DETERRENCE OF THE ZAMBIAN PRECEDENT IN ZIMBABWE

THE MARCH 2022 BY-ELECTION LITMUS TEST: AUTHORITARIAN RESILIENCE OR DEMOCRATIC RESISTANCE?



Zimbabwe Democracy Institute

ZIMBABWE DEMOCRACY INSTITUTE REPORT, 2022

DETERRENCE OF THE ZAMBIAN PRECEDENT IN ZIMBABWE

"The March 2022 By-election Litmus Test: Authoritarian Resilience or Democratic Resistance?"

Acknowledgements

Zimbabwe Democracy Institute is very grateful to the research participants, CBOs, CSOs, funding partners, research team, and ZDI leadership for making this research possible. We are also grateful to previous researchers who tackled this topic before ZDI and we appreciate their contributions to the conceptualisation and problematisation of the transition problem in Zimbabwe.

List of Acronyms

BVR	Biometric Voter Registration
CIO	Central Intelligence Organisation
CCC	Citizens' coalition for Change
CSOs	Civic Society Organisations
CAP	Command Agriculture Programme
EISA	Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa
JOC	Joint Operations Command
MOPA	Maintenance of Peace and Order Act
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MDC A	Movement for Democratic Change Alliance
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PVO Bill	Private Voluntary Organisation Bill
ZANLA	Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army
ZANU PF	Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African Peoples Union
ZBC	Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation
ZDI	Zimbabwe Democracy Institute
ZESN	Zimbabwe Election Support Network
ZEC	Zimbabwe Electoral Commission
ZNA	Zimbabwe National Army
ZIPRA	Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army
ZRP	Zimbabwe Republic Police

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Authoritarian Resilience Infrastructure

- The electoral defeat of the ruling party in Zambia in 2021 has triggered the ruling ZANU PF elites to intensify building and strengthening the authoritarian capability and resilience infrastructure. The current political economy has therefore been characterised by the deployment of strategies to prevent the 2021 Zambian precedent and boost ZANU PF staying power beyond 2023.
- In this report, we conceptualise Zimbabwe as a competitive authoritarian regime that is neither in transition towards democratic breakthrough nor towards absolute autocracy. It is a deliberate mid-way regime with strong institutional safeguards to keep the system neither a democracy nor an absolute autocracy.
- On one hand, the regime fears full democracy for its exposure of un-electable elites to potential electoral defeat by the opposition, and on the other hand, fears absolute authoritarianism for its inherent proneness to suffer coup d'états, civil wars, and international isolation.
- The competitive authoritarian regime in Zimbabwe is broadly characterised by three key actors in order of their power relations: i) the military elite, ii) ZANU PF, and iii) state institutions for democratic consolidation - the media, judiciary, legislature and the electoral arena. The military elite is the decisive power bloc affecting ZANU PF decision-making directly while affecting state institutions directly or indirectly via ZANU PF as its medium.
- Four regime durability capability infrastructures intensified by the Mnangagwa regime are identified as: i) infrastructure for coercion of rivals; (ii) infrastructure for the extraction of revenues; (iii) infrastructure for the registration of citizens; and (iv) infrastructure for the cultivation of dependence.

Possibility of Democratic Breakthrough

- Mobilisation of large numbers of voters or large masses to protest electoral manipulation has been the two key strategies used by the opposition to create 'substantive uncertainty' or 'procedural certainty' of elections respectively.
- Divisions in the ruling elite and opposition alliances with moderate ruling elites make transition to democracy possible.
- Cooperation of the military in citizen-led transition is the most fundamental facet for a democratic breakthrough in Zimbabwe and the worst feared scenario in the minds of the handlers of the ZANU PF regime led by President Mnangagwa. Recent studies reveal that strong regimes have been overcome by citizen protests when security forces either join the citizens or decide not to shoot their fellow citizens in defiance of orders from the ruling elite.

The 2022 By-election Litmus Test: A case of Authoritarian Resilience

Voting Outcomes in ZANU PF Strongholds

- ZANU PF increased from the 2018 baseline of 65% to 75% of the total votes cast in 2022 in its stronghold. There is an additional 10% in 2022 showing that ZANU PF is increasing its performance and popularity in its stronghold regions.
- The CCC performance in ZANU PF stronghold regions increased from the 18% share of MDCA to 22% in 2022. There is an additional 4% showing that CCC performed better than MDC Alliance in ZANU PF stronghold regions.
- The proportions with which ZANU PF and CCC gained in the ZANU PF stronghold indicate that ZANU PF support is growing faster than that of CCC in this region. ZANU PF's winning margin increased by an additional 6% in its stronghold.
- In 2018, MDCA fell short against ZANU PF with 47% whereas in 2022 it fell short with 53% in the same region. Read together, these statistics show

that if ZANU PF manages to maintain this growth trend, it will completely knock out the opposition from its stronghold regions.

