachmias (1996:146), agree that descriptive surveys are useful for exploratory studies and are well suited for producing information about particular characteristics in a finite population. Quality assurance questions touches on relevance, reliability or validity and rigor in to the research. However, a little bit of quantitative research will also be used in trying to come up with a sound research that will make this writing useful.

3.2.1 The theological approach

The theological methods will take centre stage since the research is in the discipline of Systematic theology. The study explores theological foundations for the promotion of national healing and reconciliation. Schuldt, (1999:67) claims that this approach promotes cultural values that enhance quality life. This approach is going to employ the hermeneutics of suspicion. This approach will be useful in analysing the HOCD responses in working for national reconciliation and healing since they (HOCD) are motivated by their faith in God who, in and through Christ takes the initiative in bringing salvation or liberation. This is vital in that it entails that religion and culture, with their values and norms, practices and beliefs should be subjugated to suspicion since they can have greater influence on behaviours and attitudes. Supporting such a perspective, P. George warned theologians and preachers to do away with the system of taking scriptures at face value, and urges that scriptures must be analysed to see the interests of the authors before forwarding a logical response (2000:29).

3.2.2 Hermeneutics

The term hermeneutics comes from the Greek word *ἡ ἐρμηνευτική*, which comes from the verb *ἐρμηνεύειν*, meaning to interpret, to explain or to make clear. It is a discipline whose goal is “to understand the original meaning of a text as desired by the editors or biblical authors” (Klein et al 1993: 97). Hermeneutics entails the critical analysis of literature which is divorced from dogmatic interpretations.

3.2.2.1 Hermeneutic of Imagination

Ghasemi, A., M. Taghinejad, Kabiri A., and Imani, M. (2011:1623-1629) quoted Paul Ricoeur’s interpretation theory of a hermeneutic of imagination that encourages the healing and reconciling of societies that are at logger heads. According to this theory, Christians in their wait for the second coming of Jesus Christ must show love to one another, forgiving each other. In so doing, they will be preaching Christ to the world. Applying Ricoeur’s interpretive theory to this “already but not yet” position of healing hope can help the Christian navigate its dialogical tensions. It describes Ricoeur’s theory that it is through a hermeneutic of imagination which struggles with the constant extremes of ideology and utopia that the community can interact with and interpret the event of the incarnation of Jesus. This theory allows one to embrace the eschatological hope of the kingdom of God that offers reconciliation and healing.

In a country like Zimbabwe where the majority of the people are caught up in pain and suffering, full of broken relationships that crave for reconciliation, people expect their belief system to speak into the reality of their experiences. For Christians

especially, to talk about a God who created the world requires that one address not only the pain the Zimbabweans are going through, but how one can have transformative hope in response to it. It is with this understanding that Hermeneutics of imagination will be employed in dealing with issues of liberation, reconciliation and national healing from political issues in Zimbabwe.

Robert Schreiter and Knud Jorgensen, (2013:102) sees the Church as the embodiment and agent of reconciliation. God, who knows us intimately and by name, begins his reconciling work by reaching out to individuals. Biblical figures like Abraham, Ruth, Noah, Moses and Naomi are some of the examples who gave their all for reconciliation to take place. Since the theological approach makes God the starting point, the role played by the heads of Christian denominations in Zimbabwe, especially with regards to issues of liberation, reconciliation and national healing will be discussed from a theological point of view. This is to say the writer is to base his arguments on healing and reconciliation from the Bible, seeing how God reconciled humankind with one other. The theological anthropological (**theanthropology**) approach as a trajectory of the creation and baptismal dignity will be discussed. Genesis (1:27) has it that, humanity is created in the *imago Dei* (image and likeness of God). Other theological loci to be pursued include, divine providence, governance, stewardship of God's grace, missiology in seeing how Christian leaders are responding to God's mission. There is a whole range of theologies like liberation, political, feminist, eco feminist that will be discussed in relation to liberation, reconciliation and national healing in Zimbabwe.

Robert Schreiter and Knud Jørgensen, (2013:79) further postulate that, reconciliation is commonly seen as existing in three major dimensions: the vertical dimension (reconciliation with God), the horizontal dimension (reconciliation between humans), and the circular dimension (reconciliation with the physical and spiritual cosmos or the universe). The major biblical texts on reconciliation are found in the epistles of the apostle Paul, especially in 2 Corinthians 5:17-20, Romans 5, Colossians 1 and Ephesians 2. Reconciliation in Greek is *katallage*, and the word has been used four times: Rom 5:11; 11:15; 2 Cor 5:18-19; *katallasso*, reconcile, Rom 5:10, 2 Cor 5:18-20; *apokatalasso*, reconcile, three times: Eph 2:16; Col 1:20, 22. Thus taking liberation, reconciliation and national healing from a theological perspective will give peace not only to the heads of Christian denominations in Zimbabwe, but also, to the general populace as this will provide room for people to forgive each other. The theological approach will assess the theological understanding of reconciliation and seeing its relevance and authenticity when employed to Zimbabwe today. This method will also help in trying to establish who should take the first step in reconciliation.

3.2.2.2 Hermeneutics of suspicion

This is another model that will be utilised in this research. The hermeneutics of suspicion acknowledges the differences between diverse realities. It demands that there be a critical engagement with the status quo. Like in the book of Amos, there is dissatisfaction with the way things are. Masiwa Ragies Gunda, (2012:522) argues that, the prophet (Amos) tried to force the elites practicing “hypocritical religiosity and injustice” to widen their horizons and open their eyes, on the one hand, to the plight

of the poor in their land, and at the same time to the vulnerability of Israel. The prophetic dream or vision is for better things to come. Some scholars have already suggested that Amos was executed for his scathing attack on the structural system of his time, a system engaged in mass production of poverty (Sawyer 1987:112, Kaufmann 1972:276), and the massive creation of wealth without regard to ethics (Rendtorff 1986:220). Zimbabwe needs an Amos of its day, someone who does not find comfort in corruption, injustices and economic meltdown of the country.

Hence hermeneutic of suspicion's starting point, is questioning the authenticity exposed by narratives, thus attempting a deconstruction of the contexts in which a narrative is produced. Suspicion research would use the vantage point of the researcher to identify gaps in meanings produced through the research. In this thesis, I will briefly expose implications of importing the hermeneutics into nowadays qualitative research. Since Hermeneutics is going to be used as a methodology in qualitative research, it calls for a particular ontological and epistemological position.

3.2.3.1 The *Imago Dei* (Image of God)

Nancy Pearcey (2004:87) notes,

The Bible does not begin with the fall but with Creation. Our value and dignity are rooted in the fact that we are created in the image of God, with the high calling of being His representatives on earth.

In Genesis 1: 26 we are made in God's image, thus we have intrinsic dignity. It is a biblical motif that the first and hence principal purpose of creation is to reveal the glory and lordship of God (Ps 8:1; 19:2; Is 40:5, 2 Cor 4:6; Rom 1:20). The whole world is understood to reveal the grandeur of God. We are special in the created

order because we harbour God's image. We have obligations to God as our creator, and also toward each other as spelt out in the Bible. "Whoever sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God He made man" (Genesis 9:6). In supporting this, the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. These human rights are founded on the dignity of the human person".

From the time of the Willingen Conference of the (1952) mission was understood as belonging to God, and derived from Godself's Trinitarian nature. God the Father sent the Son, and the Father and the Son sent the Spirit. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit then send the church into the world. Mission is therefore the church participating in the sending of God. To participate in mission is to participate in the movement of God's love toward people, since God is a fountain of sending love (Bosch 1991:389-390). Genesis also teaches us that human are is endowed with a moral nature, for they are fashioned in the image and after the likeness of God (Genesis 1:26-27) thus the *imago Dei*. Jesus Christ is the height of human dignity. So what this means in relation to the topic under study is that the HOCD must let Zimbabweans know that every human being is important and should be treated equally. Since what God created is good (Genesis 1:31), it implies that the world and everything in it is structurally good and important. Creation is a dynamic reality; it is continual creation, moving towards its consummation. God continues to act in creation, providing for its needs, guiding, renewing and bringing it to its fullness. But the goodness and wholeness of creation are constantly threatened by catastrophes in nature and the sufferings inflicted upon people by people. The Createdness of the world implies the fundamental unity of the world, the inter-dependence/interconnectedness of creation

(Berkhof 1979:161). All creation reflects and reveals the Creator. Dermot Lane (1992:11) accentuates the holiness or sacramentality of creation:

The whole of creation, from the smallest speck of cosmic dust to the personification of that dust in the human being is shot through sacramentally with the holy.

Now the height of God's creation (argument based on Genesis 1 and 2) is human nature (McGrath 1997:188). In the Genesis (1:26-28) creation myth, God raises the dignity of the human person as steward. Human beings cooperate with God also as rulers (Psalm 8). Humanity is entrusted to take care, use and develop God's creation. Thus, human beings are meant to practice responsible stewardship for one another. However, in what can be seen as human-centrism, humanity has become irresponsible stewards in God's household. They have abused God's good creation hence the topic on liberation, reconciliation and national healing of political issues in Zimbabwe becomes necessary.

3.2.3.2 Missiology

Musasiwa, R (2007:78) argues that, Christian leaders must understand that the Christians have been mandated to evangelise and perform societal duties that promote peace and unity. That is to say when people acquire a new life through evangelism they, become awakened to their duty to serve others. As James argues, 'I will show you my faith by my works' (James 2:18). Scott (1980:xv) has it that, the biblical understanding of mission is rectification, the establishment of justice in terms of man's relationship with God (vertical), each other (horizontal) and nature'. In other

words, Scott's understanding of mission has to do with 'putting right' that which has gone wrong. Through sin, something went wrong in the vertical relationship between human beings and God, giving rise to the need for evangelism. Something has gone wrong in the horizontal relationship between human beings, resulting, for example, in the rich getting richer at the expense of the poor who keep getting poorer. That gives rise to the need for mission as social justice. Something has gone wrong in our relationship with nature, giving rise to the need for ecological work (Verkyul, cited in Gasser & McGavran 1983:29). Indeed, social responsibility can be seen as one of the principal aims of evangelism. Through the Gospel, we become aware that we are 'created in Christ Jesus for good works which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them' (Eph. 2: 10). Good works therefore become an indispensable evidence of salvation (James 2:14-26). Secondly, social activity can be a bridge to evangelism. Jesus himself sometimes performed works of mercy before proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom'. Thirdly, social activity can accompany evangelism as its partner. Jesus showed this partnership between evangelism and social concern by not only preaching the Gospel but also feeding the hungry and healing the sick. The Grand Rapids consultation says:

In his ministry, *kerygma* (proclamation) and *diakonia* (service) are mutually connected. His words explained his works, and his works dramatized his words. Both were expressions of his compassion for people, and both should be of ours... To proclaim Jesus as Lord and Saviour (evangelism) has social implications, since it summons people to repent of social as well as personal sins, and to live a new life of righteousness and peace in the new society which challenges the old. To give food to the hungry (social responsibility) has evangelistic implications, since good works of love, if done in the name of Christ, are a demonstration and commendation of the Gospel (1982:121-126).

Missiology justifies the view that God, who is both creator and redeemer, is the foundation of mission. Everything that affects the welfare of human beings is part of God's concern. The Manilla Manifesto addresses this question in section 4 on 'The Gospel and Social Responsibility'. It says,

The proclamation of God's kingdom necessarily demands the prophetic denunciation of all that is incompatible with it. Among the evils we deplore are destructive violence, including institutionalized violence, political corruption, all forms of exploitation of people and of the earth, the undermining of the family, abortion on demand, the drug traffic, and the abuse of human rights. In our concern for the poor, we are distressed by the burden of debt in the two-thirds world. We are also outraged by the inhuman conditions in which millions live, that bear God's image as we do.

The manifesto affirms that the church includes those who have given their lives for the sake of the Gospel. The church will keep on promoting political and religious emancipation all over the world. What this means is that the church is there to educate humanity to respect one another and in so doing, they will be respecting God. It is God's desire that people live a peaceful life that is characterised by love, compassion and peace.

3.2.3.3 Ecclesiology

According to Hans Küng (1968:3-15) the etymology of the word ecclesiology is from the Greek words *ekklesia* meaning people of God and *logos* which means word, knowledge or science (Rom 12:4f; 1Cor. 10:17; Eph 1:23; 5:23, 30; Col 1:18, 22, 24; 2:19; 3:15). Ecclesiology is the study of the nature, doctrines, and structure and function of the church. The church exists in and for the world. Hendrikus Berkhof (1979:392-393) noted that the church has continually sought to further its self-understanding by meditating on the revealing images of Scripture. The church must

be seen as the building raised up by Christ; the house of God; the temple and tabernacle of God; the people of God; God's flock; God's field; the Bride of Christ; the Mystical Body of Christ. Most of these images are evidently metaphorical.

Marie-Henrie Keane (1983:4-5) has it that, the ecclesiology is historically and culturally conditioned. In other words, as the historical and social situations change, the church's form also changes. Just as we need a church built on a solid foundation, we also need a church that is flexible and open to change. In any given age, a particular kind of ecclesiology may be prevalent. We have had, for example, a suffering church, a militant church, a serving church, a preaching church, a prophetic church, etc. Thus, dangers of focusing on one model at the expense of others should be obvious. Wherever the church is present, believers are already united with God, where the Spirit of God is, there is the church grace (Irenaeus, in *Against Heresies*, 3,24.1). Conradie, E. (2000:153-157) asserts that the church is not a mere means – a vehicle to bring people to heaven. The church in a certain sense exists for its own sake.

3.2.3.4 Eschatology

According to Hagglund (1966:23), eschatology (study of the last things) is a part of theology concerned with what are believed to be the final events in history, or the ultimate destiny of humanity. The Christian life of faith is constantly oriented to eschatology and this eschatological faith brings into the present possibilities for Christian existence here and now. While Eschatology empowers Christian faith, it also enforces the decision to live in accordance with Christian principles in the sense

that it looks forward to the consummation of the divine work in creation and reconciliation. The Bible contains many prophecies about the future. The Christian Scriptures (New Testament) in particular talks extensively about the return of Jesus Christ to this earth (<http://www.newcreationlibrary.net/books/pdf>). This is usually called his second coming, or "*parousia*." Most Christian traditions like the Catholics, Anglicans and Methodists believe in the resurrection of the dead. Eschatology empowers Christian faith, it enforces the decision to live in accordance with Christian principles in the sense that it looks forward to the consummation of the divine work in creation and reconciliation.

3.3 Liberation, Political and feminist theologies and the Zimbabwean situation

3.3.1 Liberation

Liberation theology, according to Cop (2007:20) is "the reinterpretation of Christian faith as a radical engagement of the church in the world". In other words it is an interpretation of the Christian through the eyes of the poor hence; liberation theology is critique of the Christianity. According to some scholars, Liberation theology can be defined as political movements in theology which try to interpret Jesus' teachings in relation to a freedom or liberation from injustice. Harvey, J.S. (2008:54) argues that, liberation theology originated as a political movement in Catholic theology which interprets the teachings of Jesus Christ in terms of liberation from unjust economic, political, or social conditions.

According to Gutsavo Gutiérrez ((1988:83ff), three points are basic to liberation theology: the viewpoint of the poor (theology from the underside), theological work

and the proclamation of the Kingdom of life. As a theology of the signs of the times (cf. Pope John XXIII as an impetus of Vatican II), liberation praxis facilitates the coming out of the poor from the margins of history to bring about subversive (overturned) history. Here, the poor are not only freed from oppression, but they are empowered to be proactive agents of their own history (Gutiérrez 1988:xx). This theology will be useful since this research understands that Liberation theology arose principally as a moral reaction to the poverty caused by social injustices like *Gukurahundi*, *Murambatsvina* and post-election violence in Zimbabwe.

Liberation theology emphasizes salvation or redemption as an element for both the mundane world (this world) and an eschatological reality. Christians are not to be encouraged to endure suffering or abusive conditions in this world with the promise of a pie in the sky, future happiness in heaven (Gutiérrez, 1988:xxi). Poor people are the ones who are relegated to the margins of our socio-cultural and political world. They are oppressed and exploited and in so doing, their dignity has been taken away from them (Gutiérrez in Ghibelline 1979:8). The poor cease to be conceived as passive objects of charitable works if they emerge from the doldrums of social marginalisation to the center piece of socialization through political involvement.

3.3.2 Political

As a Christian drive, Political theology rose around the 1960s and focused on the solidarity of the church with the struggles of the oppressed people. Heywood (1990:56) argues that political theology is faith as articulated or brought to

expression in and through political expression. Political theologians argue that traditional and orthodox Christianity make doctrine a final norm, thus, implying the primacy of doctrine theory over practice. This therefore, means that political theology is opposed to the theoretical approach to issues by traditional Christianity. Political theology stresses praxis. It should be noted that political theology is also called public theology. In this regard, it is also treated as a branch of both political philosophy and practical theology. Since the HOCDZ is a body that represents many different church denominations, its role in advocating for Christians to be practical in challenging abuses, corruption and violence will be scrutinised. This will be done with the understanding that, Political theology as said by Gutierrez (1973):

- sees the need for people to be set free from any form of oppression be it sexual, political, economic or religious;
- emphasises that theology must be contextual, relevant and identified with its people and must not be enforced upon people by a certain mighty force;
- seeks to discover the purpose and meaning of life from a theological perspective;
- sees the suffering of the poor, their struggles and their unfading hope as true marks of a genuine Christian; and
- Advocates for a society that is defined by love; love for one another and love for God.

Political theology understands religious freedom as liberation from any form of injustice and from sin and oppression. The Gospel of St Luke's gospel (4:18) quoted prophet Isaiah when he talked about how we ought to conduct ourselves and how we treat other people who are God's image as well. As such, a genuine church must not divorce itself from the politics of its day.

In light of Aristotle's claim that, "Human beings like it or not, are essentially political animals" (Leonardo Boff: 1985:26); it is vital to understand how far the Church should go. Leonardo Boff expounds this understanding from Puebla saying,

Politics with a capital 'P' spells out the fundamental values of the entire community. It also defines the means and ethics of social relations. By proclaiming the Gospel; the Church has an interest in Politics and always has had an interest. Politics with a small letter 'p' Speaks of 'party politics'. This does not involve the whole Church but only a part of it, namely, the laity ... being yeast and salt within the dough of party-politics" (Leonardo Boff: 1985:27-8).

The Church representatives thus should avoid prominence in party politics in the name of the church, and urges the church to participate fully in National politics, in the context of her calling. The commitment should be like that of the Catholic Church which has gone to the extent of setting up a commission for this mission called The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (C.C.J.P.). The use of Political theology in this study is going to see if the church in Zimbabwe has been able to stand for the dignity and self-worth of humanity. Again, the role played by the church is challenging the government to respect fundamental values of the communities like attending Church services at the same time the political rally will be happening will be looked at.

3.3.3 Feminist perspective

Rosemary R. Ruether (1986:7-9) argues that,

“feminism is a critical stance that challenges the patriarchal gender paradigm that associates males with human characteristics defined as superior and dominant (rationality, power) and females with those defined as inferior and auxiliary (intuition, passivity)”.

Such a perspective is going to be used especially considering that Zimbabwe as a country is an androcentric society. Commenting on the situation in Zimbabwe in the early 2000, Gundani (2002:144) points out that there is consequent lack of prophetic theologies that are informed by liberation ethics. This means that the religious worldview of the patriarchal society has conditioned people to perceive politics as a domain for men because of the barricades they have placed to women so that men remain at a dominating or ruling position. Thus, lack of participation in politics by women is shaped by cultural and religious perceptions and attitudes that infringe with political participation. This is in spite of some identifiable female political leaders who devoted themselves to politics for ages. Gundani (2002:145) also validly points out that it is patriarchy that continues to encumber women. Women believe that tradition and the scriptures have been used by man to repress them in all phases of life, (economic, political, social and religious). Women have gradually been led to believe that being feminine is in some way inferior to being masculine. This warped notion has been so skilfully promoted that the vast majority have accepted the belief that femininity is degrading to a woman. Rosemary Ruether, Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza and Letty Russell demonstrate how critical it was to have feminist theology. Ruether defines feminism as “the promotion of the full humanity of women” (Stanton, E.C.2003:78). There are mainly three groups of feminists namely liberals, radicals and conservatives. Liberals are concerned with equality of civil rights for women that

are access to education and professional opportunities. Radicals advocate for a society where men are not found. They argue that women should live alone. Conservatives argue that the status quo is God designed and should not be disturbed. In other words, they are satisfied with the so called oppressive society. Feminists like Fiorenza, Ruether and Russel take verses like Genesis 3:16; 1 Timothy 2:22; Genesis 2:22; and 1 Corinthians 14:33-36 as the most repressive texts on women (Stanton, E.C., 2003:78-81).

Over the years, Feminist theology has risen to become a theological voice for women in their fight for full humanity. The only difference between Political theology and Feminist theology is the cause for action. Political theology focuses on political oppression whilst feminism is centred on male domination and oppression. This type of theology will be employed to see how women were left out in the process of liberation, reconciliation and national healing. Again, we will also see how the HOCD is trying to engage women and the girl child in its efforts of achieving authentic healing.

3.3.4 The need for Contextualisation: Jesse Ndwiga Kanyua Mugambi

Mugambi takes a multi-dimensional approach to African Christian theology engaging cultural values, the environment and socio-economic political issues. Mugambi (2003:12-17) labors for a theology done by Africans, in Africa, and using African resources something that the Zimbabwean Government needs to embrace. In economic terms, Mugambi raises awareness on African theologians to be both producers of raw materials and manufacturers of an African Christian theology.

Mugambi (1989:14) argues that, African Christian theology must have an anthropology that is expressive and attuned to the African experience. In the African holistic world view, humankind in turn, is seen in a total picture of the living, the dead, the yet to live, nature, the spirits and all other created things. Mugambi labors for the proposal of an African Christian theology that is relevant and answerable to the African situation. From the long history of African domination and exploitation through the Euro-American cold war, Mugambi advocates that African Christian theology concentrates on the theology of liberation. In the post-colonial era, Mugambi lays emphasis on the paradigm shift from liberation to reconstruction. This holistic perspective takes note of total liberation of the human being spiritually, socially, economically and politically; inclusive of life beyond now and questions of eternity. Mugambi's idea of reconstruction is on the hope of the future with the objective task of totally liberating an African from past bondage, and to release the same into a constructive future. Such a perspective from Mugambi is going to be useful in this research as it helps to challenge theologians not to continue promising people (Zimbabweans) a pie in the sky but to construct a theology that talks to them in the here and now. Such a theology will help in liberating, reconciling, and healing the wounded souls of the Zimbabwean populace.

3.4 The Phenomenological approach

The Phenomenological approach is attributed to the German philosopher Edmund Husserl and is aimed at being purely descriptive of the phenomena as seen and understood by the both perpetrators of atrocities and victims in Zimbabwe. The word is from the Greek word *phenomena* (that which appear). The phenomenological method enables the researcher to explore different ways by which one understands

reality (J. L Cox 1992:15). This approach is going to be used because encourages people to bracket all their preconceived thoughts and let the participants (the Head of Christian Denominations) speak for themselves. As a researcher, I will be a participant observer suspending judgment is even more difficult to effect here. However, it is one thing having presupposition, and another, being aware of them and then doing one's best to practice *epoche*.

The etymology of the term *epoche* is from the Greek verb *epocho* (stoppage) denoting the concept of suspending all preconceived ideas (Freedman, D.N.1922:570). It discourages the researcher from entering the field of study with preconceived thoughts. This agrees with E. Sharpe's observation that, *epoche* refers to bracketing or suspending. Thus, an object present to consciousness is reduced to the pure phenomenon by putting in brackets or excluding from further interests those elements which do not belong to the universal essence (1971:224). This means that as a researcher, I will try not to be judgemental in my data gathering and allow facts to come as they are. Performing *epoche* will help me to separate or withhold my and therefore, to present the phenomena in question purely as an impartial observer, without any relationship of whether what has been said is true or false. As such, the role played by the Heads of Christian Denominations is going to be explored in order to hear their anger, demands and feelings with regards to issues of promoting authentic healing and liberation in Zimbabwe. In this regard, it is critical to guard against making premature judgments on issues of liberation and national healing. This is possible only if, as a researcher, I am able to see through the perspectives of the Heads of Christian Denominations, since there is no study of democracy that is

more real than the testimonies of the advocates of democracy (C. J Platvoet 1990:34).

Similar to *epoche*, empathetic interpolation is more like a research attitude. This stage emphasises that the researcher enter into the believing community he is studying, viewing issues of liberation, reconciliation, national healing and democracy as a participant observer, just as the Heads of Christian Denominations would do (J. L Cox 1992:26). In dealing with issues of reconciliation and national healing, the researcher is challenged to have a “feeling for” (empathy), thereby identifying with the attitudes, thoughts, feelings and experiences of the Heads of Christian Denominations. This also means that the researcher will treat testimonies of Heads of Christian Denominations in Zimbabwe with sensitivity and with limited pre-conceived notions.