- The reduction in a few contesting candidates per constituency in 2022 saw a reduction in the total share of "other" political players from 17% in 2018 to 3% in 2022.

Outcomes in Opposition Stronghold

- The findings indicate that CCC performance increased by 3% of the 2018 MDCA vote compared to ZANU PF's 8% increase in opposition stronghold constituencies.
- Whereas ZANU PF got 26% of the total vote in 2018, it managed to improve to 34% of the total vote in 2022 in the opposition stronghold. This is compared to CCC's increase from MDCA's 59% in 2018 to 62% in 2022 in the opposition stronghold.
- ZANU PF needed 33% +1 to win in the opposition stronghold in 2018 whereas, in 2022, it only needed 28%+1 to win in the same area.
- There is a 5% shrinkage in ZANU PF's losing margin in the opposition stronghold.
- In addition, the vote received by other candidates decreased from to 4% in 2022 from 15% in 2018 in the opposition stronghold.
- In 2022, the total votes in the ZANU PF stronghold declined by 46% of the 2018 baseline whereas they declined by 63% in MDCA/CCC stronghold in the same period. In the ZANU PF stronghold, CCC dropped 51% of the 2018 vote given to MDCA whereas ZANU PF dropped 38% of its 2018 vote in the same area. This contrasts with a 61% drop in total votes by CCC and 34% drop in total votes by ZANU PF in the opposition stronghold in March 2022. This shows that poor voter turnout affected the CCC stronghold more than ZANU PF stronghold regions.

Harare Province

- Although all parties improved their performance in Harare province, ZANU PF had a superior improvement to CCC. It improved by 8% from 24% in 2018 to 32% in 2022 whereas CCC improved by 5% from 59% in 2018 to 64% in 2022.
- There was a 66% decline in voter turnout in Harare province from the 2018 baseline. The CCC party recorded a 63% decline from the previous MDCA total votes whereas ZANU PF had a 56% decline from its previous total votes in Harare province. Comparatively, CCC total votes declined with higher proportions than ZANU PF in Harare province.

Midlands Province

- Although all parties improved their electoral performance in Midlands province during the 2022 by-elections, ZANU PF improved much better by 12% from 35% in 2018 to 47% in 2022 whereas CCC improved by 5% from 46% in 2018 to 51% in 2022.
- Therefore, ZANU PF is closing the opposition's winning margin in this province. There is a notable decrease in the total votes going to other players from 19% in 2018 to 2% in 2022.
- There was a 54% decline in voter turn-out in Midlands province between the 2018 and 2022 elections.
- Although poor voter turn-out affects both parties, the CCC party is affected the most by poor voter turn-out as shown by a 49% decline from the previous MDC-A total votes as compared to a 38% decline of ZANU PF in the same period.

Bulawayo Province

- CCC had a greater proportion of improvement than ZANU PF in Bulawayo.
- The CCC improved by 18% from 43% in 2018 to 61% in 2022 whilst ZANU PF only improved by 9% from 23% in 2018 to 32% in 2022. Therefore, CCC is increasing its winning margin in Bulawayo from the 2018 MDCA baseline.
- There was a 75% decline in voter turn-out in Bulawayo between the 2018 and 2022 elections. Both parties were affected by poor voter turn-out in Bulawayo in equal measure in terms of the 2018 and 2022 elections as shown by a 65% decline.

- For both ZANU PF and CCC, 65% of people who voted for the parties in Bulawayo did not vote in the 2022 by-elections.

Mashonaland East Province

- ZANU PF improved by a greater proportion than CCC as it gained an additional 13% from 53% in 2018 to 66% in 2022; CCC only improved by 3% from 29% in 2018 to 32% in 2022. This means ZANU PF is widening its winning margin in Mashonaland East.
- A 48% decline in voter turnout was recorded in Mashonaland East province. The CCC party suffered a 44% decline from MDCA 2018 votes compared to a 34% decline experienced by ZANU PF. This means 44% of opposition supporters who voted in 2018 did not vote or voted for the opponent in 2022 as compared to ZANU PF's 34%.

Manicaland Province

- The CCC party in Manicaland had a reduced performance in the 2022 by-elections as shown by a 2% decrease (61% in 2018 to 59% in 2022) whereas ZANU PF improved its performance by 9% from 29% in 2018 to 38% in 2022.
- ZANU PF is decreasing the opposition's winning margin in this province.
- A 60% decline in voter turnout was recorded in Manicaland during the 2022 by-elections. Be that as it may, the CCC party suffered a 61% decrease from the previous MDCA votes as compared to ZANU PF's 46% decrease from 2018 votes in the same areas.
- Overall, the opposition has underperformed in terms of voter mobilisation than ZANU PF in this region.

Matabeleland North Province

- ZANU PF improved its performance in Matabeleland North during the 2022 by-elections from the 2018 elections as shown by a 10% increase from 37% in 2018 to 47% in 2022 whereas CCC remained static (48%) between 2018 and 2022.
- The winning margin of the opposition in these areas is decreasing.
- There was a 37% decline in voter turn-out in Mat North between the 2018 and 2022 elections.
- Although poor voter turnout affects all the contesting parties in Mat North, CCC is affected the most as shown by a 38% decline from the previous MDCA total votes in 2018. In the same province, ZANU PF is least affected as indicated by a 21% decrease from its previous total votes.

Masvingo Province

- The CCC party had a reduced performance as revealed by a decrease of 2% (15% in 2018 to 13% in 2022) as compared to ZANU PF's improved performance of an additional 7% from its previous election score (78% in 2018 to 85% in 2022).
- ZANU PF is increasing its winning margin in this province.
- There was a 52% decline in voter turnout in Masvingo. Poor voter turn-out in Masvingo province affected the CCC party more than ZANU PF.
- For CCC, there was a 57% decline in total votes whereas ZANU PF had a 48% decline in total votes. This means 48% of people who voted for ZANU PF in 2018 either did not vote or voted for opponents in 2022 as compared to 57% of CCC.

Citizens' Perceptions on Key Transition Factors in Zimbabwe

- 64% of the respondents see the military as partisan as compared to 19% who think the military is non-partisan.
- The military being a decisive power bloc is feared of wielding powers capable of overturning electoral outcomes that are not in line with its interests.