The next step to be observed is *eidetic intuition*. According to J. L Cox (1992:26), this word is derived from the Greek noun *eidos* (that which is seen). This is also a critical stage in that it will help me also to notice the impact made by the Heads of Christian Denominations in trying to advocate for reconciliation and national healing. So I will be better placed to link the provided data with some of the evidence that can be traced on the ground. This will help to classify the data found thematically and for it to be clearly understood.

It has been shown that the phenomenological approach will help in holding back assumptions and therefore, letting the reality speak for itself. The phenomenological approach is very important in getting first-hand information. However, its weakness is

that it is impossible for a person to suspend all pre-conceived ideas. In the writing of this thesis, the phenomenological approach will help in that I will allow the Heads of Christian Denominations to speak for themselves.

3.5 The historical criticism method

The historical critical method will be used since the study is about historical reality. According to Whalen J. P. (1967:34), historiography comes from two Greek words *historia* (history) and *graphei* (writing). This approach will trace the historical developments and the role of Heads of Christian Denominations in Zimbabwe in advocating for healing and reconciliation. This approach will help us to see what the past can teach us, how best we can address the current challenges and how to plan for a better future. Besides information gathered from questionnaires and interviews, there will be study of literature. Social and philosophical theories like the historicity of interpretation by Hans-Georg Gadamar, in *Truth and Methods* (1975:157), theories of existentialism (Søren Kierkegaard), social constructivism (David Emile Durkheim), linguistic and hermeneutical theories will be used.

Overall, the study uses an historical-analytical evaluation of the possibility of liberation, reconciliation and national healing in Zimbabwe. The study analyses and evaluates objectives in the history of the HOCD, especially ideological shifts caused by politics, media, society, individual quest for power and traditional cultural dynamics in the organisation. This design pre-supposes that data presentation, interpretation and analysis happen as events unfold.

Chronology is useful in tracing the history of events, while themes are useful in analysing the findings of a historical study. The historical approach is useful in interpreting what the Heads of Christian Denominations have done, what it is doing now and what still needs to be done in so far as issues of liberation, reconciliation and national healing are concerned. Finally, analysis of the historical text establishes accuracy as different sources of historical texts are examined. For this study, it provides a relevant foundation for a historical analysis of the efforts done by the HOCD. These efforts will be seen in their prophetic engagement with issues of violence, corruption, decay of the moral fibre for the promotion of quality life and national healing and social cohesion.

The recorded documents to be used are in the form of historical books, archives, and the internet. The historical approach is critical in that it allows the researcher to have access to written documents on church and state relations and more particularly on the role played by HOCD in the democratization of Zimbabwe.

The demerit of this approach is that it puts too much emphasis on the historical past, to such an extent that if not careful, one can forget the future. Again, history recorded can lead me as a researcher in not having accurate results on certain events. Moreover, some past events are not properly documented as such it will be difficult to fill in the gaps with genuine information. Hence, one may be led to pursue a more subjective than critical approach. Another weakness of history comes from the fact that, (history) is not purely perfect because it is wrapped in cultural, personal, religious and intellectual biases written to achieve a certain purpose or integrity. However, history should be appreciated because it gives the basis on which plans

can be premised for liberation, reconciliation and national healing. As such, this makes the approach vital in this research.

3.6 The social constructivism in the light of the Bible

The scientific approach or the social analytical approach will also be employed in this research. This approach explores sociology, anthropology; economics and psychology in the light of the Bible (P. George 2000:29). The approach acknowledges the fact that Christianity is practiced by a society. It therefore, acknowledges the values of society which include liberation, reconciliation and national healing. Even though the demerit of this approach is that it will dilute the essence of Christianity if one puts too much emphasis on it. The historical critical approach will help the research so that it will appeal to the hearts and mind of the crying victims and also of the perpetrators to realise how best they can reconcile.

3.6.1 Emile Durkheim and the Social construction of reality

Emile Durkheim deals with what is known as The Social Construction of Reality which attempts an innovative synthesis of the ideas of the society (Elwell, Frank W., 2003:7). The basic characteristics of social order are seen in the principle that 'Society is a human product. Society is an objective reality. Man is a social product.' Elwell, F. W., (2003:34) further states that, when social regulations break down, the controlling influence of society on individual propensities is no longer effective and individuals are left to their own devices. Such a state of affairs Durkheim calls

anomie, a term that refers to a condition of relative normlessness in a whole society or in some of its component groups. Anomie does not refer to a state of mind, but to a property of the social structure. It characterises a condition in which individual desires are no longer regulated by common norms and where, as a consequence, individuals are left without moral guidance in the pursuit of their goals (Elwell, F. W., 2003:36). With regard to political issues, Durkheim was a liberalist, a defender of the rights of individuals against the state.

3.6.2 The Communicative Power of Jurgen Habermas

Paula Montero, (2014:231) quoted Habermas who said, in modern societies, state laws have a mediating institution capable of transforming the communicative power that is present in society's foundation into administrative power. Although law has eventually taken up the mediating function that was for centuries a prerogative of the Christian religion in the West, it seems that religions are still an important part of the symbolic dynamics which, in societies such as our own, modulate lived experiences and processes of socialisation. Habermas acknowledges that churches and religious communities still play important roles in the stabilisation of a secular public culture today, and some are even requested by the state to do so (Habermas, 2006:6). Although Habermas excludes communicative action from the field of politics and confines the latter to the systemic world governed by instrumental action, it is possible to make the very concept of politics more encompassing in order to include the symbolic disputes governed by discourses by retaining the "principle of visibility" as a key notion. From the perspective of political relations conceived of in this more encompassing way, what is possible to retain as a significant advance of the

Habermasian model is its articulation of what is cognitive and motivational in the religious world. Jürgen Habermas proposes a new concept known as post-secularism to address “the continued existence of religious communities in a continually secularizing environment.” In this new context, Habermas suggests that religion and the secular have to learn from each other rather than subordinating religion to the authority of secular reason, like modern secularism. Yet Habermas insists that religion has to be “translated” by neutralising its general dangerous components beforehand in order to contribute to the secular sphere (Mohammad Golam Nabi Mozumder (2003: iv).

3.6.3 Karl Marx’s social critique

Elwell, F, (2013:9-14) argued that, Karl Marx saw capitalism as a progressive historical stage that would eventually stagnate due to internal contradictions and be followed by socialism. Marxists define capital as “a social, economic relation” between people (rather than between people and things). In this sense, they seek to abolish capital. They believe that private ownership of the means of production enriches capitalists (owners of capital) at the expense of workers. In brief, they argue that the owners of the means of production exploit the workforce. The Zimbabwean situation can be described as being dominated by the capitalists who only think of themselves. These rich people accumulate more wealth at the expense of the poor.

In this study, I am going to respect the fact given by Peter Cannolly (1999:1) who gave the assertion that all interpretations of religion are done by people from a particular position and that accurate, objective accounts of religious phenomena do not exist in their own rights. The methods used in this research are unique because

they involve the use of varied instruments namely questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions. The use of questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions result in data triangulation which will in itself validate the findings of the study by either confirming or rectifying data sought through different instruments. This being the case the study adopted the descriptive survey that enables the researcher to collect original data for describing a large enough sample to observe.

3.7 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Research instruments are techniques to be used in the actual collection of data (Derman, 1990:24-27). Qualitative data is collected through the questionnaire and in-depth interviews based on the literature. In-depth interviews are conducted to generate rich, detailed data that leave the participants' perspectives intact and provide a context for the impacts of political involvement of the church in Zimbabwe. The focus is on “how” the data collected from the interviews helped to complement the data collected via the interview guides.

3.7.2 Interview guide

This is a data collection technique that brings together a set of questions around any given topic for purposes of probing so as to gather more data. It takes a number of forms including structured and semi structured (Burgess 1992:47). The interview guide was chosen mainly because it enables data to be collected from many participants in relatively short period of time.

However, one disadvantage of using interview guide is that some may choose not to respond as you probe. This may impact negatively on the validity of findings (Seliger and Shohamy, 1989:172). It is also important to note that interview guides can probe deeply into respondent's opinions and feelings (Gall et al, 1996:289).

3.7.3 Interviews

This is an oral interpersonal administration of questions. According to Kish (1995:146), an interview is a purposeful discussion between two or more people that can help to gather valid and reliable data that is relevant to research objectives. Groves et al (2009:231-243) states that the main advantage of interviews is that the researcher can adapt the questions as necessary, clarify doubt and ensure that the responses are properly understood, by repeating or re-phrasing the questions.

In-depth interviews were appropriate for this study because it allowed the researcher to elicit information. Hence holistic understanding of the interviewee's point of view or situation is achieved and it was also used to explore interesting areas for further investigation.

In addition to other methods of gathering data, some Heads of Christian Denomination Executive Board Members were interviewed. The interview questions were sent in advance after appointments were made and that helped to ensure that the respondents were better prepared mentally and psychologically for the interview.

The interview questions were adjusted along the process as the researcher learned something new or picked up new themes during the interviews. The interviewees were asked open-ended questions, and probing was done wherever necessary to obtain data deemed useful by the researcher.

Personal interviews will include oral and self-administered questions. Questionnaires and random interviews will be used on the Heads of Christian Denominations leadership. Questionnaire interviews are useful in qualitative research studies for information gathering to provide important background information of participants, giving them the opportunity to express their views with regard to liberation, reconciliation and national healing in Zimbabwe. Using interviews assists in accessing information that would be difficult to penetrate through mere observations. Through feelings and intentions, information not easily accessible through observations is found and outlined (White 2000:31). In this study, structured or unstructured interviews will be used, and in most instances, personal and focus group interviews would be done.

Further, the benefit of using interviews is that more interviewees can be conducted in a short space of time, and that data obtained is easier to interpret than data from unstructured interviews (White 2000:31-33). On the other hand, unstructured personal interviews identify a number of topics and allow interviewees to discuss them, and consequently, providing a great deal of information. It is important, technically, to capture perspectives of interviewees, and personal meanings interviewees attach to different situations. However, using unstructured interviews may be time consuming and the data is difficult to interpret.

According to Henwood and Pigeon (2006:179), interviews enable the researcher to control the external environment and extraneous factors that would impact negatively on the reliability of the responses gathered such as response time. Also, the researcher made sure the right person answered the questions. Through interviews, the researcher adapts the questions when and where necessary, clarifies doubt and ensures that questions are properly understood by repeating or rephrasing questions, a feature which is lacking in the questionnaire method.

3.7.4 Observations

Observation is one of the most effective methods of data collection that captures people's reactions, values, behaviours and beliefs without biasing them with their calculated responses. They are also taken in real life situations (White, 2000:34). The study will have non-participant and participant observations. With non-participant observations, the researcher remains detached from the situation under investigation. The advantages of observation are that I experience the situation first-hand, and this aids insights in the interpretation process. This also complements the interview method as some board members of the HOCD might not be keen to be interviewed. I will analyse the data at the end of each observation and take up pertinent issues to follow-up on interviews, and to interpret informal conversations.

3.7.5 Documented Evidence



Though the interviews are the backbone of this thesis, they are, however, complemented by written sources of data. For example, data on church-state relations in Zimbabwe will be obtained from newspaper articles, court records, books, journals, pastoral letters, and church and state relations bulletins. National Archives are useful in understanding who the Heads of Christian Denomination are and how the organisation originated. The archival material is useful in shedding light on the official view of the colonial government's perception of the HOCD. These are consulted in line with the argument of Vansina (1984:341) that secondary sources are not dead but they are active and charged with a lot of information that can be used objectively in a research.

3.8 TARGETED POPULATION

Population has been defined by Best and Khan (1993:13) as a group of people within a community or organisation that portray certain features that are of interest to the researcher. These are people who are the target of the research and the findings of the research will be useful to them.

In this study, the research was mainly targeting the Heads of Christian Denominations. There is also Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe Council of Churches, Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference and the African Independent Churches under HOCD. EFZ according to Rev P. Karekera (interview) was founded in 1962 and represents denominations, churches, Para-church movements and individual Christians of the Evangelical persuasion. The fellowship grew over the years and now has a membership of over 300 churches and over 4.5

million members. EFZ provides a platform for joint action and coordination of member bodies' activities. Representative participants were selected from each target group in the provinces of Zimbabwe. In this research study, the population will consist of Heads of Christian Denominations, victims of political violence and Government key personnel.

3.9 SAMPLING PROCEDURE

Sampling is a criterion or process of selecting certain elements to represent the whole group of the method used. For Trochim (2000:29), sampling is the process of choosing a representation from population of the researcher's interest so as to study the sample one may have fairly generalized the results from the population which might have chosen. It is a way of selecting a given number of persons from a defined population as representative of that population (Borg and Gall, 1996:34; Chiromo 2006:120-137). Purposive sampling was the main sampling strategy used in this study. With purposive sampling, the process takes place with a specific goal in mind and it usually happens that specific pre- determined groups are targeted in advance (Patton, 2002:243). This means that it is not necessary to investigate the entire population, but the researcher must ensure that the sample must be representative and accurate. The researcher used 15 people to represent the sample of his research. Sampling is all about reducing the population to a manageable and representative size.

3.9.1 Entry procedures

It is a common practice in qualitative research to inform the local authorities of my intentions as the researcher and to do all the necessary formalities of ensuring success in the field (Heller, 1998: vii). Permission was sought from the respective Heads of Christian Denominations in Zimbabwe to conduct the research.

3.9.2 Procedure for Interviews

The participants for interviews were a convenience sample (due to convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher). This was comprised of HOCD representatives and HOD Executive Board Members in Harare Province. A convenient sample of 48 denominational heads/ representatives in Harare Province was selected.

I sent emails and placed calls to set up interview appointments for four Executive Board Members. The Interview Guide was also sent via email to all the participants. As the researcher, I conducted 30-35 minute in-depth interviews with each participant. For denominational heads, I used convenience for I met some of the heads of denominations at HOCD meetings and seminars in Harare.

3.10 The Basic Models of Church State Relations

They are basically four key models of church state relations namely theocratic, erastianism, friendly and unfriendly models.

3.10.1. Theocratic model

It refers to the state of being under the control of religious leaders or institutions for essentially religious purposes. The period of the judges in the Old Testament was theocratic in nature. Recently, the Zionist Israel is an example of a theocracy. However, those who seek to control the state for religious purposes, at times discover in the end that it is the church that is controlled by the state for political ends (F.J. Verstraelen 1998:49). Given the above premises, one may infer that in Zimbabwe, the state does not have a theocratic leadership.

3.10.2. Erastianism

Erastianism is whereby the state uses religion for its own interests. The use of religion by the State has been termed Erastianism after the sixteenth century Swiss German Thomas Erastus (F.J. Verstraelen 1998:49). It is when politicians advance political ends through religious means. This is however, the case with many denominations in Zimbabwe which are being taken advantage of by the ZANU PF government.

3.10.3 Separation of church state - friendly relations.

F.J. Verstraelen (1998:49) claims that separation of Church-State friendly relations is when independence and integrity of religious bodies is maintained. The researcher

may conclude that this does not relate to the relationship which exists between the State and Churches in Zimbabwe. Separation of Church-State friendly relations seeks to preserve the freedom of expression of the people.

3.10.4 Separation of Church and State - Unfriendly relations.

This relationship occurs when religious and political institutions are legally separated with hostility. This is perhaps most brutally expressed by the constitution of Albania which states that, “the state recognizes no religion, supports and develops atheist propaganda for the purpose of implanting world outlook on people” (F.J Verstraelen1998:49). The unfriendly separatism is contrary to what Christians hope for in the civil society. This information does not point to the existing Church-State relations in Zimbabwe, since the State has intentions of taking advantage of the Church.

3.10.5 African Independent Churches and Politics

Before 1990, the Johanne Marange Apostolic Church, Johanne Masowe and African Apostolic Church were not very much concerned with material wealth. Their focus was on spiritual life in heaven. During the colonial period and the post-colonial period, from 1990s to 2000, African Independent Churches were silent about politics because poverty in Zimbabwe was not widespread and deep-rooted as it is today (Mhora: interview). The Association of Apostolic Churches in Zimbabwe (AACZ) pledged its support for R. Mugabe and his ZANU PF led government and rebuked prophets who prophesised death on the president. AACZ president Bishop Tsungai

Vushe said, “Those who claim that we are against ZANU PF are lying because we do not have a problem with the party and it is not abusing us” (*The International Journal of African Catholicism* 2013). The Association had also released a song on compact disc titled, “*Mauya baba*” - praising, thanking and honouring Mugabe for his supposedly, good deeds. It is against such an understanding that I am going to assess the role played by AICs in advocating for reconciliation and national healing in Zimbabwe.

3.11 Validity and Reliability

This research will make use of three ways to prove and authenticate data, commonly known as data triangulation, to increase validity and reliability of research findings. This is done through the use of interviews, observations and document analysis (White 2000:283). Triangulation is a means of data analysis developed for use in surveys to determine, for instance, the highest point in an area. They would beam their telescopes in three different angles, and the point that continues to come out in the beaming becomes the highest point, and thereafter, a trigonometry beacon is erected. In triangulation, the study uses more than three different methods of data collection to make a reliable conclusion. In this study, the interview is at the apex of the triangle, and document analysis and observation are the support bases. In all, this is useful in that validity and reliability of data is increased.

3.12 Ethical and legal consideration

Ethical considerations are of paramount importance in any study. These are ethics, which define what is legitimate for the researcher to do and not to do. Confidentiality was exercised in which participants were told that, their names were not needed and will remain unknown, I will not mention the names of the respondents in this project and under any circumstances; rather I will use pseudo names as a disguise. All the information in this study will be for research purposes only and not to be taken as evidence in the court of law. Consequently, everyone was told that, participation was voluntary and any one has the right to withdraw from the study, thus the researcher did not coerce people to partake in the study and that if they have a question regarding the study they should feel free to ask at any given time.

3.13 Analysis and Interpretation of data

Even though analysis and interpretation of data in qualitative research is usually a single process, Wolcott (1987:14-18) postulates that, a peculiarity can be made between a process of analysis and that of interpretation. He acknowledges that analysis is a process whereby key factors and relationships among phenomena under investigation, are identified and isolated. In this technique, the researcher organises data by identifying persistent themes and building up relationships between them. I will identify what was important to note, what I learned and what I believed I could tell readers. According to Wolcott (1987: 19),

Interpretation is a process in which one seeks to make sense of one's data by reaching out for understanding, or, explaining beyond the limits of what can

be explained with the degree of certainty, usually associated with analysis (1987:78).

I agree that interpretation is a process whereby the researcher seeks to make sense of his or her data. Vakalisa & Samoff (1995:62) also share the same view as they define interpretation as a porch, in terms of thinking and writing. In this case, the person doing research transcends the ordinary level of factual data, and goes on to engage in continuous analysis. In this way, the researcher begins to probe into issues beyond what is obvious and what can be made of such facts.

3.14 Summary

This research study has incorporated a descriptive research survey and design. This is preferred because in many cases, it provides flexibility and it can also be associated with other designs as well. The target population is stratified into Heads of Christian Denominations, denominational head/ representatives and HOCD Executive Board Members. The data gathering instruments used will be questionnaires, interviews and written data sources. The next chapter will be on researched data presentation.

CHAPTER 4

THE WOUNDEDNESS OF THE ZIMBABWEAN POPULACE AND THE ROLE PLAYED BY HEADS OF CHURCHES

4.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to present and interpret data that has been collected through the literature use, observations and interviews on the woundedness of the Zimbabwean populace and the role played by the Heads of Christian Denominations on liberation, forgiveness and national healing in Zimbabwe. The Church's voice with regards to how it responded to the developments and under developments, corruption, politically driven violence in post-Independent Zimbabwe will also be presented. Thus, by using verbatim in qualitative research, the HOCDZ, perpetrators and victims of violence will all be allowed to speak for themselves. The acme of this research is on the presentation and analysing of gathered data. This is supported by Vulliamy (1990:171) who said, presenting research findings of any given research is the most critical component of the whole process of doing research.

Reverends, politicians, government workers and church survivors of political machinations, corruption and general congregants were all sampled. The participants' understanding of reality in terms of Soteriological (salvation), Christological (Christ), Ecclesiastical (Church), Pneumatological (Holy Spirit) and Anthropological (man) form the basis of this chapter. The general public and politicians are vital to this research because they play an important part in the crafting and execution of government policies. Pastors, Bishops and Reverends

were critical participants since they represent the church's prophetic voice. They ought to challenge the shortcomings of the ruling government and also shortcomings of the opposition parties. The research focuses on survivors of the liberation war, those who experienced the harsh Smith regime rule, survivors of the *Gukurahundi*, those who witnessed the alleged political violence and corruption in Zimbabwe. The key participants in this research were Christians since they give the research a theological scope.

Furthermore, the chapter seeks to find out whether members of the church were guided by Rene Girard's mimetic theory that Christ broke into the vicious circle of violence and corruption by taking upon him the violence of humanity to pay back violence for violence (2013:15-31). The mimetic theory is first and foremost a theory of religion. It describes the "religious" dimension of interpersonal relations. An analysis and interpretation of data will be made in light of the reviewed literature for possible synergy and where the findings support or contradict literature on the topic the researcher indicates this. Data analysis and interpretation were carried out to assess whether the findings addressed the research problem adequately.

Moyo (2008:7-8) argues that, politically motivated violence in Zimbabwe is a problem that can be traced beyond the millennium period as such it is one area that needs serious attention especially in relation to United Nations human rights policies. The way in which humanity is said to have been abused by the State gave the researcher the zeal to have a relook at Church-State relations. In the same way, women have suffered along with men and children, and this study makes a critical look at how women and children who are also part of God's order of creation were caught up in this suffering. Critical moments notable in this period include the *Gukurahundi*, the

Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP), Operation Restore Order (ORO), and the alleged pre and post-election violence.

4.2 THE PRESENTATION OF DATA WILL BE ON POLITICAL SITUATION IN ZIMBABWE POST-COLONIAL GOVERNMENT

The researcher will focus on the political situation in Zimbabwe after the fall of the White or colonial government. The wounds created by the black government to the people of Zimbabwe and the means to address these wounds as well as the success or failure of those attempts. The researcher has chosen to start with the *Gukurahundi*: Truth and Reparation as prerequisite and the others will follow in the sequence of political events in Zimbabwe under the leadership of black politicians.

4.2.1 Exploring *Gukurahundi*: Truth and Reparation as prerequisite

The lack of openness about the mass executions in the 1980s and the alleged political persecutions since around 2000 has affected many Zimbabweans. Evidence points to the fact that the media houses have not been spared by the dictatorial arm of the government in Zimbabwe. State-media relations and the transitions that the media have gone through from the colonial era to recent times leave a lot to be desired. The argument raised is that as in the colonial period, when there was a crackdown on liberal voices, post-independence media in Zimbabwe were also experiencing government heavy-handedness. Media have been silenced by the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA), which came into force

in 2002. Under the AIPPA, privately owned newspapers such as the Daily News and the Daily News on Sunday were closed down.

C Brand (1997:91) wrote that, the 5th Brigade's killing of more than 20,000 people to deal with only 400 dissidents who broke away from the army and engaged in harming government property and upsetting business is at the centre of the Shona and Ndebele ethnic rivalry. The publication by the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP), and Legal Resources Foundation (LRF) of *Breaking the Silence: Building True Peace in Zimbabwe* (1997), which was republished by Jacana, *Gukurahundi in Zimbabwe: A report of the disturbances in Matabeleland and Midlands 1980 – 1988* (2007), shows that the most agonising aspects of the massacres was the unaddressed plight of the survivors of the hostile nation.

4.2.2 The Shona-Ndebele relations

According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2002:17), the Ndebele, throughout colonialism, were viewed as a brutal offshoot of the Zulu kingdom under Shaka which “survived by plunder, pillage and violent raids upon their neighbours ... the Shona of the Zimbabwean plateau”. This played a part in the history and memory of conflict between the Shona and the Ndebele (Chimhundu 1992:91). Some regard this assertion as mythical and others a creation of the colonial education system. Many writers concur that the differences between the Shona and the Ndebele, which had to do with ethnic differences in the late 1800s, were as real as they would be today (Chigwedere 1982:67-91). The difference is that in the more recent past, they have been manipulated. Colonialism participated in making ethnicity a distinct reality, and

the church, unfortunately, played a part in the invention of tribalism (Lindgren 2005:159; Chimhundu 1992:87-109).