- 47% of the key informants have hope in the power of the vote to replace a president whereas 39% of the respondents doubted the power of their vote to elect a president of their choice if such choice is not the military choice
- 68% of the respondents doubt the possibility of a new government without getting support from the military whereas only 25% of the interviewees highlighted that a new government can assume power in Zimbabwe without the military playing an assistant role.
- Research findings also revealed that most respondents believe that the relationship between ZANU PF and the military is characterised by conflation (45%) and capture (29%) than independence (19%).
- The relationship between the military and opposition in Zimbabwe is characterised by intolerance and/or animosity as highlighted by 69% of the respondents whereas 8% perceived a tolerant and friendly relationship between the two players. Another 19% of the interviewees indicated that the military is independent in its interactions with the opposition.
- 58% of the respondents said the relationship between the military and ZANU PF deters them from freely voting for their preferred leaders in the 2023 elections, on the other hand, 28% of the respondents noted the relationship encourages them whilst 14% said they don't know.
- 55% of the respondents said the military involvement in electoral processes has produced timid voters and/or tutelary votes whereas 32% of the respondents stated that free choice votes are still produced despite military involvement in electoral processes.
- 64% of the respondents said the electoral system cannot deliver a result that is against the interests of the military/security sector. This is in contrast to 28% of the respondents who noted that the electoral system is capable of delivering a result that is against the interests of the military/security sector.
- 74% of the key informants of this study said the military is interested in keeping ZANU PF in power whilst 12% said the military is not interested in keeping the party in power.
- 79% of research participants perceived that ZEC is linked to ZANU PF compared to 16% who said ZEC and ZANU PF have no links in their lines of duty.
- 55% of the respondents believe that ZEC is controlled by the military. On the other hand, 32% of the respondents highlighted that ZEC is independent of the military.
- 88% of the respondents noted that there is no good relationship between ZEC and opposition parties whereas 8% of the interviewed respondents believe there is a good relationship between these two institutions.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements i
List of Acronyms i
SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS ii
CHAPTER ONE 1
BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY 1
1.1 Introduction 1
1.2 Background to the Problem 1
CHAPTER TWO 6
AUTHORITARIAN RESILIENCE AND DETERRENCE OF THE ZAMBIAN PRECEDENCE 6
2.1 Introduction 6
2.2 The Competitive Authoritarian Regimes Conceptual Framework 6
2.2.1 The Military/Security forces 7
2.2.2 ZANU PF 8
2.2.3 State Democracy Consolidation Institutions 9
2.2.4 Supportive Philosophical Infrastructure 11
2.3 Authoritarian Resistance and Build-up of Staying power 11
2.3.1 Infrastructure for Coercion of Rivals 12
2.3.2 Infrastructure for Cultivating Dependency 13
2.3.3 Infrastructure for Extraction of Revenue 13
2.3.4 Infrastructure for Registering Citizens 14
2.4 Possible Transitions from Competitive Authoritarian Regimes 16
2.4.1 Elite Disunity Agency 16
2.4.2 Mass Mobilisation Agency 17
2.4.3 External Pressure Agency 17
2.4.4 Military Cooperation in Citizen-led Agency 17
2.5 Summary 18
CHAPTER THREE 19
THE 2022 BYELECTION LITMUS TEST: AUTHORITATIAN RESISTANCE OR DEMOCRATIC RESILIENCE? 19
3.1 Introduction 19
3.2 Voting Behaviour in ZANU PF Strong Hold: A case of Authoritarian Resistance 19
3.3 Voting Behaviour in the Opposition Stronghold 20
3.4 The Role of Poor Voter Turnout: Enabling Authoritarian Resilience? 21
3.5 Comparative Performance Analysis by Province 22
3.5.1 Winning Margin and Voter Turnout in Harare Province 22
3.5.2 Winning Margin and Voter Turnout in Midlands Province 23
3.5.3 Winning Margin and Voter Turnout in Bulawayo Province 24
3.5.4 Winning Margin and Voter Turnout in Mashonaland East Province 25
3.5.5 Winning Margin and Voter Turnout in Manicaland Province 26
3.5.6 Winning Margin and Voter Turnout in Matabeleland North Province 28
3.5.7 Winning Margin and Voter Turnout in Masvingo Province 28
3.6 Summary 29
CHAPTER FOUR 31
CITIZEN PERCEPTIONS ON KEY TRANSITION FACTORS IN ZIMBABWE 31
4.1 Introduction 31
4.1 Perceptions on Militarisation of Electoral Processes in Zimbabwe 31
4.2 Decisiveness of the Vote in a Militarised Electoral Environment 33
4.3 Possibility of a new Government without the Support of the Military in Zimbabwe 34

4.4 Perceptions on the state of Military-Party Relations 35
4.4.1 Military – ZANU PF Relations 35
4.4.2 Military-Opposition Relations 37
4.4.3 Impact of military-party relations on the right to freely chose leaders in the 2023 election 39
4.4.4 Perceptions on the outcomes of military involvement in party or electoral processes 40
4.4.5 The capability of the electoral system to deliver a result that is against the military/security sector interests 41
4.4.6 The interest of military in keeping ZANU PF in power 42
4.5 Relations between ZEC and Key Transition Parties 42
4.5.1 The Relationship between ZEC and ZANU PF 42
4.5.2 The relationship between ZEC and the military 44
4.5.3 The relationship between ZEC and Opposition 45
4.6 Summary 45
CHAPTER FIVE 47
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS 47
5.1 Conclusion 47
5.2 Recommendations 48
Bibliography 49
Vision 52
Mission 52

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the introduction, background, research methods, and research questions of the study. It describes the historical context of the research showing that militarisation and military involvement in Zimbabwe's electoral and transition politics is a phenomenon deeply rooted in the history of Zimbabwe's liberation war. The security forces have been a decisive power bloc in all critical junctures for a political transition in the past and they remain the most critical force today. As has been reiterated in previous Zimbabwe Democracy Institute reports, the transition to a democratic dispensation in Zimbabwe relies on the vested interests, conduct, and alignment of the security forces. In the past, the security forces have been aligned to the ruling ZANU PF party, interested in protecting its continuity in power and their conduct has been punctuated by violence and intimidation of those opposed to the ruling party. However, the overthrow of former president Mugabe in a military coup d'état in November 2017 and the reform rhetoric of the Mnangagwa government have prompted a revisit and reassessment of the role of the security forces in democratic transition in processes Zimbabwe using the 26 March 2022 by-election as a litmus test. The involvement of the security military in the March 2022 by-election is used to predict the likely political permutations in the 2023 harmonised elections.