Amani, (2005:15-36) has it that, since the church also played a role in colonialism, this to a greater extent affected the socio-economic and political developments in Zimbabwe. Using this background to discuss liberation, reconciliation and national healing in relationship to the *Gukurahundi*, one finds that the negativity that was exercised in the war derives its energy from this history (Cousins, 2006:584-597). The conscientiousness of the colonial government for ethnic divisions in the country has plenty literary coverage (Lindgren 2005:84). The Ndebele identity was firstly reinforced by dislocated evictees who lost land to Ndebele invaders (Alexander and McGregor 1997:201). They constructed the Ndebele state “from the pain, anger and insecurity of the evictions” (Alexander and McGregor 1997:201). The second phase of construction was done by missionaries and colonial administrators in the “colonial transformation of pre-colonial identities”, which reinforced differences and distinctions made during colonialism (Alexander, 2006: 131). For the Ndebele, it “took the form of re-inscribing old names with new significance” (Alexander and McGregor, 1997:201).

Throughout the liberation struggle, Bernstein, H. (1994:163) says, these differences became clear when ZANU broke away from ZAPU in 1963. ZANU was led by Shona leaders like Herbert Chitepo and Ndabaningi Sithole before Robert Mugabe took over at the eve of independence, while ZAPU was led by Joshua Nkomo who was associated with the Ndebele. The two movements, in many cases fought against each other. At independence in 1980, the predominantly Shona led ZANU PF took the majority of votes because of the influence of ethnic constellation to election results. Nkosilani Ncube (interviewee: 12 June 2015) narrated that, the issue of

ethnicity has paralysed Zimbabwe's unity. In the post-independence government, ethnicity was used to elevate the Shona against the Ndebele in all national sectors such as the army, intelligence, education, welfare and social development. This led to problems in the army, with formerly ZAPU freedom fighters breaking away from the army and declaring a civil war which led to the *Gukurahundi* war.

4.2.3 The *Gukurahundi* War

Pope John XXIII in the encyclical *Pacem in Terris* advises that, "All people have a right to life, food, clothing, shelter, rest, medical care, education, and employment" (1963:130-131). Moreover, man has a natural right to be respected. The Pope here was trying to say, every human being has a right to his good name that's having good reputation as well. A human being has the right to freedom in investigating the truth, within the confines of the moral order and the common good as well as freedom of speech and publication, and freedom to pursue whatever profession he may choose. He has the right, also, to be accurately informed about public events. This means that when people are denied these basics, such that they seriously struggle to earn a living, are starving and homeless, they are being denied their basic rights. According to Raftopoulous (2005:44), the *Gukurahundi* war was executed by "The North Korean-trained 5th Brigade" between 1982 and 1987. The brigade was responsible for the death and disappearance of an estimated 20 000 people in Matabeleland and Midlands provinces. A number of reasons have been suggested for the eruption of this war, but all are rooted in the past grudges between the Ndebele and the Shona people. Ndlovu- Gatsheni (2002:17) commenting on

these grudges said, “This history of antagonism has had far reaching implications for post-colonial political developments, mainly in the military violence perpetrated by the largely Shona-speaking 5th Brigade in Matabeleland in the early 1980s”. The war was predicated on the 19th century Shona-Ndebele antagonism, PF ZAPU and ZANU PF enmity during the struggle and also the two parties’ different political ideas. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, (2002:24) further states that, it cannot be denied, however, that the Mugabe regime was also obsessed with security issues, and hence the state failed to appreciate the difficulties the nation inherited from colonialism such as a divided national army”.

4.2.4 Disparagements pointed against *Gukurahundi*

The Newsday magazine of 30 November 2016 carries a story of a senior ZAPU official and late deputy minister, Jini Ntutha, who was killed in 1984 at the height of the *Gukurahundi* massacres. Former Bulawayo councilor and family member, Michael Batandi Mpofu says,

We are very angry because we haven’t found answers as to why he was killed? We also don’t believe that whatever is happening in this country around the treatment of this region and its people gives us any hope that there is reconciliation.

Mpofu further lamented that:

We just hear about reconciliation, but haven’t seen any efforts to achieve it. We don’t believe there are any serious efforts towards reconciliation when the person, who is supposed to push for it, is going around giving us chicks.

Mpofu was taking a dig at the then Vice-President Phelekezela Mphoko, who was responsible for the national healing and reconciliation portfolio and had been going around Bulawayo donating chicks every weekend for about three months. It is now twelve years from the time Ntutha died, but nothing has been done by the government to reconcile with his family as yet (The Newsday magazine of 30 November 2016).

The *Gukurahundi* war was criticised for its systematic targeting of “ZAPU office bearers and community leaders such as teachers, nurses and headmen”. The attack on unarmed civilians made the violent operations “crucial in amplifying both a political and an ethnic interpretation of violence” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2002:26). Infact, many people feel that the *Gukurahundi* war was less purposeful compared to the liberation struggle. Even Prof Canaan Banana who was the face of the church in the government, the first President of Zimbabwe, admits that the *Gukurahundi* was problematic because the “means” the government applied to fight the civil war was not appropriate. He states “The violent undercurrents in Matabeleland posed more vital problems than a first reading may convey” (Banana, 1996:225). It is always important to take the principle used by Jesus Christ that every human being was created in the image and likeness of God and that he or she deserves to be treated with respect. Individuals have an inherent and immeasurable worth and dignity; each human life is considered sacred. As humans, we are all equal before God and that must lead us to think no less of somebody because they are from a different place or culture.

Sithembile (interview: 24 May 2015) said, in the *Gukurahundi* war, the black government failed to create an inclusive society in which minorities were integrated. Rather, politicians abused state resources and power against the civilians. The

Gukurahundi therefore annulled the widely quoted and magnanimous Mugabe's 1980 independence speech that "encouraged every Zimbabwean to forget the past and heralded the official policy of reconciliation of all parties involved in the conflict that gave birth to Zimbabwe and the amnesty ordinances of 1979 and 1980" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2002:23). In the *Gukurahundi* war, Canaan Banana questions the "excesses" in which the military and the rebels committed atrocities (Banana, 1996:227). What this suggests is that even in the government there was no agreement in terms of the excess of force applied on the civilians by the military. It is understood that there were forces against the young nation, emerging from a situation of war.

4.2.5 The Pains of the *Gukurahundi*

The Standard Newspaper of 12 June 2016 states that, Mugabe's North Korean trained 5th Brigade was a military crack unit that was different from other units of the Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA). The infamous 5th brigade was answerable directly to Mugabe and functioned outside the standard military chain of command. It is well-documented that the 5th Brigade received training that was both military and political in content. This was a case of a partisan army murdering Ndebele civilians in an act of ethnic cleansing.

The *Gukurahundi* war "hardened ethnic prejudice and created a strong link between ethnicity and political affiliation" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2002:25). A case in point was the use of rape violence in the war. This was interpreted as an organised attempt by the Shona, "to create a generation of Shona children in Matabeleland – a 'Shona-ization' of the region" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2002:25). Moreover, the *Gukurahundi* war also

aided the ZANU PF government to strengthen power. With the struggle to effect a one-party state, the merging of the state and party “would have culminated in the entrenchment of party hegemony” (Banana, 1996:226).

It is from this horrid background that the troubled state of Zimbabwe continues to nurse the bleeding scars of the *Gukurahundi*. The *Standard Newspaper* of 12 June 2016, in describing the pains of *Gukurahundi*, quoted the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP), and the Legal Resources Foundation of Zimbabwe (LRFZ) when they state that: “Perhaps, the CCJP and LRFZ, (1999) correctly captured what went wrong in post-colonial Zimbabwe. People have been tortured, seen their loved ones murdered or abducted, and had their houses burnt. No efforts have been made to alleviate their plight and those who caused the damage have not been made accountable” (1999:30). In November 2009, United States President Barack Obama described the *Gukurahundi* period as a period of “systematic murder of many thousands of people... many of whom were buried in mass graves”. Obama said, the *Gukurahundi* era was the saddest chapter of Zimbabwe’s postcolonial history (*The Standard* 12 June 2016).

4.2.5.1 *Gukurahundi*: A time bomb

Leslie (interviewee) as he struggled to control his tears said,

The people of Matabeleland are a bitter and angry people. They are like a time bomb waiting for the right time to explode. The Zimbabwean government has surely failed in the area of national anger management.

Canaan Banana regarded the experiences of the Gukurahundi as “important lessons” for Zimbabweans to pledge not to solve current and future problems through the barrel of the gun (Banana, 1996:227). The authority of governance, for which the liberation struggle was fought, lies in freeing civilians to constructively criticise their leaders (Banana, 1996:226). In the current developments, interviews and research done by civil society and members of parliament request that the “experiences of *Gukurahundi* must be recorded for posterity”. Though it is difficult to ascertain the practicality of suggested initiatives and the feelings being aroused by the *Gukurahundi* atrocities, the church’s attempts to deal with it, and to possibly usher in a new era of life and reconciliation in the country, a mechanism of transformation remains fundamental to people whose lives are hurting.

The *Gukurahundi* civilian attack created a lot of problems. One of the challenges posed by *Gukurahundi* is the denial of children who lost parents to get national identity cards (ID). An ID gives someone full citizenship status and in turn the person will have voting rights. The CCJP and LRF report of 1997, *Breaking the Silence*, was written with the idea of advocating for restoration, reconciliation and reconstruction of people’s lives that were affected by *Gukurahundi*. Nxosilathi Zulu (interviewee: 2 January 2016) reiterated that, “we the Ndebele people need a form of compensation to reconcile and restore our lives in society. Echoing the idea of compensation, Coltart (2007:98) said, provision of compensation and livelihood to many vulnerable persons, whose properties were destroyed during the massacres, would aim to restore the sources of incomes they were robbed of when they lost property and the parents who were killed in the war.

4.2.5.2 The 1987 Unity Accord in relation to the *Gukurahundi*

During the 1987 Unity Accord, the clergy were also hopeful that the idea of unity represented their wishes and hopes for reconciling the Shona and the Ndebele. The Unity Accord, however, failed to bring the intended ethnic reconciliation. Thirteen years later, the 2000 parliamentary elections indicated that most of the provinces in Matabeleland voted for the opposition, Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). The shift indicates that ethnic disgruntlement is still in the country, and this has been worsened by economic meltdown and leadership problems. So, the Unity Accord did not solve ethnic tensions, but rather marked what Huyse calls “the start of a period of uneasy co-existence between the rival groups” (Huyse, 2002:38). The uneasy co-existence and lack of tangible evidence for reconciliation between the Shona and the Ndebele was marked by lack of power-sharing.

An emotionally charged Zenzo (interviewee) reiterates that, “can the Ndebele ethnic group, for example, whole heartedly accept reconciliation when day in, day out they pass through a building called *Karigamombe*?” The building is situated in Harare central business district. *Karigamombe* is a Shona term meaning “the one who fells bulls” The late vice President of Zimbabwe, Joshua Nkomo was the face of the Ndebele people in the government. The word “Nkomo” is Ndebele and means a “bull”. Before the 1987 Unity Accord, Joshua Nkomo used to lead a political party, (PF ZAPU) that used a political symbol of a “bull.” Mugabe’s political symbol is a cock. A cock is much smaller than a bull so by saying *Karigamombe*, the word is saying something small (cock) has caused a bull (Nkomo) which is bigger to fall. As such it is a mockery to say a bull has been defeated by a cock. It is alleged the building was named such to commemorate the defeat of Nkomo’s PF ZAPU party by

ZANU-PF. The latter is the ruling party that was run by Robert Mugabe until November 2017. So day in day and day out, the Ndebele people are always reminded of how they were defeated by ZANU-PF. If ever authentic reconciliation is to take place, socio-economic and political situation needs to be conducive and this will in turn bring about healing. Currently, the relationship between the perpetrators and victims of political violence in Zimbabwe is sour and there is dire need of reconciliation.

The 1987 Unity Accord in Zimbabwe entrenched and imposed a form of forgetting of the past to the people of Matabeleland from the military personnel violations of human rights, a tradition they inherited from the “Indemnity and Compensation Act of 1975” (Huyse, 2002:36). Offenders were granted protection in advance, drawing a veil over the 5th Brigade violations in the *Gukurahundi* operations. The closure of the book of violations meant that the end of the war did not bring reconciliation between civilians and the government. Unfortunately, reconciliation was negotiated by leaders, a venture conceived, developed and concluded by the elite leadership, without grassroots consultation or survivor involvement. This Accord by the elite, therefore, did not resolve past grudges or allow the public to internalise the agreement. In essence, the imposed Accord fed the unresolved grudges rather than resolve them. The government policy in Matabeleland replaced aggression “with neglect and victimization” because the ZAPU leaders “yielded to military pressure and agreed to ‘unite’ and become part of ZANU-PF” (Huyse, 2002:38). The Unity Accord, which supported the culture of political impunity, became challenged.

4.2.6 The Zimbabwe's Land reform Programme

The Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) in Zimbabwe has been garlanded on Zimbabwe's socio-economic and political map since 2000. This issue has received mixed feelings since it was not only about land but also about people and institutions. The FTLRP also reawakened people's memories of the past. As a result, it has become a contested issue that over the years has resulted in policies being drafted and redrafted.

The 1890 invasions by the Pioneer Column with Cecil John Rhodes at the helm disenfranchised Africans from their land rights among other things. They took away from the kings and their representatives, the custodianship of the land (Bakare, 1993: 40). The whites enacted laws that disenfranchised and took away the rights from the Africans for example the Land Apportionment Act of 1930, the Land Husbandry Act of 1971, and others. The Land Apportionment Act divided the land area equally between whites and blacks, with 50.8% of good-weathered fertile soils for the white minority and the rest for Africans and wild animals (Essof, 2012: 23). Actually of the land apportioned to Africans, 30% of it were low-rainfall poor soils (Masengwe, 2011: 23; Christopher, 1971:39), leading to the war of liberation. Chirongoma (2009: 75) states:

The 30% containing the poorer soils and receiving the lowest rainfall was for the Africans. It subsequently became inadequate as their numbers increased; leading to several wars aimed at reclaiming lost land from the invaders. The most notable are the 1893 Matabeleland war and the 1896-7 Ndebele-Shona uprisings, which were both ruthlessly crushed by the power of the settlers' superior weaponry.

Chirongoma further stated that “The land issue has remained a bone of contention in Zimbabwe and the main goal of the liberation struggle was to reclaim the land” (Chirongoma, 2009:75). This continual fight for land which was once squashed by superior settler weaponry (Farren 2001:2) changed when Africans began to unite their people into nations. For Zimbabwe, as the people were aggrieved by the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) announced by Smith in 1965 and the introduction of the Land Husbandry Act (Brand, 1977: 240), people started thinking of how best they could free themselves politically and economically. As more and more people left the country, and Zimbabwean politicians formed parties to confront the Smith government, using the rhetoric of restoring land to the masses, thereby gaining support from among people in rural and urban areas (McLaughlin, 1996: 290-293). Between 1978 and 1979, the war escalated, leading to the widespread suffering of the people from lack of all basic necessities (Auret, 1992: 123). At independence, there was a lot to be addressed to return people into living normal lives. Unfortunately, the 1980s did not address the immediate needs of the majority of the people due to the quick announcement and enactment of the peace and prosperity propaganda of the ZANU PF government. Such underlying concerns became the root causes of Zimbabwe’s conflicts with workers, students as well as traders. Zimbabwe failed to address the land issue and governance systems that were intolerant to dissent.

According to Essoff, (2012: 23) “At the time of independence approximately 6 000 white farmers owned over 50% of Zimbabwe’s most fertile land, while in Communal Areas, 700 000 families occupied less than 50% of the least fertile agricultural land”. The protection of the small white minority was contained in the Lancaster House Constitution which propelled the willing-buyer willing-seller approach. With rising

poverty levels juxtaposed to vast under-utilized tracts of land, the government institutionalized land acquisitions (Moyo, 1995). Unfortunately, the government plans could not materialize with speed, and in 1998, the donor conference nailed the efforts in the coffin. “Thus the donor conference held in 1998 forced the government to concede that any land taken would be paid for up front” (Essof, 2012: 25). All this happened as opposition grew from civic society, trade unions and the general public. “The powerful evocation of nationalist struggle through the third Chimurenga facilitated the unfolding of a race war with white farmers ... and the country plunged into violent land seizures” (Essof, 2012:29) sponsored by the state through self-styled war veterans.

From history, the encounter between western settlers and native Africans was characterised by white settler superiority and supremacy and African peasant inferiority and subjugation. Anything that was subdued and controlled was viewed as weak. Being incapable of executing leadership and governance on land, Africans were undermined on racially motivated land decisions, and women were seen and treated worse than their male counterparts. This negatively affected simple social structures governing politics, economics and agriculture in Zimbabwe. European technology was quite superior to African technology in everything including agriculture, which overpowered the African population. The introduction of the capital economy in Zimbabwe finally separated the men from the women and forever undermined women’s lives.

4.2.6.1 The Land Reform Programme increased uncertainty among the Zimbabwe’s populace

The events preceding the year 2000 led to the decreasing popularity of ZANU-PF due to economic difficulties in Zimbabwe. Workers, students and civil society became involved in work boycotts, food riots and strikes for affordable prices of consumer goods. Also, the government social service provision was depreciating. This state of affairs led to the rise of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) as an opposition force to reckon with. Again, civil society rose to register its dissatisfaction. ZANU-PF responded to some demands by civil society such as the drafting of a new constitution. Due to the anomalies the constitutional process went through, civil society campaigned against the constitution, which failed to pass the February 2000 constitutional referendum. The failure of the 2000 constitutional referendum led the dominant ZANU-PF parliament to amend the Westminster constitution to compulsorily acquire white owned farms. This was called the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP), which targeted the white farmers.

Government officials made racial attacks on white farmers, verbally and sometimes physically. This scenario increased national insecurity, impacting further the decreasing services in education and health. The ability of the national industry to produce food and clothing dwindled. Though the land reform was a noble aspect of economic redress, the FTLRP failed to plan and consider the effect of external factors such as bad weather conditions and the international market system. The Zimbabwean state also failed to consider the national limitations in farming technology, challenges of weather patterns, HIV and AIDS among farm workers and lack of farming finance. The FTLRP was widely condemned by both the local and the international society for it took land from the rich white farmers and allocated it to government cronies without empowering poor people. All in all, the FTLRP brought more racial insecurity as ZANU-PF used racial polarity on land redistribution. Many

people viewed this as ZANU-PF's political struggle to survive, as well as the struggle for the legitimacy of its leadership in the face of growing poverty due to a deteriorating economic base in agriculture and manufacturing (NVDD, 2006:31).

The land question was to be the centre of racial identity in Zimbabwe. Even in politics, land has been the driving force for ZANU-PF's political survival, making the land issue a locus of reconciliation for white and black people. This means that resolving the land issue once and for all is a positive step towards national reconciliation, where racial relations between whites and blacks can be restored. This could assist small scale black farmers to produce more food (Cousins, 2006:594) as well as reconcile whites and blacks in Zimbabwe.

The FTLRP received widespread condemnation because it created many divisions. Generally, it lacked economic sustainability and destroyed human livelihoods. There were also divisions on party lines, that is, between supporters (ZANU-PF) and those who disapproved (MDC) of the programme. ZANU-PF was supported mainly by government, war veterans, small scale farmers and peasants, while the MDC was supported by large-scale commercial farmers, farmers' unions, workers' unions, lawyers and students. Large-scale commercial farmers, in fact, did it for their own selfish-economic interests, and thus they received dissident reaction from self-styled war veterans and discontented masses through property raids. It appears justified the allegations that some government officials are implicated for sponsoring some of these raids for their own interests (ownership of land properties and farms). Above all, the land reform was biased towards men and was arranged in such a way that, "Loyalty to the party and its leadership became the criteria for benefiting from the land grab" (Dzino 2011: 211).

4.2.6.2 The Lancaster Agreement propagated land disparity

The Westminster constitution, commonly referred to as the Lancaster House Agreement, legislated that one-fifth parliamentary seats (20 of the 100 seats) be reserved for the white minority from 1980 to 1987. This was meant to enable white farmers to stop the parliament from making unapproved changes in the constitution. These restrictive details protected the minority white farmers from losing land until the third elections in 1990. Besides this law, the ZANU PF government had to give guarantees to whites for their land, and if it was acquired for resettlement of people, it had to be paid for in foreign currency. With agriculture as the basis of the national economy, the government followed “the letter and spirit of the Lancaster House constitution” (Herbst, 1989:45), to protect the agrarian industry and national reconciliation. This commitment did not obligate white landowners to change their luxurious lifestyles during colonialism “while the vast majority of the population continued to find their existence from inadequate landholdings” (Herbst, 1989:45). For this reason, Zimbabwe had the best black government economic policy for whites (Herbst, 1989:46).

Unfortunately, the policy had a narrow focus because whites were treated kindly because of their economic output, which in some way meant that the economy was going to be run by whites without considering the contribution of blacks. In the first place, the ZANU PF government’s response was wise for national reconciliation and continued agricultural production, but it, however, failed to do justice to growing poverty and hunger among black peasant farmers.

The fast land reform programme of 2000 – 2003 in Zimbabwe was meant to empower the previously disadvantaged such as women, the aged, youths and the

crippled, and commonly the blacks. However, the same can be seen undermining the lives of some of these people. The FTLRP displaced people resulting in risks of homelessness, landlessness, joblessness, lack of health provision, loss of property, food insecurity and lack of citizenship. The violent evictions and displacement led to farm workers' inability to pursue their political and socio-economic interests. The nature of this violence went against what the former UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan once said in 1999 that "Violence against women is perhaps the most shameful human rights violation ... As long as it continues, we cannot claim to be making real progress towards equality, development, and peace" (Women and Land in Zimbabwe, 2007), making the FTLRP amplify women's poverty and suffering. Women were heavily affected as well and F. Chimhanda explains patriarchal binary mentality also experience in land allocation is Zimbabwe:

Shona women realize that they experience marginalization in a sexist binary logic in which man has a superior mind, where women have inferior mind, man is the head, while woman is the minor, and man is the impregnator or bull where woman is barren. Thus, Shona women are grieved that negative elements are projected on them while similar acts done by men are rationalized or tolerated for a desired good (Chimhanda 2003: 18).

Rather, the FTLRP facilitated marginalisation of women is the Shona and Ndebele "sexist binary logic", thus further impoverishing the majority of the electorate, the women traders, employees, mothers and girls, while it facilitated political expediency for the ruling ZANU PF party ahead of the newly formed MDC party.

Chanda (interviewee: 26 February 2016) stated that, "The male child was seen as the progenitor in the family and thus authoritative in many official family and community ceremonies as well as the heir to the family's wealth. Land thus had to be given to the boy child or males in general". Viewed from theological and political

perspectives in Zimbabwe, Maposa supported this by saying, “every son of the soil must continue to be tied to the land, mother soil. To deny the son of the soil this land becomes a naked violation of human rights as enshrined in the natural divine law” (Maposa 2012: 84). The idea of son here refers to the male person in whose care, women would eventually benefit. This shows that, the land distribution was not done in a fair way. Rather, the word son should be supposed to refer to son/daughter of the soil, if women could be part of the equation. Even though the Land Reform Programme has come and gone, the challenge has been that if the father passes on, the wife and female children could not have the family wealth (land) transferred to them. They would rather send it to the male person in another house than to give it to the female children.

This is very particular with land, where the female members of the family are often expected to be under the authority of some male guardian, and are not expected to make decisions without family consultations or the aid of the men. Unfortunately, these decisions include issues to do with women’s own personal lives, especially marriage partners. As such, most women were already socialized that land was to be registered in the name of a male relative. Women in Zimbabwe are questioning this today. In particular, there is a rise in women who are single parents. The Beijing conference worked as an eye opener for many women in Zimbabwe. Again, former vice president of Zimbabwe, Joice Mujuru emancipated women to be aware of their God given dignity and role in Church and society.

Zimbabwe was once renowned for its agricultural produce, as the “breadbasket of Southern and Central Africa”, and its star-hood from colonialism, yet the 1990s and 2000s the contrary image is that Zimbabwe sunk to a begging bowl status. The land issue, both “political and gendered” (Bhatasara, 2011: 316), predates independence,

thus it seems to be “a product of the historical grievances which emerged on account of colonialism in Zimbabwe” (Maposa, 2012: 70). The FTLRP rather reconfigured land use and the economy, and ZANU PF has distorted history of the nationalist struggle to legitimize its violent confiscation of land (Kriger, 2006: 1151, 1165). Mutupo, Manjengwa & Chiweshe (2014: 47) regard the reconfiguration as a re-peasantization process of agriculture “to make the countryside a more viable and desirable place to live and to promote food security and new synergies with domestic industries”. However, “men and women have benefited differently from the FTLRP in terms of access to land and have resorted to a range of often gender-specific livelihood strategies” (Chingarande, 2010: iii).

The FTLRP was used as a campaign tool for the up-coming 2000 elections and for politically mobilizing the nation as well revamping the economy in favour of black masses. Violence against farmers and their workers was practically encouraged. The FTLRP brought a climate of violence, which prevailed until the 2013 elections. Many of these elections were condemned by international observers as not free and fair. Due to the violence and reduced farming activity on the farms, towns received an influx of people from the farms, worsening unemployment and increasing violence in urban centers.

Finally, the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) meant to address the problem of urban and rural poverty for households led to political and familial instability. Chirongoma (2009: 79) says:

The bitterly disputed Fast Track Land Distribution Programme of 2000 which resulted in the transfer of land mostly from experienced white commercial farmers to inexperienced African, mostly absentee landlords, negatively affected agricultural production, the mainstay of the Zimbabwean economy.

Zimbabwe has primarily an agrarian and mining economy. The FTLRP became a key factor towards a complex humanitarian crisis in Zimbabwe. As a result, by 2007, the state of affairs was “evident in the statistics of high infant mortality, chronic malnutrition, vulnerability to preventable diseases, low life expectancy, and high illiteracy” (Moyo and Yeros, 2007:104).

4.2.7 Operation Restore Order (ORO)

The Zimbabwean government embarked on Operation *Murambatsvina* “to clean up the country of vendors, flea-market traders and foreign currency dealers, and to destroy illegally built structures” (Vambe, 2008: 2). Some other groups involved in the operation indicate further that ORO was an act of retribution to urban voters who, in the previous elections, voted in favor of the opposition in parliamentary and presidential elections (Tibaijuka, 2005: 20).

Operation Restore Order (ORO) which is commonly known as Operation *Murambatsvina* came in May 2005 and was formally stopped in July the same year although in some places the operation continued to take place. ORO targeted houses in informal settlements, unauthorised housing extensions, informal businesses and illegal structures erected for these purposes. ORO was a programme that was described by Sekesai Makwavarara as enforcing “council by-laws and the stopping of all forms of alleged ‘illegal activities in areas such as vending, illegal structures, and illegal cultivation’ in our cities” (Chindomu, 2006: 46-55). Sekesai Makwavarara was the chairperson of the government-appointed Harare Commission, who first officially announced on 19 May 2005 that ORO was coming and was going to be put into effect “in conjunction with Zimbabwe Republic Police

(ZRP)” (Chindomu, 2006: 46-55). A government notice advised people to demolish illegal structures by June 20, 2005, but surprisingly a few days after the announcement, 25 May 2005, a massive operation by government officials ensued. The operation that began in Harare led by the police and the army soon engulfed all cities in the country. ORO destroyed business and vending sites, houses, and settlements on farms. Chirongoma explains:

The operation involved the bulldozing, smashing and burning of structures housing many thousands of poor urban dwellers ... The destruction and demolition first targeted so-called shantytowns in the high density suburbs, and informal vending and manufacturing operations, later extending to settlements on farms in peri-urban and rural areas. More than 52 sites were affected and practically no area designated as urban was spared. The most devastating and immediate effect of this operation was that hundreds of thousands of people were rendered homeless and left without any viable form of livelihood. Women were the majority of those who endured the trauma (Chirongoma, 2009: 84).

The ORO is a result of longstanding unresolved policy issues since independence, where social, economic and political issues in a globalizing world suffering from disease challenges are key (Price-Smith & Daly, 2004:54-61); poor governance affecting food productivity (Masengwe 2011:13); and political instability (Chirongoma, 2009:81). This then led to increased poverty and unemployment; resulting in informal trading for survival. Indigenization ideas led many young men and women to open up tailoring, hairdressing, carving and bookbinding service shops in the cities. With increasing unemployment even city councils ignored the erection of backyard shops, accounting to over 40% of the national economy (Chirongoma 2009: 78) states:

Besides flea markets and vending stalls, cities and towns throughout Zimbabwe witnessed the mushrooming of street hawkers and makeshift stands, many of which were supplying the same range of goods sold by the stores in front of which they plied their business, clearly violating the rights of the formal sector which continued to pay taxes. Many stakeholders described the Central Business District of Harare as an eyesore and as totally chaotic and most middle class people blamed this situation on the government.

According to a report given by Tibaijuka, housing extensions were larger in number compared to legally recognized and approved dwellings (Tibaijuka, 2005: 26). ORO execution led to demolition of houses, “tuck shops were forced to close, goods under sale at the informal markets were impounded by the State operatives as directed by ZANU (PF) politicians” (Maposa, 2012: 99).

Many people however continued to think that ORO was a smokescreen to opposition politics rather than that it addressed urban problems with informal structures. Many people saw this as reenacting of the colonial ideas of limiting people’s political and economic mobility by undermining informal trading where the majority of them were doing very well (Vambe, 2008: 75). The purpose of ORO was to ensure that the bulk of Zimbabwe’s electorate remained poor and consequently dependent on state benefaction.

4.2.7.1 The impact of Operation *Murambatsvina* on the majority of the poor

Many people suffered, especially those who had been designated vending slots in flea markets. Many of these people were complying with council regulations paying their monthly subscriptions to city councils. They did this on the pretext that the 1996 Constitution of Zimbabwe article 16(1) which stated “No property of any description or interest or right there in shall be compulsorily acquired” would be followed. Seeing that the society was in a dilemma, churches issued statements to voice their concerns (ZNPC, 30 May 2005), and NGOs and churches provided humanitarian assistance as well as asked the government “to stop the operation immediately until alternative mechanisms were put in place” (NANGO, 5 June 2005; Chari, 2008: 115).

Men, women and children were made destitute, left without food, water, sanitation or access to health facilities. According to Vambe, “Without anyone to turn to, and unable to raise capital to restart their businesses, most people lost their economic independence and some were forced to choose the hard option of being thieves or prostitutes” (2008: 76).

Chamu (interviewee: 28 June 2016) said the city authorities were indeed heartless people. They were not even sympathetic to the plight of the poor. Rather they destroyed some houses and businesses which -had been built beautifully and could easily have been regularized through council approving their plan. ORO “was carried out with a high degree of insensitivity to the rights and needs of those affected and with such ferocious speed that local people began to speak of ‘Zimbabwean tsunami’” (Mlambo, 2008: 10). The operation aimed at making the poor feel the pinch of the exercise, in the wake of ZANU-PF’s failure to establish its hegemonic rule in the history of independent Zimbabwe (Moore, 2008: 25). It is from this angle that ORO needs to be criticized in view of its impact on the lives of all people in society.

Global responses came from the EU who issued a statement on 7 June criticizing government actions (Chari, 2008:115). The UN Rapporteur, Dr Miloon Kothari, asked the government “to immediately halt the mass forced evictions” (20 April 2006). The affected people were estimated to have reached 700 000 who lived in more than 100 000 housing structures, and tens of thousands of business structures. On nominal calculation, the operation directly and indirectly affected more than 2.4 million people, about 20% of the population then.

In as much as justifications were raised for Operation *Murambatsvina* by the state, Chimedza (2008: 87) says:

The focus is on how public law reform and coercive public policy has been deployed by nationalist elites to revive a waning hegemony resulting in excessive interference with the rights of citizens. Operation *Murambatsvina* must be interrogated and understood historically and empirically as an elite and uncivil nationalist project of establishing and conjuring 'identities' which make inclusion and exclusion possible and mess democratic governance.

Observers to the operation, like David Coltart of the MDC however, had different views such as punishing the errant urban electorate, succession politics in ZANU PF, controlling major foreign currency in-flows, a cover-up on the failing agricultural economy and possibly to force people to go into farming, and to engineer reverse urban-rural drift. Worse still, operation *Murambatsvina* has been seen as interfering with human rights, citizenship and governance. Such human rights like the right to shelter, education and right to treatment were all ignored. In this way, Operation *Murambatsvina* displayed an erosion of certain humanitarian rights enshrined in local and international laws.

4.2.7.2 Operation *Murambatsvina*: The Church's response

Reverend Gwara (interviewee: 26 November 2015) believed that, Operation *Murambatsvina* affected the majority of the marginalized segments of the population. It plunged men, women, children, and the elderly deeper into poverty, deprivation and destitution, thus rendering them even more vulnerable to illness and despair than before. Some churches in Zimbabwe, through the Heads of Christian Denominations, sent health workers to different camps where people were resettled, providing medication and other basic services. These churches played a critical role

since they served people from traveling long distances looking for treatment in clinics. Bishop Zuva (interviewee:13 March 2016) also said, through the “cry for help” done by the church, the United Nations envoy made strong recommendations to the Zimbabwe Government as the first steps to address the human rights and humanitarian crisis in the country. Operation *Murambatsvina* led many people to lose access to basic services such as education, water, food, and health, leaving many people stranded. Such services were supposed to be restored as a matter of urgency. People lived in the open during winter, and many people suffered from diseases like pneumonia and had no access to treatment.

The timing, impact, motivation and magnitude of the operation raised eyebrows. ORO targeted prescribed unlawful lodgings and structures as a way to crack down on suspected prohibited dealings. Unfortunately, the exercise was indiscriminate and unjustified for it never considered the plight of the marginalised and was done in utter disregard to national and international humanitarian regulations. The government could not dialogue with anyone. This revealed that Zimbabwe had unaddressed histories of inequities and difficult structural economic problems that required international intervention to resolve. The international community rather needs to intervene in addressing outdated housing and urban development policies that conflicted with new Zimbabwean policies of indigenization.

4.2.7.3 An assessment of Operation Restore Order

Rev. Pasi (interviewee: 26 February 2016) said Operation Restore Order (ORO) contravened many statutory procedures of Regional Town and Planning Act, for

residents did not receive any prior warning as to the regulation against their residence. ORO leashed a humanitarian crisis by demolishing houses, assets and means of livelihood at a time when the Zimbabwean economy was on its knees. The operation was not pro-poor, and did not provide security of tenure, affordable housing, access to water and sanitation, nor encourage small trader activities as desired by the current environment (Tibaijuka, 2005: 8). The call on government to observe the rule of law in order to develop citizens who are law abiding cannot be overemphasized given the amount of breach to international and national humanitarian laws and human rights. ORO precipitated a humanitarian crisis when government had not enough resources to neither compensate for losses nor provide reprieve to the suffering masses. ORO thus increased unemployment, reduced agricultural activity, and increased people's vulnerability to hunger and diseases. In all, the church was affected by ORO as it jeopardized the livelihoods of African Initiated Churches who dominated the informal sector (Sibanda *et al.* 2008:67-78), and in particular women (Vambe 2008:75-78). Unfortunately, the church has been polarized and divided, while on the other hand, has been courageous to challenge the vicious Zimbabwean regime by emphasizing the upholding of peace and tolerance among its citizens.

4.2.8 The 2007 – 2008 Zimbabwe's Hyper-inflationary milieu

Hyper-inflation can be defined as the devaluation of the national economy and national currency. The rate of inflation in Zimbabwe rose up to 79.6 billion percent by mid-November 2008 (Hanke & Kwok, 2009). The Zimbabwean economic meltdown deepened in the mid-1990s due to economic and political decisions done without

right economic advice and decision. The first had to do with ESAP in 1990, the second has to do with the unbudgeted 1997 war veterans packages and gratuities, the Zimbabwe government's involvement in the DRC war in the same year, the labor movement's job boycotts of the late 1990s, and finally the FTLRP of 2000-2003.

At the beginning of 2000, the government of Zimbabwe attempted to amend the constitution to empower the president to decide without majority support what to do about the land, the economy, regional wars and many other issues. Thus, "The February 2000 constitutional referendum was aimed at convincing people to take Zimbabwe's democracy into the new millennium". This initiative was started by the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) which was officially launched on 31 January 1998, and has its roots in the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) through its employee Mr Tawanda Mutasa. "The role of the ZCC in the initial formation of the NCA was a major contribution by the churches to the broadening of political participation in the democratization process of Zimbabwe" (Ruzivo 2011:7), although it finally went away with civil society. It was formed for the "widening of the democratic space in the country" (Ruzivo 2011:6). It was realised that since the formation of the Lancaster House Constitution, there had been no serious discussion on the national constitution. So the NCA was formed, according to Kagoro (1998: 8), on the following objectives:

- (1.) Initiating, engaging and enlightening the general public on the Lancaster House Constitution
- (2.) Identifying the Lancaster House Constitution and debating possible constitutional reforms
- (3.) Organizing broad-based and participatory constitutional debates

(4.) Subjecting the need for the constitution-making process to be in people's hands

(5.) Encouraging the culture of popular participation in decision making processes

The NCA made notable gains as a civil society organisation, and staged vigorous campaigns against the government initiated constitution through the Constitutional Commission of Zimbabwe. The referendum marked the first political defeat for the leadership of ZANU-PF and 2000 became a watershed year in the political history of Zimbabwe. Thus, the MDC emerged against this background, as a formidable challenge to the ruling party ZANU-PF. Krugman, (2005: 363–366) argued that, hyperinflation is caused by lack of fiscal restraint such as increasingly proclaiming new currency regimes rather than creating a basis for monetary stability wherein users of the currency expected the currency to lose its value subsequently. The worst case was when inflation reached 231 million percent monthly and people abandoned the Zimbabwean dollar (Jongwe, 2008:46) forcing government to use the United States dollar.

4.2.9 The experiences of alleged pre- and post-elections political violence in Zimbabwe

Since 1980, the general and presidential elections in Zimbabwe have been marred by different forms of violence. Many ordinary people in Zimbabwe are still haunted by the traumatic experiences of the pre- and post-elections violence. Emotionally and psychologically, many Zimbabweans are still wounded and this is due to the brutalization that they experienced.

The alleged pre- and post-election violence has been caused by ZANU-PF failure, to metamorphosize from a liberation movement into a modern democratic party, giving primacy to loyalty and patronage. Lack of competence and expertise within the party led to mediocrity and mismanagement of resources or corruption without listening to dissenting and constructive voices. Bishop Makanza (interviewee: 30 September 2015) said, the Heads of Christian Denominations in Zimbabwe played a critical role in emphasizing the need for an end to violence and the transformation of Zimbabwe from a violent country into a progressive and peaceful nation.

4.2.9.1 ZANU PF and the alleged pre and post elections violence

Zimbabwe's elections are alleged to have been characterised by a high wave of violence and this reached its climax in the unforgettable 2008 elections. In the 2008 elections, ZANU PF confronted civilians with ruinous policies in the face of a vibrant MDC party. As a result:

Political violence became institutionalized as the principal election campaign tool and was backed up by attacks on all political opposition, civil society, the judiciary and the independent press. This informal repression was reinforced by an arsenal of legislation ... the Public Order and Security Act (POSA), the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA), the Broadcasting Services Act (Mhanda 2011: 213).

In the 2008, the ruling party wanted to win the presidential and general elections at any cost. Thus, "Freedom, democracy, the rule of law, and human rights inevitably became casualties in this environment as they had become obstacles to the maintenance of ZANU-PF hegemony" (Mhanda, 2011: 214). RAU (2011: 2) postulated that:



The re-run of June 2008 controversial presidential elections ... saw many people losing their lives, maimed, raped, abducted, losing properties and exposed to all forms of torture all in the name of fighting for political hegemony.

A few months before the 2008 elections, people of all ages suffered physically, emotionally and psychologically. Many of those who were beaten, injured and raped could not report the cases for fear of reprisals and abduction for “the prevalence of reports of women being abducted into torture camps to ‘cook’ for the war vets and the youth” (RAU, 2011: 45), scared many abused women to death. It is evident that:

The level of brutality and callousness exhibited by the perpetrators is unprecedented and the vicious and cowardly attacks by so called war veterans on women, children and the elderly, shames the memory of all true heroes of the liberation struggle (Punish and silence 2).

The 2008 political violence left a scar in the hearts of many Zimbabweans. The scar was so effective physiologically and psychologically on the victims that by the time the 2011 general elections and the presidential elections of 2013, the mere announcement for general elections “resurrected the 2008 images of torture, rape, verbal and physical violence at the hands of the militia, the former war veterans, soldiers and the police” (RAU, 2011: 2). While it is the object of this study to aggregate data to reflect on the particular issues associated with the role played by the Heads of Christian Denominations in Zimbabwe in advocating for liberation, reconciliation and national healing, it is also important to refer to the use and misuse of democracy, freedom especially by the ZANU PF women’s league as it mobilized women, the majority of the national population to vote for ZANU-PF.

4.2.9.2 The challenge of Party-Aligned Pastors

The political violence that characterizes the elections in Zimbabwe has been among other things precipitated by economic decay, social strife and violence. While the church, through the Heads of Christian Denominations in Zimbabwe, promoted liberation, reconciliation and national healing, through humanitarian assistance, the challenge has been on how the church can engage to reduce violence during elections and provide healing and reconciliation to those already hurt through the violence.

Apostle Gava lamented that, “some pastors became party-affiliated, and this resulted in the Church lacking unity”. Some leaders of the church have thus publicly supported ZANU-PF and its rule. The government positively covered them in the national media and allowed them to officiate on national events. Unfortunately, this became “The net effect that was to divide the church into two broad groups – those in favor of Mugabe and those opposed to his continued grip on power” (Chitando 2011:46). Borrowing from Taylor (1963:16), these ZANU PF affiliated pastors said, “Mugabe has been presented as the answer to the questions a black man would ask, the solution to the needs that Western man would feel, the Saviour of the world of the Zimbabwean people, the object of the adoration and prayer of historic freedom.” These pastors’ plea was that the then President, would emerge as the answer to the questions that Zimbabweans were asking, and that he would redeem Zimbabwe from the Europeans. Most church leaders who identified with Mugabe seemed to:

Have deep-seated ideological convictions that tally with those of Mugabe. These relate to his appeal to racism, African pride and sovereignty. For church leaders who have struggled against institutional racism in their own denominations, Mugabe comes across as an articulate spokesperson (Chitando, 2011:46).

Secondly some pastors were attracted to the Afro-centric interpretation of history by ZANU-PF in the face of God’s recognition of Africans as equals to people of other

racism. They were “convinced that Mugabe is a God-given leader, who will empower Africans to reclaim their status in the world” (Chitando, 2011:46-47). This was supported by ZANU-PF’s rhetoric of reclaiming our natural resources and “emphasis on the integrity of African culture which appealed to churches that cherish their autonomy and total separation from mainline churches [AICs]” (Chitando, 2011:47).

Finally, some pastors were direct beneficiaries of the FTLRP among others, and were thus indebted to ZANU-PF for this and other benefits that came with their loyalty to the ruling party. Thus, pastors who were favorable to ZANU-PF and its policies got:

Preferential treatment on state occasions, use their political connections to increase their own grip on power and also enjoy the psychological benefit of feeling ‘safe’ in an uncertain socio-economic and political environment (Chitando 2011:47).

Unfortunately, “the division within the leadership of the church gives the impression that it (church) does not have the right to claim the moral high ground since it appears as sharply divided as the politicians that it seeks to call to account” (Chitando, 2011:47). However, these are some of the few challenges and weaknesses in the church’s work towards achieving authentic liberation, reconciliation and national healing in the country. Thus, Chitando and Togarasei (2010: 151) reiterated that Psalm 137:4 was repeated by Zimbabweans in 2008 saying, “How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a context of violence, hopelessness and despair?” This was in reference to violence and suffering people encountered at the hands of the police, state agents and army. Zimbabweans were divided along political parties, families and even churches were also divided that they could not adequately respond to the crisis before them.

Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA), an activist organisation that aims to offer women in Zimbabwe a united voice, encouraging them to fight for their rights and freedoms and to empower female leadership in the society also played a critical role in promoting peace. WOZA Zimbabwe (2011) reported that, there were over 16 400 cases of political violence that were reported by Zimbabwe Peace Trust from January 2008 up to the end of the election-tide. Of the 16 400 cases, there were 167 deaths. In this environment, most people were killed as a result of the failure by assailants to locate their primary victim. Murdering was done at home, in remote places after abducting the women and dumping them in the process. This sometimes included rape and sexual abuse. Those who survived death, especially women and girls, sometimes failed to access medical care. In the WOZA report, over 15% of the women who were violated were over 60 years of age. WOZA stated that 15% of the injuries were severe and life threatening, and required hospitalization. Unfortunately for most of the elderly were for their children (orphans they are responsible over) involvement in politics.

The long history of pre and post-election violence in Zimbabwe has led to unprecedented suffering on both men and women, especially the poor rural souls who were ostracized for associating with city relatives and fellows. Responding to question 2 on appendix 1, Gogo Chimhowa (interviewee: 2 February 2016) said, *takatoramba vana vedu vaive kumadhorobha nekuti munhu wese aive kudhorobha ainzi ndewe MDC saka zvairovesa isu vabereki vevana vavo*” (we disowned our children who were in towns because everyone who was living in town during that time was considered to be an MDC supporter and us the parents we beaten for that). Research findings have highlighted that the response of President Mugabe to opposition was always ruthless and crouched in derogatory language, for example,

Mugabe's reference to the ZAPU leader (Joshua Nkomo) as "a snake" during the height of the *Gukurahundi* massacres and to Morgan Tsvangirai of the MDC as a "puppet of the West". Furthermore, respondents who answered question 2 and 10 on appendix 1 said political displacement and violence through various forms of operations such as *makavhotera papi* (checks on who you voted for) and *Murambatsvina*, left permanent scars in their hearts. One respondent, an old woman, Mbuya Ngwenya, (interviewee: 14 June 2016), narrated how she and thousands others were rendered homeless after they were evicted from Churu farm (outside Glenview, Harare). The whole operation, she mentioned, was political and not demographic as was claimed that they had built houses on illegal land. She reiterated that the residents had been formally allocated residential stands in a scheme administered by Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole (of ZANU Ndonga) the owner of the farm. She said, "*Takatorerwa dzimba dzatanga takapiwa zviri pamutemo, dzataibhadhara mutero. Vanhu ava havana nganda kumeso zvachose*" (we were displaced from our homes which we were lawfully allocated. These people are not shy at all). The violent displacement was just a way of making people insecure - the people who were thought to be supporting Sithole's opposition party, hence creating insecurity and lack of trust in them towards the opposition party.

Insecurity was also created through violence as evidenced by research findings in which human rights defenders are also a target of political violence. An important case worth mentioning is that of Itai Dzamara who was abducted on the morning of 9 March 2015. Dzamara is said to have been taken by five unknown men while at a barber shop in Harare's Glenview suburb and no one knows where he is up to today (http://www.pindula.co.zw/Itai_Dzamara. Retrieved on 11 May 2016). Again, Jestina Mukoko, a former journalist for Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) was

abducted in December 2003 for her involvement in the documentation of human rights abuses. She was tortured and released after more than eight months. Most researchers and non-propagandist reporters were intimidated.

Research findings also reveal insecurity that political violence creates among religious leaders. Studies and interviews have shown that the church, in Zimbabwe, is a target for persecution by the government which it courageously and consistently criticizes for human rights abuses. Political violence is used to undermine the church's role in upholding and promoting justice and peace. According to Kurebwa (interviewee: 23 October 2016), probably the most eminent religious person to suffer victimization by the government was Archbishop Pius Ncube of the Roman Catholic Church, Bulawayo. It is alleged that the Bishop was directly threatened by President Mugabe in Bulawayo on 29 June 2000. He mentioned that Ncube was responsible for the winning of the MDC in Matabeleland. According to his report, Ncube, on 13 July 2001 wrote a letter that he had issued two months before the 2000 elections condemning the violence perpetuated by the government. The letter which is said to have been written on the 26th of April 2000 highlighted several political violence issues that triggered intimidation from the government. Part of the letter read:

We do not take sides with any political party. We strongly deplore the lawlessness invasion of the farms... Destitution grows and misery increases.... The decline of the economy is largely due to corruption and nepotism in the government, people in the rural areas are being forced to buy party cards and being threatened with the return of the 5th Brigade (*Gukurahundi*)... Threatening, insulting and racist language cannot be tolerated...

4.2.9.3 Violence Connected to Party Symbols

Political violence also took the form of forcing people (regardless of their political orientation), to purchase ZANU-PF membership cards, and they could not wear T-shirts and display symbols such as wrist bands associated with other parties. Batsi (interviewee: 5 March 2015) recalled how he was assaulted, threatened and victimized by ZANU PF supporters for waving good-bye to someone. They accused him of practicing MDC open hand signals. Another street vendor from Bulawayo stated that during the 2008 elections, she was accused and beaten for selling products with the warning in IsiNdebele that read “*Tshisa Isandla*,” which meant that the products would burn the palm of the hand of whoever touched the products. Her wares were confiscated because MDC uses an open hand as its symbol. She also noted that she was severely assaulted and left for dead.