The study used a mixed-methods research design that combined semi-structured interviews across the ten provinces with desktop research. Guided by the Competitive Authoritarian Regimes conceptual framework, the study examined the role of the securocrats in the five key institutions captured and manipulated by competitive authoritarian regimes: 1) the media, 2) the judiciary, 3) the legislature, 4) the electoral system in the context of March 2022 by-elections. These four institutions are key areas of political contestation and serve as key determinants of democratic transition. However, the security forces remain the decisive institution. The conduct of these institutions was scrutinised to ascertain the implications for the state of elections and outcomes thereof to be expected in 2023. The study posits that there is strong evidence of authoritarian resistance in all these four key areas of democratic contestation despite the reform rhetoric of the Mnangagwa government.

1.2 Background to the Problem

The security forces' role in electoral and transition processes in post-independence Zimbabwe cannot be underestimated. This role can be traced back to the political setup of the nationalist movements in pre-independence Zimbabwe. The liberation war in the 1970s was spearheaded by two military wings which were affiliated with two main nationalist movements namely the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) and the Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF). The Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) army wing was affiliated to ZANU while ZAPU was affiliated with the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA). These two armies laid the foundations of the current Zimbabwean army (Ruhanya, 2017). After the attainment of political independence by Zimbabwe in 1980, it took 7 years of military violence for ZANU and ZAPU to merge into one political party called the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) which is currently in power in Zimbabwe. The liberation war armies and their affiliate political parties shaped Zimbabwe's political future in more than one way.

Former President Robert Mugabe, formerly being a member of the command structure of ZANLA forces and later on becoming the president of independent Zimbabwe, used the military to entrench and consolidate his authoritarian grip on power in disregarding of ethics of free and fair election and transition processes. Ruhanya (2017) argued that for long in Zimbabwe's politics, the military played a decisive role in keeping Robert Mugabe in power regardless of the election outcomes. The formation of opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC)

party in 1999 was met with a brutal hand of the military whereby the 2000 parliamentary elections were characterised by torture, kidnapping, and killing of the opposition members and supporters (Makumbe, 2000; EISA, 2007; Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum, 2005; and Hulec, 2019). Prior to the 2002 elections, all senior military officers pledged that they would not serve under a president other than Robert Mugabe. To make matters worse, the army joined the ZANU PF-initiated campaigns of intimidation of opposition supporters. For Maringira (2017), the Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) became heavily politicized in such a way that it directly supported the regime of Robert Mugabe and on the other hand demeaning opposition political parties, particularly the MDC. The ranks in Table 1.1 show that Zimbabwe is climbing up the militarisation ladder since 2017.

Table 1.1: Zimbabwe's GMI ranking & scores between 2017 and 2020

Year	2017		2018		2019		2020	
GMI score/rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
	173	73/151	160	87/155	133	86/154	132	108/151

Source: ZDI 2022 - **Dataset**: Bonn International Centre for Conflict Studies (BICC), Zimbabwe GMI Scores for 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020

The ZANU PF party/military conflation continues to prevail in the Mnangagwa era as evidenced by the role played by the military in the overthrow of Robert Mugabe from power and the subsequent inauguration of Emmerson Mnangagwa as the President of Zimbabwe on 24 November 2017. The use of the military as an infrastructure for authoritarian power consolidation by Mnangagwa still persists in Zimbabwe. The capture of key state institutions by ZANU PF/military elites stands in the way of strengthening democratic governance, human rights protection, and observance of the rule of law in Zimbabwe. The involvement of the military in electoral affairs during the Mnangagwa administration was evident in the August 1 2018 killings where soldiers shot and killed at least six people during opposition protests over contested election results in Harare (Human Rights Watch, 2019). As was revealed by the ZDI (2020) report, the military in Zimbabwe is used to defy and emasculate transition pressure points such as the electoral system, protests, the media, the judiciary, and the legislature to ensure the incumbent stays in power. By and large, the ruling ZANU PF party is characterised by a history that involves presiding over militarised elections since 1980 (Masunungure, 2008 and ZDI, 2017). As Alvarez et al (2008: 4) submit, if elections are conducted fairly well and the authoritarian regime loses, power is not transferred automatically instead, the incumbent authoritarian regime commits forms of manipulation and retains power. This is the transition problem in Zimbabwe.

With the military in Zimbabwe effectively becoming the decisive power bloc in the country's transition politics, the research comes in a context where the transition is eagerly awaited as the country is heading towards, yet another watershed harmonized election scheduled to take place in 2023. It is therefore important that the role of the military in electoral processes be re-examined and work towards the promotion of electoral transparency and accountability to foster democratic transition in Zimbabwe. The involvement of the military personnel in civilian and political affairs normally yields adverse impacts. In line with this view, McAlister (1965:86) posits that the military man cannot be a good man, and Adams (1907:250) adds to say a standing army, when allowed to get into government programmes is always dangerous to the liberties of the people. Thus, this study examines the military role in democratic transition and uses a review of case studies to inform best practices in the electoral and transition politics in Zimbabwe.