Chitopo (interviewee: 6 July 2015) states that, just before the 2008 election run-off at Bara Farm in Mberengwa, about four kilometers from Mnene Mission Hospital, ZANU-PF enthusiasts claiming to be war veterans and using machetes stopped a bus belonging to Mhunga Bus Company. The ZANU-PF supporters boarded the bus and searched and harassed the passengers. Those found without ZANU-PF party cards or those who had Morgan Tsvangirai’s MDC cards were manhandled, ordered to buy ZANU-PF cards and surrender whatever was not of ZANU-PF since they were viewed as “*zvimwasungata*” (sellouts). Further research findings reveal how traumatic the violent experience in relation to membership cards possession was. In Shurugwi for instance, four respondents from that constituency noted that the campaign for party membership cards was a reign of terror.

4.2.9.4 The right of Privacy ignored

According to research findings, in Mashonaland West, Mashonaland East and Mashonaland Central, political violence also constituted invasion. This was done by people who were in groups of about 15 to 20 and moved from one homestead to the next in search of supporters of the opposition. In answering question 8 on Appendix 1, 3 respondents mentioned invasion of privacy as part of political violence. They emphasised the conducting of unlawful breaking and searching of people's bedrooms for MDC cards and party regalia by ZANU-PF supporters. The respondents further noted that although people were aware of their rights, they had little courage to either defend or confront them in the face of such grave danger. Moreover, this was exacerbated by the fact that: *Mapurisa acho ane huori, mutemo unoenderana nekuti imhosva yaparwa naani*, one of the victims of invasion of privacy (The police are corrupt; the law has been twisted such that it is applied depending on who committed the crime) notes Mupi (interviewee: 10 October 2016). The majority of the Zimbabwean populace came to conclude that the police are corrupt, inefficient and partisan (pro-ZANU-PF), or insensitive to the plight of the victims of political violence. It has yielded people's ignorance and indifference to violation of privacy. One respondent stated that:

ZANU-PF supporters came to my house; they searched everywhere including my main bedroom. They broke into the wardrobe and scattered everything on the floor in search of opposition items such as cards and T-shirts...

4.2.9.5 Attendance of Political gatherings made compulsory

From the interviews and data gathered, it was established that, a strategy commonly used by ZANU-PF supporters to boost attendance at party meetings was to force people to abandon their normal activities, driving them from their homes, and even business to attend political meetings. Out of the 15 respondents of the 2008 political violence, 10 of them reiterated that they had been victims of coercion or use of force to attend political rallies. Two of the respondents who are Bulawayo citizens state that at one point during the 2008 elections, President Mugabe addressed a “state rally” in white city stadium in Bulawayo. The rally was preceded by widespread intimidation and beating of the masses at Renkini Bus Terminus. One of the interviewees notes that in other residents such as Nketa, Tshabalala and Nkulumane suburbs, similar violence was experienced and it was led by ZANU-PF supporters. These ZANU PF supporters went into people’s homes beating and forcing them to attend the president’s rally. It is also postulated that in Tshabalala suburb, war veterans forced a number of shop owners to close their business and release staff to attend the rally. This same practice of forcing people to attend gatherings has become a tradition in Zimbabwe because each time the President was to give a speech in a certain district, everyone was expected to be there.

In a related issue, 3 respondents (interviewees: 2 February 2015) from Mashonaland East echo the same sentiments, that in Marondera town, business was once or twice brought to a halt prior to the March 29 election run-off 2008. People were forced to attend a rally addressed by Sydney Sekeramayi the then ZANU-PF candidate for Mashonaland East constituency.

Two respondents (interviewees: 13 May 2015) from Mashonaland Central aver that when two rallies were held on the same day in their constituency, all the farmers in the area attended the rallies, but the turnout of workers from each compound was

In Chikomba district, one respondent stated that bases were formed to force people to gather for political rallies. The respondent, Muzondo (interviewee: 23 March 2015) noted that, at the Matove base in Chikomba on the 8th of May 2008, over 50 people were beaten. The youths could go from door to door at night forcing people to support ZANU-PF and threatening to kill those who followed opposition or failed to attend rallies. MDC supporters were forced to attend meetings at this base, beaten and humiliated in public, forced to make public confessions that one was an opposition supporter, together with forced denouncement of the opposition party. All these were done to embarrass, silence and squash the opposition.

and this was later followed by many fights between

youths and those for MDC in Mhangura. Thomas Maseko the then MDC chairperson then engaged in a lot of fights with the ZANU-PF youths but they failed to win him to their side. In a similar incident, in Hurungwe, Kazangarare area, all those below forty years of age were supposed to attend rallies every day at 10am as from April to June 2008. Jaweti Kazangarare was the councilor, Comrade Madamombe an ex-soldier, Biro Kaunda (youth Chairman) for the District were the chief –leaders. These gentlemen made sure that they indoctrinated the youths of both sexes with the ZANU-PF doctrine and all those who failed to attend the rallies were followed and beaten at their homes since there was a register that was marked every day.

In Mbare Harare, there is a ZANU-PF group which is known as Chipangano. This group comprises of serious ZANU-PF supporters. According to interviews held in Mbare, this is the group that has caused many to suffer because of political violence. Crispen (Interviewee: 13 September 2015), a carpenter at Magaba, lamented that he closed his workshop as from April to June 2008 because of the ZANU-PF rallies they were forced to attend. It was an anathema for a person to be seen doing his/her carpentry when there was a ZANU-PF rally taking place somewhere within Mbare. Besides being beaten, you were also risking your working premises.

In Epworth Harare, Mai Moyo (interviewee: 21 August 2015) could not resist tears flowing as she narrated the story of how she lost her child. She said, “*Vakamuuraya mwana mudiki iyeye, vakauraya ropa risina chipomerwa asi chandinoziva Mwari akatendeka*” (They killed that little child, they killed innocent blood but I know God is faithful). Being a pastor, together with some church elders, we went to console the family but we were chased away by the ZANU-PF youths. The burial of that child was fast tracked so that people would quickly forget about the funeral and concentrate on the campaigns that were taking place. So, to a person like Mai Moyo,

there is no room for reconciliation since it's impossible to bring back to life the child that was killed. She said, "*Handiregereri vanhu vemusangano uyu, mwana wangu wavakauraya vanomumutsa here ndikavaregerera*" (I will never forgive the people of this party, if, I forgive them, will they bring back my child). No money is enough to compensate for this kind of loss. Such people are closing any door on forgiveness and reconciliation; this only shows the degree of pain they are still going through. If proper reconciliation procedures are to be taken, I am sure people like Mai Moyo will open their heart for reconciliation.

There is a base for ZANU-PF that is at Reuben Shops in Stopover in Epworth. This shop was owned by one, Kamusoda and was converted to be the ZANU-PF base. People who were caught uttering anti- ZANU-PF speeches were taken to the base where they were thoroughly beaten. Those seen wearing MDC T-shirts or any Red-T-shirts were suspected to be MDC supporters. As such, they were also taken to the base where they were beaten.

In an interview with Maxwell Zamba (27 August 2016) who is today a living testimony to the residents of Epworth, narrated how he battled with life after being beaten for being an MDC member. He said on 12 April 2008 ZANU PF youths came to his residence chanting slogans like "we demand our votes" and this was after they lost the March elections. On 15 April 2008, soldiers took him around 3am. He together with 18 others were taken to Domboramwari Police Station before being transferred to Harare Central Police Station. This caused the MDC party to engage in a lawyer Aleck Muchadehama who represented them and they were released on 18 April 2008. Zamba said their docket was doctored in court; they were accused of blocking roads with huge stones and were also accused of knowing the whereabouts of Mutumwa an ex-soldier who just disappeared from his area of resident.

Zamba and others were released on bail and was visited by ZANU PF youths who wanted to kill him. Zamba fought 40 ZANU- PF youths on 8 June 2008 leading to him being cut at the stomach by Persy Mupunga who is now believed to be in South Africa. He was helped by an MDC councilor who came wearing a skirt to disguise himself. Zamba was taken to Avenues Clinic before being transferred to Michael Gelfund Medical Centre where Dr. Mungani worked tirelessly to help him. Maurani and Salim the ZANU PF leaders in Epworth (Stopover) went to his residence with some youths and razed his house to the ground. Zamba after being discharged from hospital was helped by two Christians Nigel Wilson and Fiona Mills who provided shelter for him. Hospital bills were footed by MDC party and the Civic Society Union. The pertinent question is: After such an experience how would the victims meet with the perpetrators? Zamba said he does not know what will happen the day he meets Persy Mupunga (one of known perpetrators).

According to a Newsday Zimbabwe of 4 March 2016, President Robert Mugabe's incumbency was a threat to reform and development of Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe will remain cocooned in an economic logjam until there is a clear succession plan in ZANU-PF, an international think-tank has observed. In its latest report, the International Crisis Group (29 February 2016) observed that Zimbabweans who are desperate for economic revival would have to wait a little bit longer until Mugabe's departure. The report said the waning economic fortunes in the country were to persist as long as Mugabe remained in control and was unable to resolve the raging succession wars in his party and embrace policy changes on the country's controversial indigenisation laws and land reform. A leadership vacuum, the report dated February 29 2016 observed, factional infighting in ZANU-PF and across the

political spectrum and policy inconsistencies, had complicated and further blunted Zimbabwe's chances of economic revival.

Newsday magazine of 2 August 2016 had a story in which a disgruntled Harare clergyman, Tapfumanei Zenda had a solo demonstration against President Mugabe saying:

Zimbabwe is at the edge of a catastrophic turmoil while government is putting on a defensive attitude and wearing a brave face. But whilst in a denial attitude, the Church cannot be silent and turn a deaf ear at the cries and concerns of Zimbabweans. God sides with the oppressed, marginalised and poor. Those are the majority of ordinary citizens of Zimbabwe at the moment.

4.3 PRESENTATION OF DATA ON HEAD OF THE CHURCHES IN ZIMBABWE

Following the same line of argument on comprehensiveness that has been presented in the foregoing chapter, this chapter looks at the role played by the Heads of Christian Denominations in advocating for authentic liberation, reconciliation and national healing in post-independent Zimbabwe. The church in Zimbabwe is said to have played and continue to play a vital role in striving to build peace and stability in the country. Various activities of the church are explored and it is interesting to note that, as a result of the unpredictability of the situation, even the church is looked at untrustworthily and many of its leaders are categorized as foes of the regime.

Since the over-arching theme of this research is liberation, reconciliation and national healing, exploring the role played by the Heads of Christian Denominations, church activities were analysed through the work and practices of Heads of Christian Denominations in Zimbabwe. Though it was not always the case of churches coming

out in open to engage in politics, but the isolated moments churches engaged in politics left many government officials wondering as to what exactly will become of it if churches went uncontrolled. In a bid to represent member churches, HOCDZ assumed the political role which is sometimes misunderstood by the society at large.

The Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC); the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference (ZCBC); the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ) and the Union for the Development of African Churches in Africa are the four main bodies in Zimbabwe in which the church can be grouped into. The four joined hands to form the Heads of Christian Denominations in Zimbabwe which in this paper is referred to as Heads of Inter-Denominations in Zimbabwe. The first ecumenical council for the Protestant churches is the ZCC and was formed in Zimbabwe in 1964 to enhance the public sentiments and behavior of the freedom fighters. Its formation goes hand in hand with the formation of the Unilateral Declaration of Independence in 1965 by Ian Douglas Smith who ejected Garfield Todd. Todd was compassionate to blacks and was influential in forming the ZCC, then the Rhodesia Council of Churches (RCC). ZCBC was the earliest council to be involved in political and social issues in the country through its subsidiary the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP). EFZ, composed mainly of Pentecostal churches, was the latest grouping to deal with social and political issues and often ridden with controversies, wherein pastors and churches in the group were found in active participation in different political parties. The last one is Union for the Development of African Churches in Zimbabwe Africa (UDACIZA), which was formed in 2007/8 to respond to the scourge of HIV and AIDS which had reached its highest toll among the churches due to their practice of polygamy. Unfortunately, UDACIZA was the most inexperienced

grouping to enter the political landscape resulting in the organization becoming the darling of the ruling party through their invitation and participation of state functionaries in their gatherings including the state president.

In giving a brief background of Heads of Inter-Denominations in Zimbabwe, some respondents said, the Zimbabwean church through the Heads of Inter-Denominations in Zimbabwe sought to provide effective leadership in dealing with a heavily polarized political situation that challenged the political leadership to give political dialogue a chance. The Heads of Inter-Denominations in Zimbabwe then joined hands with the civil society actors and demanded that elections be held when the country was ready, with demilitarized political parties. Paulo Freire later reiterated that, Heads of Inter-Denominations in Zimbabwe openly stated that violent behaviour degrades both the perpetrator and the victim; and that “the power from the weakness of the oppressed will be sufficiently strong enough to free both” (Freire 1997:27). By this, Heads of Inter-Denominations in Zimbabwe called for realistic economic and political policies for the welfare of the common people. Sadly, Heads of Inter-Denominations in Zimbabwe did not accomplish their full intentions because of internal weaknesses in the church body such as theological inflexibility, splitting up, conflicts and rigid theological boundaries.

One Bishop further said, several times, the Heads of Inter-Denominations in Zimbabwe and other related faith based organizations use advocacy as a tool to air grievances of the church to the state. Most of these advocacy programs were donor funded and were thought to have a motif of regime change. It can also be argued that churches affiliated to Heads of Inter-Denominations in Zimbabwe have extended

their focus from their core business to include engaging in politics for the purposes of completely fulfilling their earthly mission. Among the challenges pointed out by some respondents, church-state relations and those of the donors are not specifically catered for in the laws of the country. These respondents argued that, political activists masquerading as pastors have discovered a weak point of nurturing the political ideas under the umbrella of churches. It will take some time before this is discovered by the security agents due to the covering of the churches as spiritual entities.

4.3.1 The politics of reconciliation

Political theology is central in social justice because of its close relationship to economic justice and identity. Some of the questions it asks are: How can the church seek for political rights and economic justice where the gaps widen everyday between the haves and the have-nots? How can the church challenge Zimbabwe's divisive economics that were inherited from the colonial regime? Also, how can the church contribute in reversing political and military expansion that seems to favor the elites? Of course, in Zimbabwe, land reform is one form of economic injustice that Zimbabweans are forced to accept. According to Bishop Uranda (interview), the poor were promised resettlement on white owned farms. Unfortunately, the poor, who lack skills, resources and legal protection, failed to access the land, robbing them further in terms of their access to health, food, education, decent living, information, electricity, clean water, peace and happiness.

In Zimbabwe, some church personalities like Canaan Sodindo Banana, Ndabaningi Sithole, Abel Muzorewa and Garfield Todd enthusiastically took part in the struggle for Zimbabwe. Just as they had surfaced to fight for freedom, the new generation appeared from the churches to battle against growing authoritarianism and take up the challenge of promoting tolerance, good governance and respect for human rights among leaders in post-colonial Zimbabwe. Such Church figures like Pastor Evan Mawarire (His Generation Church), Pastor Nelson Chamisa (Apostolic Faith Mission Church), Bishop Patrick Mumbure Mutume (Roman Catholic Church), Sebastian Bakare (former Anglican Bishop of the Diocese of Harare) and Trevor Manhanga (Bishop of Pentecostal Assemblies of Zimbabwe) are some of the people who voiced for the voiceless as they represented the Church.

Authentic liberation, healing and reconciliation entails freedom from threats to life by hunger, disease, war, and the restoration of wholeness of body, soul, spirit and society. This means that at the centre of the church's business is the dignity and agency of human beings. Human beings lose these tenets under oppression and material deprivation. With damage to the national economy and politics in the country, human dignity is difficult to guarantee, and this calls for total renewal. In the context of this discussion, the church understands succinctly its commitment to human dignity (De Gruchy, 1995:22, 44), and the fulfilment of God's design for true humanity. True dignity encompasses social fulfilment as well as spiritual purposes in human usefulness in society and for the purposes of God. Among other things, social justice concerns how resources like land are distributed; how laws are applied and how people find recourse through the courts.

In trying to achieve this, De Gruchy (1995: 144-145) places the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) at the centre in transforming South Africa from an apartheid state to a democratic state. The TRC helped to spell out the subjects and regulate both the process and exercise of reconciliation. To meet the highest standards of social integrity, the TRC allowed members of society to participate in the process, and when necessary, to critique its weaknesses. The process was accountable, though too professional and corporate in style and governance. The bureaucratic standards helped the TRC to reduce manipulation and to bring justice. The people were brought on board and their “agency” was increased (De Gruchy, 2002:147) because the bills and laws were used to manage the TRC, and this increased the agency of affected persons, their creativity, their freedom and their rights, and for many, they participated in bringing about a better future for their communities.

4.3.2 The role played by the Heads of Inter-Denominations in Zimbabwe in the Democratisation of Zimbabwe in a New Dispensation

It is acknowledged that, the church’s nation building initiatives were pursued mainly from three different platforms namely the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ), the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference (ZCBC) and the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC). These church bodies made significant impact in evangelising the nation, building schools and hospitals and consolidating the Christian faith in Zimbabwe. However, there arose a need to integrate these bodies pushing for democracy. The mission of the Church to bring salvation to the oppressed could not be achieved under a fragmented system, hence the formation of the Heads of Inter-Denominations in Zimbabwe which encompasses the totality of the bodies. The

Heads of Inter-Denominations in Zimbabwe became the Christian voice of oneness, one faith, one hope, one vision and mission.

4.3.3 The Heads of Inter-Denominations in Zimbabwe and elections in Zimbabwe since 1980

Zimbabwe has held elections in 1985, 1990, 1995, 2000, 2005, 2008 and 2013. In all these plebiscites, the church has played a vital role in trying to make them democratic. It is true, however, to say the Church has been found to take a more passive position, seeking only to educate people on what is right and wrong. This left many things to chance, and the Church's plight was always ignored. Elections have repeatedly been marked with violence; human dignity was put at stake. The thirty-eight years of ZANU PF rule in Zimbabwe has witnessed the general deterioration of the rule of law, the political and social decay. According to David Harold Barry (2004:2), on 18 April 1980 when Zimbabwe got its independence, the then president of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere in greeting and congratulating Robert Mugabe who was the Prime Minister then said, "You have inherited the Jewel, keep it that way." Sadly, a few years down the line, Mugabe faulted. The Heads of Inter-Denominations in Zimbabwe began opposing the new government as early as the mid-1980s. In the mid-1990s, the political leaders in Zimbabwe completely lost direction both politically and economically resulting in an economic meltdown. The Zimbabwe Council of Churches in the Manica Post of May 2000 blasted the government over mounting poverty for it reads, "The ZCC noted that bad governance, unjust laws, corruption, lack of integrity and unfair distribution of resources had contributed significantly to

the dire situation faced by Zimbabweans...” Many such articles from the Church were published in an effort to challenge the government to action but nothing changed.

Upon realising the rampant fiscal, indiscipline, plundering of the economy and the sky rocketing national and international debts, the church again played a crucial role in educating the populace. Father Chidavaenzi, a Catholic Priest said, under section 5.4.4 of the “Zimbabwe We Want” document there is a section with a sub-heading “Good Governance and the Creation of facilitative environment for development.” In that section, the HOCD stated that, “fiscal discipline on the part of government is needed and so is good governance and the elimination of corruption...” The church continued to voice on political issues but sadly her voice continued to be ignored.

4.3.4 The Church and Political Violence in Zimbabwe

The church in Zimbabwe has been affected by historical factors to cooperate closely with the state, although it has at the same time “become a strategic actor on issues of national interest and featured prominently in efforts to resolve the crisis that engulfed the country in the past decade” (Chitando, 2011: 43). Elections have negatively affected the lives of people and the church has responded in a bid to find out how the message and rituals of liberation, reconciliation and national healing can be communicated to the lives of the Zimbabwean populace who were affected by the violence. The philosophy of militancy commonly referred to as *jambanja* that surfaced during the fast-track land reform programme implied that the rule of law

could no longer be guaranteed. In many cases, the police refused to get involved in addressing cases of violence, saying that they did not want to be involved in 'political' issues (Chitando 2011:44).

The mission of Church to society is neither to uphold the *status quo*, nor to topple it by violent means. Its challenge is to give an intentionally chosen and lived witness of contradiction to the unjust *status quo*, and of opposition to those who seek to uphold it because they gain from it. It is also by the same token challenged to oppose those tough minded idealists who are prepared to resort to any means to upset the 'powers that be' and usher in the Kingdom.

It is imperative to note that the church began as a moral conscience to the Zimbabwean nation during the colonial era in supporting the war of liberation, national projects after independence and calling the national leadership to political accountability during critical times like the 1983-1987 *Gukurahundi* civil war and the 2000-2013 crises, among others. Thus, the church is a key instrument in the liberation, reconciliation and national healing debate of Zimbabwe (Maxwell, 1999:108). The role of the church is to be the moral guardian of the nation, to preserve and safeguard the supreme values of a human person," as such the church played her role in challenging the government to respect human dignity (Mutume, 1988:463).

According to Chitando and Togarasei (2010: 250-252), from 2000 and 2008, the church has courageously condemned the national crises through protest statements and communiqués. These pastoral letters by CiM, ZCC, ZCBC, EFZ, Heads of Inter-Denominations in Zimbabwe and various efforts to the organs of government as well

as the national executive were prompted by fights between ZANU PF and MDC, the police and students, workers and civilians due to the re-emergence of new forms of nationalism through student boycotts, job strikes, civil actions and food protests by the late 1990s (CiM, 2006).

Reverend Makamba (interview) speaking on behalf of the church said, “*Hatikwanisi kukurudzira kupora, kusimbaradzana pamwe nekubatana kana tisati tarapa marwadzo/maronda ekumashure*” (We cannot promote healing, cohesion and unity without dealing with the hurts/wounds of history). These same sentiments are expressed by Ambassador Albrecht Conze, who pointed out that, the world is moving from the old politics of confrontation, division and fighting to a new politics of engagement, dialogue and cohesion. Church leaders in Zimbabwe have challenged the political leadership to give dialogue a chance. They have openly said that violence degrades both the victim and the perpetrator. They have called for pragmatic economic policies that take cognisance of the plight of the poor. Despite their noble intentions and activities, they have not had the desired outcome. Divisions within the church and the lack of radical theologies have compromised the church’s efforts.

Proper Christian boards should be the voice of the voiceless and advocate for justice and peace. As such the ZCC, ZCBC and EFZ stood their ground in 2006 as they defended the dignity of humanity, especially the underprivileged and defenceless. Women were also affected; hence the National Vision Discussion Document (NVDD) included them. This document advocated for the humanisation for women, as such a segment on “Gender equity” was included. The issue of women’s dignity and agency, women’s capabilities and a theological challenge to women being created in

the image of God (*imago Dei*) vis-à-vis the traditional thinking that women are in the image of man who is in the image of God (Moltmann, 1985: 232) could not be avoided. The NVDD has it that the church is at the center of the liberation, reconciliation and national healing debate, and that churches have built their work on the solid foundation of Christian responsibility (NVDD, 2006; CiM, 2006).

The major reason for the failure of the church in history is its unchanging mind-set in a new set of problems and this has brought about what is referred to as theological rigidity. Be that as it may, the relationship of church and State has never been the same in Zimbabwe for they varied due to changing circumstances (Hallencreutz & Moyo 1988, Chirongoma 2008). For instance, in the 1990 economic comatose, the church called on a visionary leadership of the country to arrest the economic hiccups. Politicians unfortunately, were unready to allow a new generation of leaders to emerge to undo the “darkest periods in the country’s post-colonial history” (Chitando & Togarasei, 2010: 252). Many churches ended up being roped in the business of the state, and thus sharing the same views of the world. Pastors accumulated serious wealth during this period when there was grueling poverty among the majority of society. According to David Kaulemu (2010:51):

Churches have injected more inclusive, universal perspectives into Zimbabwe’s national conflict. This does not mean that churches have not been partisan, but their partisanship has been related to a fundamental stand against injustice, corruption, cruelty, exploitation, and unfairness. Many churches, especially those operating from a prophetic perspective, have been guided by values of universal solidarity, the common good, respect for life, and dignity of the human person. These values have informed their response to ZANU-PF and their hopes for Zimbabwe’s future.

Maposa (2012: 98) argues that, the church has been constantly losing its Christian morals of peace, justice, unity, fairness and racial harmony, where the poor and landless majority continued to be landless. Some churches owned impressive

institutional buildings in the form of churches and cathedrals, boarding and day schools, urban residences such as housing flats and mansions, and other properties even in the remotest parts of the communities in the country (De Waal, 1990: 11). It thus would be appropriate to say that the Zimbabwean church struggled with its new identity in the new Zimbabwe, and this struggle for relevance meant it could not curve out a new vision in the face of the new agenda of the new regime (Villa-Vicencio, 1992:7). Ideally, the church returned to its “private piety and ecclesial ghettos” (de Gruchy, 2004: 52, 45) providing mass and counselling to the suffering while the State built monuments that celebrated violence such as the National Heroes Acre in Zimbabwe. Unfortunately, the church was co-opted into some of the State’s agendas since it represented some of the aspirations of the church at the moment. Among churches and organizations that were co-opted included Destiny of Africa Network (DANet), UDACIZA through its leadership, especially Bishop Ndanga, Anglican under Bishop Kunonga, among a few. This therefore led the state to dictate to the church how it was supposed to behave, its norms and values, especially because the State dictated acceptable projects to be done by the church such as infrastructure development, service provision and reconstruction. By so doing reviewing of social ethics and state accountability became a punishable offence on the clergy and the church (Magesa & Nthamburi, 1999: 9). The Zimbabwean government faced serious challenges that rendered the church confused, but offered new opportunities for the church to show its relevance and effectiveness in difficult circumstances.

Jesus’ mission did not meet with widespread acceptance. On the contrary, it met with apprehension, doubt, antagonism and rejection on the part of the Jewish

political and religious leaders of his time. Finally, it led him to Calvary where he prayed for forgiveness for those whose fear had led them to destroy him. If the Cross can be said to symbolise Christ's ultimate witness to God's reign, it is his resurrection from the dead which is the underpinning and assurance of its victory over the power of evil, and hence the ground of Christian mission. The disciples of Jesus met him again on Easter Sunday morning and caught a glimpse of a new world where the promise of God's reign would be realised. The world as they knew it was passing away and a new creation was about to be born. All the relevance and urgency of the early Church's mission was derived from this certain hope. So the church in Zimbabwe must continue to engage the government for the purpose of creating a God fearing nation.

As from 2000 to 2014, church-State relations were overwrought due to political brutality. As Mugabe's popularity plunged because of the deteriorating socio-economic conditions that were precipitated by the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme of the 1990s, the nation suffered, Raftopoulos B and Savage T (2004:70-91). The 1997 bad economic and political decisions to award war veterans bounty gratuities and the war in DRC; and the 2000-2003 Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) worsened the situation. Thus social crises, which were created during the whole time Robert Mugabe had ruled, including the post millennial FTLRP and Operation Restore Order (ORO), arose as a result of economic and political collapse. Zimbabwe suffered social violence, poverty, food insecurity and poor health conditions, especially the spread and impact of HIV and AIDS. ZANU PF made bad economic decisions as efforts to stay in power at all costs; which led to humanitarian crises of hunger and disease (Taylor, 2002:404). Investors pulled out from the

country, and many people became jobless. This resulted in a mass exodus of Zimbabwean professionals and workers to neighbouring and foreign countries in search of jobs. These losses led the country's economy to a standstill, and the government found itself having budget deficits and supplementary budgets because of inflation. The economy is central to human wellbeing and its crisis leads to human crises. The problems of Zimbabwe were brought by wrong economic and political decisions.

Respondents who gave their opinions on the church's role to political brutality were divided in their views with some saying only prayer is the solution. Others said it is better to ignore the issue of political violence. The last group advocated for the engagement of all the political parties concerned. Those who advocate for prayer only concur with the sentiments of former President Robert Mugabe who on several occasions made media statements that the church should only be praying and advising the government. In a magazine titled *Bulawayo News* 24, of 27 July 2016, Mugabe was quoted warning churches to refrain from meddling in politics and causing disharmony among the people, saying the country has means to protect its hard won independence. "When the church starts being political, ZANU-PF will regard them as political creatures and the party will not fold back its hands," he told this to thousands of people who had attended the war veteran's solidarity meeting at the party headquarters in Harare. He emphasised that the church should be apolitical. What is of particular interest is that twelve of the victims of political violence share the view that prayer alone is the answer to political violence. One responded to the questionnaire said, "*Kereke iungano yevanonamata saka haifaniri kuita zvementongerwo enyoka. Mweya Mutsvene anopindura mikumbiro yedu yose,*"

(The church is a praying community as such must not be associated with any political issues. The Holy Spirit answers all our petitions). (Rom. 8:26). The Father understands the intercession of the Spirit and answers the prayer and works all things together for good in the believers' life because the Spirit has interceded for the child of God (Rom. 8:28).

Those who supported the view that the Church must engage all the political parties involved argued that, all churches have influence. They said, "By their silence churches condone and promote the government's actions." If the Church decides to be silent, one respondent said, "It means they are supporting what is happening and sanctioning it by silence. Someone who keeps silent when a bad thing is done is a sinner par excellence." In trying to dig deeper into possible means of bringing about authentic healing and reconciliation to political issues in Zimbabwe, respondents were asked (Heads of Inter-Denominations in Zimbabwe executives) to provide their honest views on how perpetrators, political victims, and the general populace should be assisted. The general consensus was that, political violence has presented an opportunity for Zimbabweans to rehabilitate and rebuild their communities. There is need to eliminate from the scene all forms of violence that tend to become self-propagating and brood new, serious forms. There is need to find new peace-loving role models in society for others to copy. It is very disturbing to note that some of the church leaders are supporting violence.

4.3.5 Church-State Relations in Zimbabwe

The Heads of Inter-Denominations in Zimbabwe played a critical role in stating that the Church is a living witness to Christ's promise that He would be with us until the end of time (Mt 28:20). Christ entered into our humanity and into human history when He took on our flesh, by the help of His human mother, Mary, our blessed Lady. He came among us to save us from our sins. Through the church, Jesus taught us the ways of God, a way of life that leads to eternity in the Kingdom of God. He gave us the special assistance we need to live the Christian life by giving us the sacraments, especially the Eucharist and the sacrament of Reconciliation. He established His Church to continue His mission on earth throughout the ages, generation after generation, from one culture to another.

According to Heads of Inter-Denominations in Zimbabwe representative, "*Kereke iripo kubetsera vanhu pane zvinhu zvine chokuita nehupenyu husingaperi, ruponeso rwavanhu zvinongowanikwa muhumambo hwaMwari*" (the Church in Zimbabwe has been there to deal with the eternal order, our eternal salvation, which is to be found ultimately in the Kingdom of God). *Kune rumwe rutiviwo, hurumende inoona nezvepasi pano, zvine chokuita nokurarama kwavanhu nhasi uno*", (the State on the other hand, deals with the temporal order, which is concerned the material well-being of citizens here and now. God made us material bodies and immortal spirits. We are incarnate spirits, and spirit-filled bodies. Both dimensions of our being must be attended to. The spiritual well-being is by far the more important, but we cannot neglect the material needs of our bodied existence. The State looks after our temporal material needs.

According to Chitando, the pastoral letters confirmed that the mission of the church was not merely to preach the gospel, but to stand shoulder to shoulder with ordinary people in their hour of need. When one remembers that these pastoral letters were

published in an environment saturated with fear and intimidation, one begins to appreciate the remarkable courage that church leaders demonstrated, especially as Mugabe always contested these prophetic pronouncements by church leaders and criticised them for playing a dangerous game (Chitando 2011:44).

The leaders of the three main Christian groupings, the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference (ZCBC), the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ) and the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) also embarked on a strategy to promote dialogue. Bishops Patrick Mutume, Sebastian Bakare and Trevor Manhanga held meetings with leaders of the two main political parties and encouraged them to shun divisive attitudes and to promote a shared national agenda. The church leaders pleaded with the politicians to consider the wellbeing of ordinary men, women and children and they maintained that there was more to unite the different political actors than to divide them (Chitando 2011:44).

4.3.6 A Religious Mission

According to some bishops, the ZCBC issued pastoral letters that highlighted the various aspects of the crisis for all to read. These pastoral letters were hard-hitting and uncovered the falsehoods that were being peddled by the state media. The ZCC and the EFZ also issued pastoral letters that called on the government to uphold civil liberties. These same sentiments were also echoed by Chitando who said, the Christian bodies in Zimbabwe challenged the government to tackle the severe economic crisis with greater creativity than the endless printing of the local currency (Chitando 2011:44).

In an interview with F. Munyaradzi (interview: 2016), she said, “*Matambudziko avarombo panguva dzaJesu kufanana nanhasi uno, ainyanya kukonzerwa neudzvinyiriri, rusarura, kutsikirirwa navapfumi navanesimba, vanonzi ndivo vanhu chaivo,*” (the afflictions of the poor, in Jesus’ time as much as today, were in large measure caused by repression, discrimination and exploitation by the rich and powerful, the upholders of the *status quo*. In his ministry, Jesus focused quite intentionally on those who had been pushed aside: in his compassionate outreach to these outcasts, Jesus concretely personified God’s sovereignty as good news for the poor; God’s supremacy would mean the end to their despair and the beginning of a new order of social relations based on the standard of inclusion. No one is debarred from the love of God “who causes his sun to rise on bad as well as good, and sends down rain to fall on the upright and the wicked alike” (Mt 5:45). What amazes one time and time again is the inclusiveness of Jesus’ mission. It embraces both the poor and rich, the oppressed and oppressor, the sinners and the devout. His mission is one of dissolving estrangement and breaking down walls of antagonism, of crossing boundaries between individuals and groups.

The Second Vatican Council teaches us that “Christ gave His Church no proper mission in the political- economic or social order. The purpose He set before her is a religious one. Out of this religious mission itself came a purpose, a light, and a force which can provide structure and consolidate the human society according to the divine law” (Gaudium et spes 42). Politics and economics, then, are the prerogatives of the State. How and when does the Church find itself caught up with the activities of the State?

4.3.7 Church Proclaims the Moral Order

Pius XI's social encyclical, *Quadragesimo anno*, circulated in 1931 teaches a lot about the church's role in heralding the moral order. In paragraphs 41-3, Pius explains that, the Church proclaims the moral order of the human life. She is to proclaim and elucidate all facets of the moral order. The moral order is something like the plan of an architect for a great project. God is the architect, and the human race is His great project. God has a design for His human universe. We are free agents, with intelligence and free will. We can discern the moral order and choose to abide by it, or we can disregard it and make up our own plan. Attempting to improve upon God's moral order is a perilous enterprise. We have seen many examples of social engineering in this century alone, and know the disastrous results of Nazism, Fascism, and Marxism.

The Church preaches and practices a love which incarnates itself in action for justice; however, its concern is for justice which will settle for nothing less than a 'civilization of love', to use a phrase made famous by Pope Paul VI. The Church should shun, on one hand, an inept moralism which would reduce Christian love to mere sentimentality, and, on the other hand, a zealous concern for the righting of wrongs that can so easily deteriorate into a loveless practicality, sightless to any criterion other than pure political victory. The mission of the Church is surely to promote the Kingdom or Sovereignty of God.

The moral order is premised upon the dignity of every human person. That dignity flows out of the certainty that each of us is created in the image and likeness of God,

with an eternal destiny. All our human rights flow out of this dignity. Only God can give us this dignity, nobody else. The state does not award us our human dignities; it can only recognise and respect them and assist to uphold them. Paragraph 43 of *Quadragesimo anno* reads as follows:

For it is the moral law alone which commands us to seek in all our conduct our supreme and final end, for example, God, and to strive directly in our specific actions for those ends which nature, or rather, the Author on Nature, has established for them, duly subordinating the particular to the general. If this law be faithfully obeyed, the result will be that particular economic aims, whether of society as a body or of individuals, will be intimately linked with the universal final order, and as a consequence we shall be led by progressive stages to the final end of all, God Himself, our highest and lasting good.

From the time Zimbabwe attained her independence in 1980, Church-State relations went from warm to very sharp differences (Mapuranga & Chitando 2008). The warmth was generated by the feeling that the Prime Minister then had enunciated a policy of reconciliation and national healing which was in line with the Christian teachings on forgiveness (Chitando & Togarasei, 2010: 1152). During this period, some churches supported the State for fear of government reprisals.

The period between 2000 and 2014 was marked by high political violence, human dignity abuses and the Heads of Christian Denominations in Zimbabwe played a critical part in the country to deal with such problems. They organised prayer rallies and peace rituals in the churches, where some politicians were also invited. In essence, the years beyond 2000 posed a big challenge to the life of the church on its pragmatic work, on its social ethics and teaching, and especially its activities on human dignity in the face of a marauding Zimbabwean state. Problems arose due to the Prime minister's inclination towards the Marxist orientations for a one-party. The

church, especially the Catholic Church, unsettled ZANU PF by facilitating the publication of atrocities that were perpetrated against the people of Matabeleland in the 1982-1987 civil Gukurahundi war (CCJP 1997).

The Zimbabwean church has been involved in the life of the state since the 1890 colonial event. At one time it was on the side of the State while on the other it has been against the State. The Church-State relations in Zimbabwe must be understood in light of the church's advocacy and prophetic role to the government.

Since independence, President Mugabe tried to influence the Zimbabwean government to constantly limit the church's activities to prayer, morality and charity. Chitando (2011: 43) reiterated that, "Zimbabwean church leaders have refused to subscribe to such a narrow interpretation of the mission of the church and have endeavoured to make a difference in a heavily polarized political environment". This has been seen as the crisis worsened with some pastors seeking to encourage political dialogue between ZANU PF and MDC parties in the 2008. Particularly, Andrew Wutawunashe created a nationalist campaign, 'Faith for the Nation', an initiative done along his Pan-African thinking that also converges towards those of President Mugabe (Togarasei 2006: 223). His campaign sought to infuse Christian ideals into the national body politic wherein the people were encouraged to take responsibility for the national fortunes. "For him, it was vital for all Zimbabweans to put aside their political differences and to work together for the national good" (Chitando, 2011: 44).

Further, the Heads of Inter-Denominations in Zimbabwe bishops also encouraged political dialogue between ZANU PF and MDC parties. The heads of three ecumenical bodies, “Bishops Patrick Mutume, Sebastian Bakare and Trevor Manhanga (of ZCBC, ZCC and EFZ, respectively) called for meetings with leaders of the two main political parties (MDC and ZANU PF) and encouraged them to shun divisive attitudes and propagate a shared national agenda” (Chitando, 2011: 44). To support this, the Heads of Inter-Denominations in Zimbabwe argued that the problem was deeper than the national crisis because of the lack for a shared national vision by producing a vision document: *The Zimbabwe We Want: Towards a National Vision, A Discussion Document* (ZCBC, EFZ and ZCC 2006). “The document undertook a penetrating and honest evaluation of Zimbabwe’s achievements and challenges. The church was also responsible for failing to work towards creating a shared vision” (Chitando 2011: 44). Thus,

Whereas many politicians constantly advised Christians to stay away from politics, consultations on the national vision document reminded Christians that they had an obligation to participate in political processes. The consultation process also helped Christians to realize that, while they might subscribe to different political ideologies, they all shared a common destiny (Chitando, 2011 44).

Further, Heads of Inter-Denominations in Zimbabwe leaders interrogated ZANU PF and MDC on the problems in the economy, society and politics in the country. Ecumenical bodies like the ZCBC, ZCC and EFZ issued pastoral letters that highlighted diverse aspects of the national crisis, exposing falsehoods being peddled by the official media. These letters called on the government to respect civil liberties; and challenged it to deal with the harsh economic meltdown with better ingenuity than the incessant printing of the local currency. (Chitando, 2011: 45). In this way:

Pastoral letters confirmed that the mission of the church was not merely to preach the gospel, but to stand shoulder to shoulder with ordinary people in their hour of need. And when one remembers that these pastoral letters were published in an environment saturated with fear and intimidation, one begins to appreciate the remarkable courage that church leaders demonstrated, especially as Mugabe always contested these prophetic pronouncements by church leaders and criticized them for playing a dangerous game.

4.3.8 The Church and the 2008 political crisis

The church was a worthy player in the 2008 political crisis and the persistent involvement of church figures during the liberation struggle, Ndabaningi Sithole, Abel Muzorewa and Canaan Banana, have seen the new generation of leaders in the church fighting “against growing authoritarianism and take up the challenge of promoting tolerance, good governance and respect for human rights among leaders in post-colonial Zimbabwe” (Chitando, 2011: 45). This is because

Religion operates at every level of society in Africa where popular priests and prophets work in the areas where the poor live, while the rich may have their own more exclusive spiritual advisers (Ellis & Haar, 1998: 175-201).

Further, using its numbers, where Christians in Zimbabwe account for an estimated 80% of the national population, the new crop of leaders helped to internationalise the Zimbabwean crisis using its global connections and influence. In this way,

The church is well placed to play a major role in this difficult exercise and one would have expected a robust Church-State partnership to support the process. Unfortunately, churches have not been openly invited to spearhead the process, which has been monopolized by the ineffective Organ on National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration. But the church has also been unable to influence the process because of its own weaknesses. In particular, the church has struggled to make an impact due to the divisions outlined above and because it has

failed to develop contextually relevant theologies of healing and reconciliation. Sadly, this has contributed to the spectacularly underwhelming progress towards national healing (Chitando, 2011: 48).

The church, through the Heads of Inter-Denominations in Zimbabwe joined their hands together with civil society actors to demand that the next elections ought to be held when the country was ready, with demilitarised political parties. Thus, the Zimbabwean church sought to provide effective leadership in dealing with a heavily polarised political situation that challenged the political leadership to give political dialogue a chance. The Heads of Inter-Denominations in Zimbabwe called, through the NVDD, realistic economic and political policies for the welfare of the common people. Unfortunately, the organisation failed to achieve their full intentions because of internal weaknesses as alluded to earlier.

4.3.9 Some of the reasons for the failure of Zimbabwean Church in politics

As the researcher, I sought to get the opinions of respondents on the factors they think contributes to the failure of the church in the political spheres. The factors ranged from lack of good information dissemination system, lack of tangible benefits, corruption and nepotism.

Respondents highlighted different perceptions and comments concerning the factors that contribute to the failure of Christians in the church. Most of the respondents regarded communication problems as the major factor that causes churches to fail in politics. A communication problem in their sense means lack of information about

political dimensions in the country, no access to government officials due to political bureaucracy. This factor is followed by the problem of corruption and respondents highlighted the fact that churches or Christians quickly become corrupted when they engage in politics. A good number of respondents labelled lack of tangible benefits as the main factor that suck the zeal in churches to engage in politics. Some few respondents cited nepotism as the biggest problem that has affected the effectiveness of churches in the political realm. According to them, benefits are awarded to the highest bidder and on relationship grounds with government officials. The data shows that on average, people were somewhat critical of the way churches in Harare Province operate in politics as they felt that more could be done to regain the effectiveness of churches in the politics.

From Pope Leo XIII until Vatican II, the predominant value the Church sought to promote in society was social stability and order. The Church would articulate on behalf of the poor but, at the same time, urge the poor to be long-suffering and not upset the existing order. The underprivileged were invited to follow the suffering Christ, a call usually backed up by an escapist and other-worldly spirituality. In this spirituality, this world was seen as a 'vale of tears'; and Heaven as our true home, where the unavoidable discrimination of this world would be put right. Vatican II, especially its *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern world*, sought to overcome this dichotomy between this world and the next, and highlighted the importance of seeking justice by changing the *status quo*. The poor themselves were viewed, not as objects of history, but as privileged agents of God in ushering in a new world. This vision was strongly advocated by Liberation theology but is not so popular today.

4.3.10 Jesus Christ, the basis of an authentic liberation, reconciliation and national Healing

Volf discussed the significance of Christ in the social reality. Christ is the seed of Abraham, who fulfils both “the genealogical promise of Abraham and the end of genealogy as a privileged locus of access to God” (2002:45). Birth in Abraham is replaced by faith in Christ. In pursuance of ultimate justice and a common humanity, Christ takes the centre place of all tribal allegiances, deities and heroes which fan cycles of conflict in the world (2002:158). In the face of social reality, the place of Christ, especially the command for love is critically analysed. Kim further argues that in Volf, justice is necessary as a vehicle of forgiveness and a new identity for the perpetrator (Kim, 2002). Thus, “only those who are forgiven and who are willing to forgive will be capable of relentlessly pursuing justice without falling into the temptation to pervert it into injustice” (123). It is only with Christ that the justice of God, the forgiveness of sin and the hope for a new humanity is made possible.

4.3.11 Liberation, reconciliation and national Healing as the willingness of the sinner to be embraced in Christ

Although the hope of renewal for culture and humanity is in the resurrection of Christ, the individual is equally important for realising the justice of God, forgiveness and a new beginning. Rather, “the will to embrace ultimately rests on a willingness to take up the perpetrator to a state of being able to receive forgiveness and consequently a new identity from God” (Brown, 2000:921). In the Cross, Volf contends,

the voices and perspectives of others, especially those with whom we may be in conflict, resonate within ourselves, by allowing them to help us see them,

as well as ourselves, from their perspective, and if needed, read just our perspectives as we take into account their perspectives”(213).

Volf makes a special discussion on justice, forgiveness and new hope. He states (:302), without entrusting oneself to the God who judges justly, it will hardly be possible to follow the crucified Messiah and refuse to retaliate when abused. The certainty of God’s just judgment at the end of history is the presupposition for the renunciation of violence in the middle of it. The divine system of judgment is not the flip side of the human reign of terror, but a necessary correlate of human nonviolence”. In Christ, the justice of God and forgiveness of sin leads to a new hope for humanity.

In his book, *Reconciliation: Restoring Justice*, De Gruchy, a white South African theologian, explores “the relationship between the politics of reconciliation and the Christian doctrine of reconciliation” (2002:13). This was in relation to the end of the 300-year period of colonisation and apartheid in South Africa. In this exploration, he uses the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) as a reference point to explain “the story of struggle, suffering and the ‘miracle story’ of transition to democracy” (:23). He writes with conviction, as an insider of the TRC, with a privileged perspective, hoping to renew and transform relations and ethos of the new South African society. The TRC in South Africa was the most notable reconciliation process in history because of its attempt to restore the human identity of both survivors and perpetrators by recommending reparations for the loss suffered by survivors and rehabilitation for perpetrators. The TRC highlights strongly the centrality of story-telling. Story telling was used to give amnesty to those who told the truth. Survivors managed to ‘remember’ stories and to deal with their memories of pain while

perpetrators 'remembered' and came "face to face with their guilt" (:23), offering a new beginning for South Africa.

An African that moves forward, joyful and alive, makes manifest the praise of God, since, as Saint Irenaeus observed: "the glory of God is man fully alive". But he immediately added: "and the life of man consists in beholding God". (Benedict XVI *Adversus Haereses* IV, 20, 7: 7, 1037.) De Gruchy proposes a fourfold strategy that puts Christ at the centre of the dialogue between former enemies (:16, 17). We now turn to examine this in more detail. De Gruchy understands the seriousness of the place of society for the success of Liberation, reconciliation and national healing. For him, Liberation, reconciliation and national healing can only take place "within a particular context and with regard to a particular set of interpersonal or social relations" (:153). For instance, in exploring the notion of restorative justice from the Christian perspective, he was aware of the plurality of strands in Christianity.

He also acknowledges that societies are multicultural, multi-religious, and he was overly aware of the diversity in contexts and histories. Though his study uses images from the Christian religion, De Gruchy also examines a humanist philosophy, *Ubuntu*. This philosophy comes from traditional society, and was taken aboard to define how human beings were expected to live (:91). *Ubuntu*, originating from the concern of "Bantu" (people) among the Zulu, was a founding principle of the struggle for liberation, probably alongside James Cone's "Black Theology" which influenced the rise of black consciousness (Kalu, 2006:576-595). This philosophy became instrumental in charting a way forward in the TRC, defining and describing the process of reconciliation. *Ubuntu* was also used in drafting the South African constitution; as the foundation of the South African nation. This makes *Ubuntu* a

“sacral principle” in the living memory of the history of apartheid in South Africa (:96). So *Ubuntu* made South Africa a new nation. It brought a new liturgy and spirit to people, who for 300 years were deprived of true religious formation and practice (:107). De Gruchy explores lines of relationships such as God and creation, gender, and of course, former enemies locked up in a given geographical space. The TRC, using *Ubuntu* philosophy, helped to find ways to pay back the losses suffered by both survivors and perpetrators (:31). The *Ubuntu* philosophy helped to bring liberation as well as justice in South Africa (:37), to answer the question “Who is an African’ within the South African context?” (:31). Though no substantive resolve about reconciliation has been reached in South Africa yet, the TRC set a trend for engagement through practices that enhance reconciliation such as nation building. The use of truth to ‘remember’ the past as well as plan and prepare for the future is a method that has been in use in many contexts in the world (:23).

4.4 Summary

This chapter has managed to present the data gathered in Zimbabwe especially from those who were affected by Gukurahundi, Fast Track Land Reform Programme, Operation *Murambatsvina* and politically motivated violence. This chapter has also shown the woundedness of Zimbabweans. Testimonies have been given from those who were directly or indirectly affected by *Gukurahundi*, *Murambatsvina* or the pre- and post-elections violence. Issues of ethnicity challenges national liberation, reconciliation and healing. The *Gukurahundi* experience testifies to the failure of the nation to assimilate the Shona and the Ndebele (Nyangoni 1978:125; Banana 1996).

The church was kind of hesitant to intervene during the *Gukurahundi* to help PF ZAPU and ZANU PF bury ethnic differences to attain national unity and reconciliation. Some of the reasons as to why political violence occurred were given and will then lead us to discuss the role played by the HOCDZ in liberation, reconciliation and national healing with regard to the above catastrophic events in the history of Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER 5

HOLISTIC APPROACH TO LIBERATION, HEALING AND RECONCILIATION AS THE PROPOSAL FOR ZIMBABWEAN SITUATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The researcher has carried out the research, presentation, and interpretation of data, as such; this chapter seeks to look at the holistic approach to liberation and national healing in Zimbabwe. An in depth discussion of liberation and reconciliation will be presented in this chapter to further lay foundation for the proposed solution to Zimbabwean situation. This chapter therefore aims at juxtaposing the responses of both victims and perpetrators' as this will enable the research to give a conclusion and recommendations in the last chapter.

5.2 A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO LIBERATION, HEALING AND RECONCILIATION

The researcher will build up his argument towards the conclusion of this research study by using liberation, reconciliation and national healing theories to formulate the praxis solution to the Zimbabwean situation. The researcher will journey through these major concepts of this study as the building blocks for the solution to the problem statements. Liberation, reconciliation and national healing will be approached holistically.

5.2.1 Liberation, reconciliation and national healing in TRC context

In Zimbabwe, there is a quest for authentic liberation, reconciliation and national healing, because many lives were lost during the process of national building. Some people are heroes, playing a role as political saints. For this reason, reconciliation is a costly exercise which begins with seeing examples of those who paid heavily both emotionally and in personal losses, but chose to forgive their enemies. De Gruchy (2002) defines reconciliation, as a metaphor with overarching relevance for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) process and its goal of liberation, freedom and justice. Of all the possible metaphors, reconciliation clearly defines and articulates history and theology without losing meaning. It goes beyond religion, and it covers fields of human experience and theological introspection. Hence, the researcher sees it as part of the holistic approach.

Despite the loopholes of TRC, Zimbabwe can learn some of the tactics to address its current socio-politico-economic challenges. The TRC is a model that contributed significantly to South Africa's transition from Apartheid to peaceful democracy. For blacks, the TRC promised a new future, but for previously privileged whites, it challenged their comforts. The TRC provided South Africa with an opportunity for social transformation. Whites were made conscious of the atrocities of apartheid through the media and blacks remembered the past and it assisted in dealing with current and future anger between whites and blacks. By the end of the process, healed memories began to show the world that new narratives had become part of the new South African society. An example is Ginn Fourie whose daughter died during the Heidelberg Massacre, where black freedom fighters killed some white students in reaction to apartheid. Ginn's story is passionate and amazing; it

undergirds the building of new narratives. It clearly, shows the shift of power and relations between whites and blacks, and is a testimony for the restoration of human dignity for both whites and blacks in the democratic South Africa (<http://www.umich.edu/news/ccamp.html> accessed 14 July 2017). The lesson the researcher is proposing in the line of TRC as the solution to the Zimbabwean context is the narrative approach to the whole process of total liberation, reconciliation and nation healing as the first stage to national building. This stage will assist the Zimbabweans to move further in the threefold analysis of Gutierrez for liberation.

5.2.2 Theological perspective of liberation, reconciliation and national healing

The researcher will focus on the divine initiative for the offender, using theological perspective. Reconciliation it is not theocentric or anthropocentric but it is theanthropocosmic¹ in nature, meaning reconciliation is human reconciliation with God that will influence the reconciliation between human beings as images of God and reconciliation to the physical-organic environment then life will be in a state of equilibrium. According to Benedict XVI (2003: 212-216) reconciliation must not only be limited to the forgiveness of sins through the blood of Jesus Christ. Reconciliation must also be understood as the mending of differences between people and also the removal of anything that may disturb people from freely worshipping God. De Gruchy (2002: 131) explores the life of Abraham for its significance to three major world religions: Islam, Christianity and Judaism. The story of Abraham is a living testimony of God's involvement in human history. De Gruchy (2002:52), like Volf (2002:68-74) turns to Paul, and declares that God took the initiative to deal with enmity even

¹ Theos = God; Anthropos = human being and cosmic = organic-physical environment.

though humanity had offended God, which closely connects with De Gruchy's discussion on restorative justice, where the offender is justified by accepting the offer of forgiveness. The theology of De Gruchy denies the limitation of the gospel to personal piety, and argues that it contributes to the wider restoration and renewal of relations in society. This transformation is built into a continuum of relations in restoring society and creation to God and each other. This work is done after the fall of apartheid in South Africa and supports the quest for democracy. The model De Gruchy employs for the inter-religious reconciliation is the one the people of Zimbabwean strife for in the attempt to build a new nation and new humanity in Zimbabwe. It is reconciliation that is not only interpersonal but Theanthropocosmic in nature. This reconciliation cannot be complete unless it includes restorative justice.

5.2.2.1 Reconciliation as part of Restorative justice

The central element for reconciliation and mediation of justification, according to Karl Barth (1958: 6-11) is the church through its rituals and sacraments. Karl Barth considers the importance of law and gospel for the realisation of full justification as he discusses restorative justice. The sacraments preserve the promises of Jesus Christ, unleashing the unparalleled power of love. For a community to experience genuine peace, there must be genuine reconciliation as well. As such, government officials, politicians, traditional chiefs, pastors and community leaders must all join hands in reconciling people. Reconciliation should not be done so as to please others, such type of reconciliation is not authentic and it can bring negative consequences in the near future.

De Gruchy (2002:2) states that, genuine reconciliation restores justice in an unjust society, and this can only be achieved through the help of the Holy Spirit. Examples of this transformation are seen in the rehabilitation of perpetrators, educational programs and victims' compensation pay-outs. The legislation of compensation gives survivors hope when their immediate needs are met. In fact, this process contributed immensely to the provision of education, health, other services and access to land. So what began as confession, storytelling, truth telling and forgiveness bore practical fruit through the TRC model of externalising what has been internalised for a very long time. This closely agrees with the understanding that reconciliation must begin at a personal level because of the creativeness of individuals in accepting and being willing to risk their lives for the better of all. For this, taking from Moltmann's (1967:46-49) seeing and doing things creatively and even disturbing the established order. In this sense, reconciliation in Zimbabwe should be the package of restorative justice, that individuals participate in the process of restoration in order to achieve genuine liberation, costly reconciliation and health national healing.

5.2.2.2 Liberation, Reconciliation and National healing in the *Kairos* Document

The second lesson Zimbabweans can learn from the South African context in the recommendation of *Kairos* document. *Kairos Document* identified four issues supporting the Apartheid regime; the church had to deal with, namely:

- the misuse of Scripture;
- the preferential option of the poor;
- prophetic theology; and

- political revolution.

The *Kairos Document* sought to liberate Scripture from misuse and to justify God towards the marginalized and against the doctrine of “pigmentocracy” (Kalu, 2006: 589) as a means for privilege. In a way, the document attacked the conservatives who applied middle axioms to preach reconciliation; and attempted to protect the poor, oppressed and marginalised, who are embraced in Jesus’ ministry (Kalu, 2006:593).

The point the *Kairos Document* makes about reconciliation is that the plight of the poor is central in church mission. This helps to shock those in power and to extend the gospel to the majority who are in the class of the poor. It is a readiness to pursue justice and the struggle for freedom to the oppressed. For the sake of reconciliation, Maluleke (1997a:62) asserts that regard for the poor is important because only equal human beings can ultimately be reconciled (Maluleke, 1997b: 334).

Secondly, the *Kairos Document* says reconciliation is impossible without radical transformation; this means restorative justice. It argues for reconciliation that is balanced by justice. Graybill commenting on the *Kairos Document* states that liberation, reconciliation and national healing rejects middle path theology. The response of those in power with third way theology is an attestation that “liberation, reconciliation and national healing are an obvious aim of any Christian. But at the same time it is clear that the means to reconciliation will encounter hostility from those who do not wish to give up privilege” (Rowland and Corner, 1990:184).

The *Kairos Document* finally calls for practical steps to action to support a revolution. Rowland and Corner (1990:175), analysing the *Kairos Document*, state, “The *Kairos Document* feels that it can no more condemn the armed struggle against apartheid and call for peace at any price, than it can call for reconciliation at any price”. For this reason, de Gruchy (1997:169) notes that the document “heightened” tension within the English-speaking churches. In sum then, the *Kairos Document* highlights three issues, namely:

- the gospel’s clients are the poor, marginalized and oppressed;
- true reconciliation requires justice; and
- the gospel allows for violent revolution to bring justice and reconciliation.

Genuine liberation and reconciliation in every country where there is oppression there must be a *Kairos* moment to look into the truth and reconciliation in the holistic manner. In this context, the Zimbabwean people need to read the signs of the time and come up with their own *Kairos* document that define the situation of this country and the commitment to reconcile and heal the nation. The churches should play the major role in this process of liberation, reconciliation and national healing.

The churches should empower the Zimbabwean people to know and understand their political and human right, and how to liberate the scriptures from misuse. After engaging the South African context in terms of liberation, reconciliation and national healing there is a need to construct the political theology of Zimbabwe as is the attempt in this thesis.

5.2.3 Towards a deeper theology of liberation, reconciliation and national healing in Zimbabwe

Over the centuries, the church has been engaged in a number of community services, concertizing people about justice and peace, elections and how they must vote. This has been happening in many African countries. To a larger extent, through her activities, the church has performed an educational role, advisory role and also has been an agent of peace and reconciliation.

5.2.3.1 The theory of reconciliation

If ever a new inclusive society is to be created, different values are required in fitting with the needs of the majority in an interface between justice and reconciliation. Reconciliation is not simply pursuing by religious notions of salvation and freedom. It covers a tangible field of human experience and theological introspection. It encompasses perpetrators and survivors, with the latter defining and articulating history.

5.2.3.2 The strategy of liberation, reconciliation and national healing

One of the HOCDZ bishop said, in Zimbabwe, reconciliation requires a seven-fold strategy. He borrowed these seven theories from De Gruchy. The first is reconciliation at an individual level. This is when individuals are transformed, have accepted and are willing to risk their individual comforts for a greater good, it brings in a new humanity that embraces, relates and belongs in a new family and society. The TRC successfully handled painful stories and changed individuals: survivors

remembered and dealt with their 'memories' of pain, while perpetrators remembered and came "face to face with their guilt" (De Gruchy, 2002:23). This produced new individuals who were willing to risk their lives for the greater good, especially the example of Ginn Fourie who lost her daughter in the Heidelberg Massacre where her daughter died when the resistance movement fired back on the apartheid regime. Her choice to forgive the perpetrator even when he refused to apologise is a passionate and amazing risk that undergirded in building new narratives for South Africa. This inspiration has led to many projects on reconciliation in South Africa such as the Vuleka Trust in Durban, Institute of Justice and Reconciliation Commission in Cape Town and other church programmes. Such a perspective is useful in Zimbabwe in that the perpetrators of impunity are refusing to take responsibility but be that as it may, reconciliation must take place.

This is a biblical concept found in Matthew 23:1-13. In these verses, Jesus requested his hearers to individually respond to his message by softening their hearts, change their minds and open up to new possibilities presented by the gospel. The individual is changed from within, what Volf calls the de-centering of the self in mind, heart, motives and intentions. Like in Cain's story, Jesus shows persistence towards the sinner's repentance, who must receive the Cross of Jesus as the protective mark from damnation (Volf, 1996:93). This is because sin is "generated by a perverted self in order to maintain its own false identity" (Volf, 1996:96). This however limits freedom for the individual. Freedom is a basic tenet of personal transformation and leads to sustainable reconciliation (Gadacz, 1987:56-72).

The second aspect of reconciliation can be understood as the social level. Both Volf and De Gruchy discuss about social transformation. On social transformation, the focus is on relations, and De Gruchy states that reconciliation is contextual; it is marked by different social and personal relationships (2002:153).

De Gruchy's focus in his writing is social justice, economic equitability, peace and human welfare, which takes place within the renewal of relationships of the South African society, and build new relations based on a new ethos. For De Gruchy, "reconciliation is about the restoration of justice, whether that has to do with our justification by God, the renewal of interpersonal relations, or the transformation of society" (2002:2). This led to "a fundamental shift in personal and power relations between former enemies" These relations, Volf expands, are not dependent on personal or social behaviour only. By and large, the *Gukurahundi* scenario shows that Zimbabweans have hurt each other for nearly three and a half decades now and this is all because of different political ambitions. Genuine reconciliation will only come as a result of proper methodological processes of healing being followed first. Disturbances in Matabeleland remain a thorny subject since the offended are still alive and their memories are still fresh. The ruthlessness of the 5th brigade during this occurrence is something that is hard to forget. Pregnant women would be killed in cold blood. Families would be put into one hut and burnt inside. This is one of the serious crimes that the biblical prophet Amos spoke against. The ills that people encountered then are difficult to erase.

We are related by geography, blood and history. For Volf, relations give meaning to life and it is by upsetting these relations that we exclude ourselves from the same

relationships. He (2002:97) uses the story of Cain, who “By his own act of exclusion he excluded himself from all relationships; from the land below, from God above, from the people around”. For he states, “The land soaked with fraternal blood is inhospitable and no longer yields fruit”. In all, the practice of solving conflicts through violence further alienates without bringing acceptance. The society therefore needs to be transformed so that relations are renewed and a new ethos is built. The third is cultural reconciliation. De Gruchy discusses about identity as a national issue that led to the questions of “‘Who is an African’ within the South African context?” Volf spends more time discussing cultural transformation, and this has relevance in Zimbabwe’s struggle with identity in a globalizing world full of controversies of neo-colonialism, political autarky, economic corruption and social polarisation. This culture has partly been borrowed from colonialism, the West and other African autocracies; hence Volf (1996:59) asks the question, “How would the face look in a mirror that was not made by us in order to court our vanity?”

The tribal culture is full of corruption, idolatry and exclusion needs to be deprived of its definitive place in order to give it and other cultures “legitimacy in the wider family of cultures” where “ultimate allegiance is given to God and God’s Messiah who transcends every culture” (Volf, 1996:49). Thus, Christ erases all particularities and breaks all tribal allegiances because as “the seed of Abraham” he fulfils both the promise from Abraham’s dynasty and replaces birth with a new people. To this effect, the culture that used genealogy as a locus of privilege to access God (Volf, 1996:45) was changed to Christ. The Zimbabwean culture that is leaning towards westernization finds relevance in the “stepping out of enmeshment in the network of inherited cultural relations” (Volf, 1996:39) in Volf’s departure and belonging text.

Using the Croatian experiences, he discusses about cultural renewal as a useful option for readjusting relations. Also Christianity focuses on cultural transformation, and as “many bodies of different people [become] situated in the one body of Christ” (Volf, 1996:50), the Cross and resurrection of Christ (Volf, 1996:27) unifies the human race and not membership in the Jewish tribe (Volf, 1996:44). Paul’s theology moves from use of genealogy as a means of salvation to spirituality; tribal loyalty to multicultural realities and moves “from the locality of a land to the globalism of the world” (Volf, 1996:43). To transform culture, the culture and history of people need to be revisited, especially their strategies to change culture. In addressing the relations between whites and blacks in South Africa, black perspectives to oppression and initiative to reconciliation became important (Roberts, 2005). The South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) revisited the history of apartheid and re-enacted examples of resistance important for South Africa’s new democracy. The SABC launched a comedy that used local drama for building South African culture of reconciliation “Suburban Bliss” with the intention to address sensitive civil and cultural issues through use of humour (Roome, 1999).

The fourth level of reconciliation is institutional. In De Gruchy’s book, one sees a trend in the culture of human rights, a new culture that fostered a smooth transition from repression to liberal democracy in South Africa (Wilson, 2000:76). When the situation in Matabeleland and part of Midlands was serious, people crying for their lives, the Catholic Bishops wished that they present a report to the President but the President ignored the Catholic Bishops’ request of wanting to see them and he said “I warn the nation against mischief makers, among them religious personalities”. This again is among the statements that the Ndebele people quote when they argue that

reconciliation is not possible. Sibusiso and Nomalanga who are a couple from Jocholo near Gwai river along Victoria Falls road, Christians worshipping in the United Methodist Church, postulated the same experiences for they said Gukurahundi still has lasting impressions in their lives. “*Bangitshiya besithi nguGwesela. Nginga baxolelanjani abantu ababulala imhuli yathu? Sesingani singabadhw layo elizwani lethu*” (We were all left orphans because they killed our fathers saying they were Gwesela. How can we forgive people who killed our families?) The narration of the events and how it happened truly indicates that the ruling government (ZANU) made every effort to subvert the popular will of the Ndebele people. This crisis indicates that the only possible way of resolving it is that as Zimbabweans there is need to learn to respect each other, work in unity promoting peace and justice.

This means the TRC did not belong to the church; and the TRC leaders understood this because they employed a civil and social language to the cases they heard and examined (Wilson, 2000:76). As such that which began as confession, storytelling, truth telling and forgiveness; ended in courts where there was compensation, bearing fruit of justice and mercy. The church became an example although it continued to have its own crises. Despite this, most survivors became hopeful because the government provided some of their immediate needs. The TRC also contributed immensely to service provision in the education, health and economic sector by giving more opportunities, resources and services to those who were previously disadvantaged. The fifth is political reconciliation. Volf gets it right when he makes a major classic departure from modernity. Modern nations radically turn from spirituality to dirty political scheming, “manufacturing hatreds, fabricating

injuries and rewriting histories of brutality” (Volf, 1996:77). The spread of Christianity shares in this brutality, and the language used emphasizes radical purity and exclusion. There are some circumstances when brutality becomes “madness,” when destruction of enemies extends to their achievements, sacred places, culture and children so that no accusing finger can be raised against their brutality (Volf, 1996:74).

Most perpetrators keep hold on power, postponing indefinitely the safety valve and hope for transition for fear of losing all what motivated them in the first place. The surprise of smooth change in South Africa from apartheid to liberal democracy is found in what Schaap (2004) calls “logic of recognition”. As long as there is no recognition, the question of identity (de Gruchy, 2002:31) fails to receive a new logic in the possibility of reconciliation by countering past violence with genuine civility. The realisation by Nelson Mandela to exercise moral integrity helped him to achieve justice (de Gruchy, 2002:37). Others accuse him of acting out of political expediency by providing political legality, reciprocity and civil friendship to his former enemies.

Though, the inclusion of the statement in the interim constitution, “people must see the need for understanding, reparation, Ubuntu rather than promoting revenge, retaliation and victimization” (de Gruchy, 2002:40) shows the premises of genuine expediency and sound and moral teaching. In the *Kairos Document*, the determination to re-enact a new, just and democratic order brought a new political socialisation that proved that the theology of apartheid was faulty, limited and inadequate (The *Kairos* Theologians, 1990: *ibid*). The document empowered the churches’ struggle for justice, identifying apartheid as a “heresy” and an idolatrous

ideology that disfigured humanity, politically and morally. This mobilised local English-speaking churches, civil society, religious groups and the international community to support the struggle against apartheid (Goba, 1987: 317). The nobility of the struggle drew collaboration from a variety of progressive movements that were prepared to re-examine their allegiances to political injustice and the radical demand for political transformation (Kalu, 2006:593).

The sixth level of reconciliation is *theological*. The transformation of theology pushes out the boundaries of church confessions; convicts the church against its own teaching and challenges the church to make fervent confessions.⁴⁵ In South Africa, during the struggle to end apartheid, the Dutch Reformed Church “viciously attacked” initiatives that were bringing confessions relevant for the needs of the moment. Other churches like Anglicans, Catholics and Lutherans were not “in the forefront of the struggle against racism in South Africa” until the late seventies (De Gruchy, 1979:97). The conservatives, even after the “Sharpeville uprisings in 1960 and the Soweto riots in 1986”, “the Dutch Reformed” “deployed covenant theology, natural theology, race, blood, soil and the history of the Boers in South Africa” as a divine arsenal for separate development (Kalu, 2006:590). The *Kairos Document* put “theology at the centre of political ethics and pursued an ecumenical response or common confession amidst corrosive circumstances” (Kalu, 2006:5821).

The effort of the church in writing the *Kairos Document* and the *Belhar Confession* was to make Jesus the apex of social transformation. In the confession however, Christ’s Lordship demonstrates a “bifocal vision of antecedent church witnesses. Christ is firstly Lord of the church, but also Lord of history and society” (Naude,

2003:14). With contemporary theological reflection, the works of the church such as the confession of Belhar “closes a loop in Reformed confessions by coming to terms with the revelation of God in relation to the realities of social justice” (Botman, 2007). The struggle for justice as De Gruchy rightly puts it puts the church in a drama, and it is by using art that we can transform wrongly designed confessions of the church of yesteryear (De Gruchy, 2001).

The seventh is reconciliation at the religious level. The task of the church is to preach Jesus Christ. The church must be exemplary in its dealings. The church must be assisting people to realise and reclaim their identity in a justifiable manner (Benedict XVI Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes*, 40; Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 49-51.) The Christ debate of the seventies also played an important role in bringing tolerance between Jews, Christians and Moslems. It is from this background that finding commonalities reduces religious conflict, which can push us into the future where the Christian religion takes no more space than other religions are willing to give. In South Africa, the TRC borrowed story-telling and other significantly teachings and practices of Islam and Judaism (de Gruchy, 2002: 18, 76). This recognition led the two religions to cooperate with Christianity in shaping the process so it could be relevant to theology and politics. If ever authentic liberation, healing, and reconciliation are to take place in Zimbabwe, it is very decisive that those who directly or are in one way or the other were affected by political violence be allowed to voice out their cry.

Many of those who survived *Gukurahundi* brutalities, Operation Restore Order and the alleged pre and post-election violence in Zimbabwe cried or became emotional as they narrated their sad stories. The Zimbabwean Bishops in their calls for healing posted pastoral letter to the masses and they started by reminding Zimbabweans of their 2007 publication in which they said “Our crisis as Zimbabweans is not only political and economic but first and foremost a spiritual and moral crisis. No one’s heart can be at rest as long as people are haunted by evil memories, never acknowledged and straightened out. This crisis can only be resolved if the people of Zimbabwe confess their sins, and are forgiven, fully accepting each other and once more committing themselves to work together in solidarity, justice and peace” This statement clearly indicates that the people of Zimbabwe had seriously wronged one another for so long and much of the hatred had political aspirations. So many people need healing from the spoils made upon them and it will be the curative that will then facilitate reconciliation.

This method helped to reopen new debates and research in the fields of theology, ethics, philosophy, classics, arts and sciences (de Gruchy, 2002:13). Centrally, truth-telling has been the principle method of narrating, proclaiming and celebrating the story of human salvation (de Gruchy, 2002:12). Even those who supported the ideals of apartheid were disempowered because two conflicting religions agreed in a just process for building a new South Africa. In so doing, South Africa did not need a revisionist history and theology over the testimony of “mob violence”, “urban terrorism”, and “religious bombings” (De Gruchy, 2002:113). De Gruchy carefully refers to religious fundamentalism as activism, especially its rise after apartheid. Though this seems to be a far-fetched idea, this is an important strategy for dealing

with identity because of the centrality of religion among Africans, and especially Zimbabweans. Having provided a theological framework for reconciliation, it is important for the churches of Zimbabwe to recognize that the task of reconciliation must involve other stakeholders and role players in an interdisciplinary manner.

According to Apostle Paul in Romans 13, every citizen has the right to obey and respect the ruling authorities. In verse 14 of the same chapter, Paul clearly states that “the state is there to serve God for people’s benefit.” This follows that if the government is neglecting its duty of promoting oneness, advocating for reconciliation and healing on gross forms of injustices, surely that state will not be serving God. This being the case, citizens are justified if they rebel against such a government. Acts 5:29 reads, “obedience to God comes before obedience to men.” The atrocities encountered by Zimbabwean citizens have caused a lot of pain in the lives of many families and must be avoided at all costs because to a greater extent they showed disrespect of human life. A lot still needs to be done for authentic healing and reconciliation to be a reality. The *Newsday*, Zimbabwe magazine of 26 September 2016 has a topic “*Gukurahundi*, a ticking time bomb.” The story has a former Bulilima East legislator, Norman Mpofu (MDC-T), urging the government to carefully handle the sensitive *Gukurahundi* issue and facilitate national healing and reconciliation, saying failure to do so could trigger civil strife. Mpofu further said,

Crimes against humanity have been committed by a bunch of criminals currently masquerading as democratic leaders of this country. Human rights have been violated by government institutions like the army, police and Central Intelligence Organization against the citizens. What is sad is that these heinous sins continue to be committed even today.

The HOCDZ in Zimbabwe as the highest church leadership body must not be partisan and must do its best to work for the common good, encouraging every Christian to be a true salt and true light to the nation of Zimbabwe.

5.3 The Challenge: the Church in Zimbabwe in address

The main challenge for the Church is how to deal with the level of impunity the country has gone through for nearly 37 years. Rev Mhora (interview: 16 October 2016) said, “*Senyika kubva patakawana kuzvitonga, takundikana kumira panzvimbo kuti mhirizhonga isavepo.*” (As a country we have failed to swiftly respond to political violence since Independence in 1980). Thousands of people were killed during *Gukurahundi* in Matebeleland and Midlands provinces especially in areas like Natisa, Mapisa, Ekusileni, Tsholotsho and Jocholo near Gwai River along Victoria Falls road. Hundreds of people were left homeless and a lot of property was destroyed because of operation Murambatsvina. Worse still, in 2008 many beatings and murders occurred in the countdown to the June 2008 presidential election run-off. If Zimbabwe is to have genuine reconciliation and healing, the first step should be of allowing the truth to come out. Some victims are still bitter simply because the environment has not been conducive for them to empty-out their anger. Rev Mhora further postulated that:

Ngapagadziawe nzira chaidzo dzokuti pave nemukana wakanaka unokurudzira avo vaitambudza vamwe kuti vakumbire ruregerero kune vavakatadzira uyewo kuti avo vakarwadziswa vatsanangure zvose zvavakasangana nazvo vasingachisidziawe. (There is need to create a conducive environment that promotes those who initiated torture on others to apologize to the victims and let the victims narrate their ordeal without being intimidated).

Some victims of political violence reiterate that they do not want any compensation for the evils done to them but they demand a confrontation with the perpetrators and blow out their anger. They believe that this would help them to dissolve the lumps that have been on their throats for a long time. What the victims demand is a confession and admission of guilt from the perpetrators and they believe this way they will feel justice would have reigned. Judging from the informant's views, where oppression and repression is brewed, war and fights are unavoidable. Judging from the violence that has been happening in Zimbabwe for the past three decades, it is suffice to say the church has come to the realisation that it has been far too slow in facing the problems of violence and political injustice.

This study proposes that the church should be bold enough to detach herself from the party and international politics in Zimbabwe in order to create a safe space for the Zimbabweans to confront each other in the formal space like TRC model of South Africa. The churches must reconstruct their theologies in line with theologies of reconciliation, healing and liberating the Zimbabwe and the entire Africa.

5.4 THE CHURCH AS ROLE PLAYER IN LIBERATING, RECONCILING AND HEALING PROCESS

The church is a political institution of a higher order, have volunteers to teach and construct the better nation. The heads of churches in Zimbabwe have opportunity to provide guidance and advices to their subordinates in the parishes to change the life and politics of Zimbabwe, since the voters and voted are members of these churches. Since more than 80% of the Zimbabwe's population comprises of

Christians, there is a possibility that perpetrators of violence also come to church. As such, the pulpit can be used to educate people on the need to co-exist and not to allow people to abuse the Bible so as to gain political mileage. Further, the church must partner the civil society and community leaders in educating people on the need to shun violence. Many youths are targeted by politicians to be used as instruments of violence, the church must target these youths for massive re-orientation.

The Christian churches and their organizations have voiced their concerns on healing and reconciliation, even when they know that the political environment is not so conducive and tolerant of their comments and suggestions. Other Christian organizations such as the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (E.F.Z), the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC), the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference (ZCBC), and the Africa Council of Churches (ACC) are amongst some of the Christian Organizations that have made efforts calling for national healing and reconciliation on political issues in Zimbabwe. The EFZ in 2005 organised a day of prayer at the City Sports Centre in relation to this issue. The motive behind the organized day of prayer was to seek God's intervention for the achievement of peace, forgiveness, healing and reconciliation. The researcher credits the EFZ for the critical step in trying to implement the programme at a National level. Such initiatives must continue to take place since they give people respect, not only for God but for one another.

The Heads of Christian Denominations in 2006 forwarded *The Zimbabwe We Want* document to the president as they were trying to put across the fact that Christians are also part of the nation, influenced by politics as any other citizen and so they are concerned with every detail. The document included issues to do with the need to

put an end to corruption that had spread like veld fire, that there be tolerance on political issues and that the country must have a true vision. Furthermore, the document lobbied for the Church to be allowed to act as a voice for the voiceless in Zimbabwe. Such a move was excellent especially considering that it came from people who fear God. Even though some of the contents of the document were publicly denounced by the Government, one encouraging aspect is that some of the issues raised in *The Zimbabwe We Want* document are being taken into consideration. This initiation was taken because; the church must accept that it is its responsibility to work in preventing communities from physical, sexual or emotional abuse.

Through the voices of the Church organizations, the government realized that it was its responsibility to accommodate the destitute and those that had been displaced by Operation Restore Order. The government of Zimbabwe housed people under “Operation *Garikayi*” in Hatcliff and Hopley farm, among other areas. This can be credited to the Church for being a voice for the less privileged. It is thus a suitable mediator for healing and reconciliation in Zimbabwe on political issues.

5.5 SUMMARY

In conclusion, it should be noted that churches in Zimbabwe have a pull factor in them that can be used for or against the government. As much as the churches represent the realm of the spirit, they also have ability to see impending political upheavals in a given country. Many political parties were nurtured from the pulpit. Some political ideologies are perpetuated by church doctrines. Political violence that

has been rampant and the talk of the day in Zimbabwe have to a much significant extent tarnished the image of the country to such an extent that it has impacted negatively on foreign direct investments and the tourism sector. It is important for the government of Zimbabwe to re-furbish social safety nets and human rights laws to protect the vulnerable population against politically motivated violence. Only until the state has managed to be responsible for the safety of the masses and when the peace-keeping forces such as ZRP and ZNA practice to be apolitical will reconciliation be possible in Zimbabwe.

The church in Zimbabwe according to the returned questioners should be exemplary in denouncing politically motivated violence. The church must forge ahead in establishing infrastructures that are efficient and all-encompassing. It will need to practice what it preaches. Democracy, reconciliation, forgiveness and love should be practiced in church first before it is preached outside. Fearlessness, determination and courage are expected from preachers, who will inevitably face resistance from the 'oppressors'. Prophetic ministry should be empathetic, relevant and credible, and the church must consistently 'read the signs of the times' and interpret the social setting in light of the gospel. As of current, the church is somehow relaxed, only waiting until elections to start issuing pastoral letters and by then, it will be already too late.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONTRIBUTION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is going to be a discussion and also a description of the findings of this research. The Chapter will start by outlining the main findings of this research study. Recommendations and conclusion will follow. The conclusions will be based on the data presented in chapter 2, 4 and 5 and also from the research aim and objectives that the researcher highlighted in chapter 1.

6.2 SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

This research has highlighted that, the Church in Zimbabwe under the Heads of Christian Denominations in Zimbabwe has been trying even though not enough, to engage the Government as a way of challenging the government to promote peace, forgiveness, reconciliation and national healing. Since 1980, the government has neglected its mandate of promoting unity, advocating for reconciliation and healing on gross forms of injustices, but rather has been abusive and violent to its citizens. To a greater extend, this being the case, citizens are vindicated if they turn against such a government. Acts 5:29 reads, "obedience to God comes before obedience to men." The massacres done to the Zimbabweans by the ruling government has caused a lot of pain in the lives of many families and must be avoided at all costs as this clearly shows disrespect of human life.

It is important to note that, as Zimbabweans, pretending that anger, frustrations, bitterness and hatred that have accumulated over the years can just disappear by a mere handshake. Such thinking shows higher levels of ignorance. Again silencing victims is in a way creating a time bomb that will one day destroy many people. A lot still needs to be done for authentic healing and reconciliation to be a reality. Worse still, these atrocious crimes are being committed and experienced even today. It then goes without saying that the country of Zimbabwe is sick and, as such, it certainly needs healing and reconciliation.

6.3 FINDINGS BASED ON THE RESEARCH AIMS

This research has mentioned that closer to 80% of the Zimbabwean population are Christians, meaning it is likely that some of those perpetrators of violence attend Church services. This then means that, church leaders have a duty of educating people, amongst them politicians that as Zimbabweans we must co-exist. People must not abuse the Holy book (Bible) for the purposes of gaining political mileage. The Heads of Christian Denominations in Zimbabwe must join hands with the civil society and community leaders in educating people on the need to shun violence. Politicians in Zimbabwe are taking advantage of unemployed youths. These youths are used to instigate violence in their communities. The church should come up with developmental programs that target these youths and these programs will also be useful in serious re-orientation.

6.4 AIMS OF PERPETUATING POLITICAL VIOLENCE

The researcher through this research study has realised that perpetrators of violence had a number of reasons behind their cruel acts. Various reasons were mentioned as to why violence was perpetrated and some of the reasons are as follows:

6.4.1 Creating a Philosophy Industry

One of the reasons is that political parties are more concerned with creating hyper-realities and cultural industries. This is done through force and violent means, through the politicized mass media that publicizes biased “truths” about violence perpetrators so as to win political back-up and support. These realities are the “established truths” or rather propagated creations of the real truth to gain political support and mileage. Some of the established realities have seen opposition party victims of violence being presented as culprits in a “victim cum perpetrator” style adopted by the so-called sovereign ruling party, ZANU PF.

6.4.2 Creation of Perpetual Fear

The research finding shows that violence is used as a measure or tool to guarantee the creation of perpetual fear among vulnerable civilians and “deviants” in society. In a press release, Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights reported that, in April 2008 that nearly one hundred and fifty innocent people were arrested and locked at Harare central police station. The ZLHR (2008) report avers that, the arrests were a serious violation of people’s rights to freedom and were aggravated by the ZANU PF military junta who were recruited to work together with the ruling government militia

to punish innocent civilians. The beatings and murdering became a nationwide cry and was unleashed to anyone who was suspected to be against the ruling party ZANU PF. The operation came to be known as “operation *makavhotera pap*” (to who did you voted for?).

6.4.3 Silence Opposition

According to the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum, one of the reasons for political violence is mainly to silence opposition both from the external and internal members of a political society. The Zimbabwean Human Rights NGO forum report highlight that it was like a norm that there will be violence before elections in Zimbabwe and violence will influence the voting process and the outcome of elections thereby silence opposition parties and opposition members within major political parties such as ZANU PF. According to research findings, organised acts of violence against opposition parties were serious as from the year 2000 and became serious during the run-up to the 29 March 2008 presidential elections. Organised groups of ZANU PF hooligans went around beating people and looting their properties. Torture of civilians was seriously experienced in opposition strongholds places like Epworth, Mhangura, Mbare and Chinhoyi.

The research findings have also explored the fact that one structural origin of violence is ZANU PF violence within and against itself. According to *Graveyard Governance* by CCJP, ZANU PF has been known for silencing internal dissent ruthlessly. This is emphasised in *Breaking the Silence: A Book on Gukurahundi in Zimbabwe*, which quotes Mugabe (1983) opining that, “We eradicate them, we do not differentiate when fighting because we do not know who is a dissident and who is

not” in reference to the *Gukurahundi* genocide. CCJP (2009) avers that “*ZANU ndeyeropa*” (“ZANU the party of blood”) is a very distinct characterisation of the party that its party that its leaders and supporters proudly sing and recite. From the research findings, internal violence has been seen in how opposition supporters in provinces such as Masvingo, Harare, Manicaland and Mashonaland West were dealt with. The Head of the party (Mr Mugabe) is known for setting one faction against another or propping one over the other, which has been one of his strategies to silence opposition and retain power.

6.4.4 Forcing Political support

The study findings have revealed that violence perpetrators do so more often because of the need to force political support from civilians or voters. This is discussed at length by CCJP (2009) on the issue of Zimbabwean 2008 election run-off period where there was the establishment of bases and forced gatherings. The new bases were established at schools and townships, in areas that were known to have voted overwhelmingly for the MDC.

According to research findings, in areas such as Harare, Chinhoyi and Mhangura some of the venues used, notably Kamusoda shop in Epworth and a clinic at Stopover shops in Epworth were used as a base for the youth militia. ZANU PF leaders actively participated in the organisation of such meetings and sometimes war vets addressed the meetings. CCJP (2009) opine that the gatherings were not voluntary as the villagers only attended out of fear of reprisals and losing their assets.

6.5 The Challenge

The main challenge is how to deal with the level of deterioration the country has gone through for nearly 37 years. As a country, we have failed to swiftly respond to political violence since Independence in 1980. Thousands of people were killed during *Gukurahundi* in Midlands and Matebeleland provinces especially in areas like Natasa, Mapisa, Ekusileni, Tsholotsho and Jocholo near Gwai River. Hundreds of people were left homeless and a lot of property was destroyed because of operation Murambatsvina. Worse still, since independence in 1980, Zimbabwe experience pre and post-election violence. If Zimbabwe is to have genuine reconciliation and healing, the first step should be of allowing the truth to come out. Some victims are still bitter simply because the environment has not been conducive for them to empty-out their anger. There is need to create a conducive environment that promotes those who initiated torture on others to apologize to victims and let the victims narrate their ordeal without being intimidated. Some victims of political violence reiterate that they do not want any compensation for the evils done to them but they demand a confrontation with the perpetrators and blow out their anger. They believe that this would help them to dissolve the lumps that have been on their throats for a long time. What the victims demand is a confession and admission of guilt from the perpetrators and they believe this way they will feel justice would have reigned.

6.6 FINDINGS: HEARING THE PREFERENCES OF THE VICTIMS

In an effort to fulfil the research objectives which are as follows:

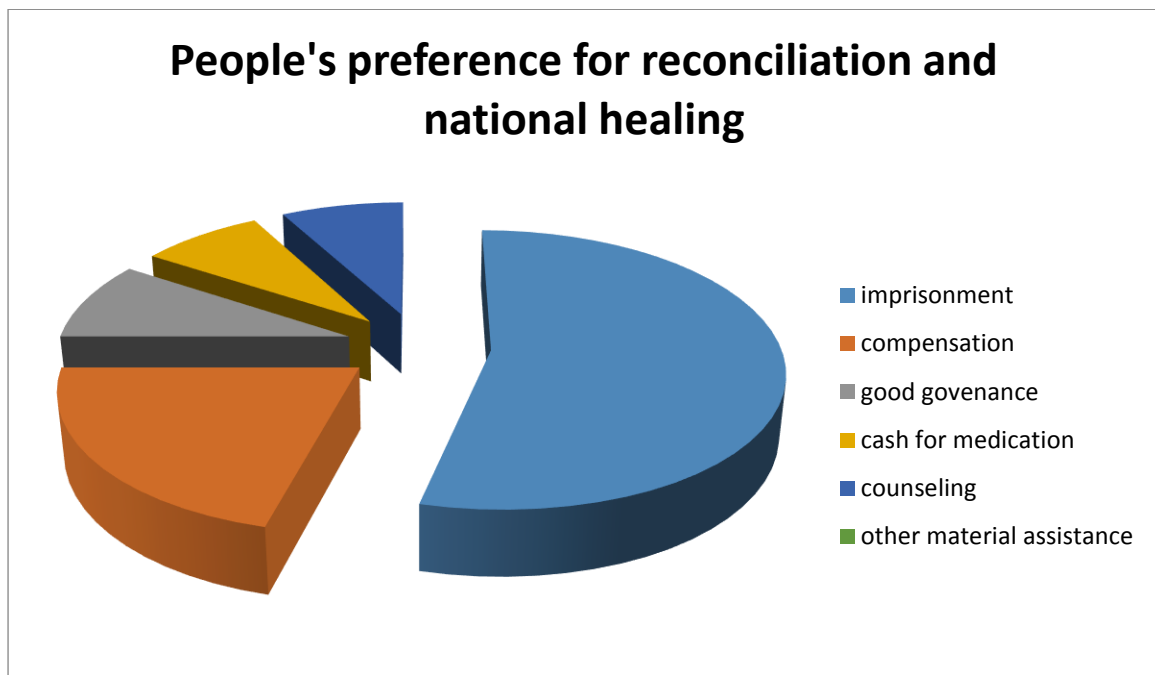
- to illustrate from the literature that Zimbabweans are wounded by the colonial and current socio-econo-political situation;

- to explore the church's prophetic engagement in uniting Zimbabweans for the good of Zimbabwe through analyzing the link between church and state in socio-econo-political issues;
- to highlight God's salvific plan for both the oppressor and the oppressed; and
- to propose theological framework on the issue of liberation, reconciliation and national healing that can be a springboard for the HOCD.

The study managed to explore various perceptions from the Heads of Christian Denominations, politicians, general public and victims of political violence on what could be done for authentic reconciliation and national healing to take place. The people who responded to the question of what form of justice would be fair to both the victim and the perpetrator; the respondents mentioned various preferences as strategies to achieve reconciliation and national healing. These strategies, they believe, are the cornerstone and starting point for forgiveness and reconciliation. To them, these strategies are not an end but significant means to an end to politically motivated violence, murder and intimidation.

Some respondents felt that imprisonment was the best strategy or move towards realizing justice for both the perpetrators and the victims of politically motivated violence. However, for some, compensation in the form of money or material things to make-up for their destroyed properties will be fair. Two of the respondents argue that the issue of national healing and reconciliation is linked with compensation of victims' losses. They argue against imprisonment and counselling, among other suggestions, claiming that imprisonment cannot heal the pain that victims have gone through. In as much as counselling can help in healing psychological trauma, it cannot compensate for the loss of material things such as houses and properties, neither can it compensate for loss of human life. Other respondents reiterate that

good Governance is the only sure means to end politically motivated violence and achieve forgiveness and reconciliation (Sokwanele report. p.24).



6.7 SUMMARY

It should be noted that churches in Zimbabwe have a pull factor in them that can be used for or against the government. As much as the churches represent the realm of the spirit, they also have the capacity to see impending political upheavals in a given country. Many political parties were nurtured from the pulpit. Political violence has been rampant and has to a significant extent tarnished the image of the country to such an extent that it has impacted negatively on foreign direct investments and the tourism sector. It is important for the government of Zimbabwe to re-furbish social safety nets and human rights laws to protect the vulnerable population against

politically motivated violence. Only until the state has managed to be responsible for the safety of the masses and when peace-keeping forces such as ZRP and ZNA practice to be apolitical will reconciliation be possible in Zimbabwe.

6.8 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is clear from the study that the Zimbabwean government feels threatened by the influence of Christian organisations especially if no attention is given to what churches do in the country. The thinking here is failure to establish security measures in the church will result in the permeation of the regime change agenda in the country through churches. A rise of new political parties within the country has seen most churches taking sides with these opposition parties. As such, the following recommendations are made;

- The top political leaders in Zimbabwe must admit that they acknowledge that their parties were involved in mass killings, tortures and terrorizations of innocent people and to apologize sincerely. Croswell has it that, the process of asking for forgiveness should be done in a humble manner and genuinely to touch and move the hearts of the victims some of whom are were left blind, dumb or disabled.
- Forgiveness ought to be presented in such a manner that the disabled or widowed victims of political violence will willingly pronounce forgiveness and blessings to their former perpetrators.

- The traditional method of asking for forgiveness should be facilitated, that is reparation (*kuripa*). This is done through chiefs and their community courts to encourage genuine repentance.
- Those deprived of education due to political violence must be encouraged to pursue their education free of charge.
- For people to come to terms with past memories, truth telling must be central and must be encouraged.
- The government must accept that it sinned against its citizens, must come out openly and apologise to the whole nation for the cruel activities it did.
- Since forgiveness has been helpfully defined by Kenneth Kaunda as ‘a constant willingness to live in a new day without looking back and ransacking the memory for occasions and resentment’ (quoted by De Waal 1990:77). Forgiveness is a pathway to healing (Smedes 1996) and even when it is not possible for members of victim and perpetrator groups to meet, it is still highly desirable that those who have experienced violence and suffering be given an opportunity to forgive for their own sakes so they can heal and move on with their lives (Villa-Vicencio 2004:202).
- Beyond physical representation of the church in government organizations like Central Intelligence Organization (CIO), Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP), the church need to extend its representation in each and every government department and that representation must be a recommendation from the HOCDZ.
- Of vital importance is for the government to show its sympathetic and apologetic heart by compensating those who lost their properties through looting or destruction by state and council workers.

- Zimbabwe politics should do away with hate speech, enmity and speak with one voice in trying to build the country
- For authentic justice to be effective, it is important for local communities to be involved so that they take full ownership of the reconciliation process

6.9 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The researcher recommends that future researches must look into the deployment of national security agencies in Christian organizations like Churches and Mission schools and Mission Hospitals where they operate as Lecturers, teachers, doctors, nurses, and how these institutions are used as incubators of regime change agenda. Future researches can also look at a book edited by Ernst Conradie, “*Reconciliation: A guiding vision for South Africa*” (2013), for conceptual analysis and theological reflection on reconciliation. There is also need to look into the effectiveness of other Christian bodies in safeguarding the interests of the nation in light of fighting for justice and forgiveness on political issues.

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APPENDIX 1:

SECTION A (Please tick in the appropriate box or item)

1. Gender: **Male** **Female**

2. Which category best describes you?

(a) Non-Christian theologian.

(b) Christian theologian.

(c)General public

(d) Affected people.

3. Level of education:

(a) Certificate **(b) Diploma** **(c) Degree** **(d) Masters**

(e) Doctorate (f) Other _____

4. For how long have you been involved in your field?

(a) Less than 5 years **(b) 6-10 years** **(c) 11-15 years**

(d) 16-20 years (e) 21-35 years

SECTION B (Tick where appropriate or fill in the blank space provided).

1. Do you have any idea of under-development in your area of operation for the past 35years? Yes No

2. State any form of political violence that you have witnessed from those below:

(a) Gukurahundi (b) Murambatsvina (c) Pre and post elections violence in the 1980s (d) Pre and post elections violence in the 1990s (e) Lootings of the 1998-2001 (f) Pre and post elections violence after 2000 (g) Land resettlement programme after 2000 (h) Corruption of 1980s (i) Corruption during the USD era (j) All of the above

3. In your opinion, how best can you describe Church and State relations in Zimbabwe?

(a) Very Good (b) Good (c) Not good (d) Suspicious

4. Give reasons to support the answer you give in 4 above-----

5. How should the Church respond to issues of political violence?

(a) Just pray (b) pretend as if no violence is happening (c) Engage the parties concerned

6. On a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the strongest evaluate the effectiveness of the church in dealing with political violence and corruption-----

-

7. What caused political violence in your area?

8. How did your Church participate in the Fast Track Land Reform Program?

(a) Supported the Government (b) Choose to be quite and saying
nothing (c) Issued Statements d) grabbed the land

10. What should the Church do to try and help the following people?

a) Political violence victims: -----

b) Perpetrators of violence: -----

c) Corruption Instigators -----

APPENDIX 2: Questionnaire For politicians in Zimbabwe.

1. From your perspective, how can you characterize church state relationship in Zimbabwe? -----

2. Does Zimbabwe have Legislative Acts and policies that support this relationship?-----

3. How effectively is the church doing its part in this relationship?-----

4. How effective is the state doing its part in this relationship?-----

5. The effectiveness and relevance of church and state relationship has

decreased? Do you agree or disagree -----

6. What role is church playing in the Zimbabwean politics?-----

-

7. What methods are used by the church to identify the political needs of its members?-----

8. Church people who are active in politics had totally failed to fulfill the expectations of its members in the province. Do you agree or disagree with this assertion?-----

9. What strategies are being used by the state to reach the church members?-----

10. What factors do you think contribute to the failure of the church in the political domain?-----

APPENDIX 3: Interview guide denomination representatives at EFZ

1. How can you characterize church and state relationship in Zimbabwe?---

2. What legislative acts are there in country to support church and state relations?-----

3. To what extend is the church doing its part in this relationship?-----

4. To what extend is the state doing its part in this relationship?-----

5. What methods are being used by the church to identify the political needs of its

members?-----

6. Does the Church has any role in Zimbabwe Politics?-----

7. What are the perceptions of people on church leaders who engage in active party politics?-----

8. What strategies are being used by the state to reach out to churches in the political domain?-----

-

9. What factors contributed to the failure of the church in the political

domain?-----

10.What new strategies can be employed by the church and state to

enhance their relationship?-----

APPENDIX 4: Interview guide for HOCDZ Executive members

1. What are the objectives of your organization working with churches?-----

2. Is your organization achieving its objectives in the area you were working in?-----

3. What are the challenged you are facing as an organization?-----

4. What is the involvement of your organization in politics?-----

5. Does your church play any significant role in meeting the interests of Government members?-----

6. What strategies are you putting in place to enhance your political participation in the country?-----

7. How can the church and the society help in redeeming the nation from its problems?-----