1.3 Research Objectives and Questions

The main objective of the study is to interrogate the role of the security sector/military in electoral and democratic transition processes and give case studies of best practices. Specific research objectives and their corollary questions are presented below:

1. To conceptualise the military involvement in electoral and transition processes in Zimbabwe and how it impacts the conduct of free and fair electoral processes ahead of the 2023 elections.

Research Questions

(i). How can the involvement of the military in electoral and transition politics be conceptually described in the Mnangagwa era?
(ii). How has the military involvement in electoral and transition processes impacted the electoral and transition processes in Zimbabwe?

2. To examine case studies of possible democratic transition pathways and their applicability to the Zimbabwean context of militarised electoral and transition processes.

Research Question

(i). What are the possible transition pathways in the context of militarised electoral and transition processes in Zimbabwe?

3. To interrogate and draw lessons and insights from the March 2022 by-elections about the state of democratic and authoritarian resilience ahead of the 2023 elections in Zimbabwe.

Research Question

(i). What lessons and insights do by-elections entail on the state of democratic and authoritarian resilience ahead of the 2023 elections in Zimbabwe?

1.4 Research Methods

The study adopted a mixed-methods approach which Tashakkori and Creswell (2007:4) define as the collection of data, analysis of data, integration of the findings, and the drawing of inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches or methods in a single study. Under this approach, research is not restricted to using traditional approaches to data collection but is guided by a foundation of inquiry that underlies the research activity (Creswell, 1994). This approach, as highlighted by Sharma (2018:6) provides a greater understanding of the research problem contrary to a case where the either a qualitative or quantitative approach is adopted. The selection of this approach was motivated by the need to answer the 'what', 'how', and 'why' questions about the role of the security sector/military in Zimbabwe's political and electoral affairs. The research design sought exploratory and explanatory data that requires quantitative and qualitative research methods. Thus, a mixed-methods research design according to Creswell (2009: 4) is more than simply collecting and analysing both kinds of data, it also involves the use of both approaches hand-in-glove so that the overall strength of a study is greater than either qualitative or quantitative research. The study opts for this design courtesy of its ability to collect diverse data and collecting diverse types of data best provides an understanding of a research problem (Creswell 2003:2). The approach makes use of semi-structured interviews to collect data from randomly sampled respondents and desktop research.

1.4.1 Research Design

The study as highlighted above made use of a concurrent mixed-methods research design conglomerating desktop research and descriptive analysis of semi-structured interviews. The study adopted this research design for its capability to collect lived experiences to explain descriptive data collected through semi-structured interviews and hence, provide deeper and more meaningful insights.

1.4.2 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The study used convenience sampling to select 3000 respondents following the approach shown in *Figure 1.1* below. This type of sampling method is used when participants are often readily and easily available (Taherdoost 2016: 6). This approach is useful when a random perception of a cross-section of a population of the country on a general national question is required.

Table 1.1 Sample Distributions across Research Areas

Research Area	Representation	Number of Interviews
Harare	16.3%	489
Bulawayo	5.00%	150
Mashonaland Central	8.8%	264
Masvingo	11.4%	342
Manicaland	13.4%	402
Matabeleland North	5.7%	171
Matabeleland South	5.2%	156
Mashonaland East	10.3%	309
Mashonaland West	11.5	345
Midlands	12.4%	372
Total	100%	3000

1.4.3 Data collection

Semi-structured interviews and desktop analysis of public data were used to collect data. Adams (2015: 6) posits that a semi-structured interview employs a blend of closed and open-ended questions, often accompanied by follow-up why or how questions. This study adopts this technique because the interviewer enjoys the freedom to probe the interviewee to elaborate on the original response or to follow a line of inquiry put forward by the respondent (Fox *et al*, 2000: 3). Moreover, the technique is used because it is not often possible for the researchers to get more than one chance to interview one and the same interviewee (Bernard 1998). However, semi-structured interviews are generally time-consuming. To counter this setback, the study deploys many data collection officers to complete all the interviews. The conducted 3000 semi-structured interviews that were guided by a semi-structured interview guide. In line with the definition cited from Adams (2015: 6), the interview guide comprised questions to gauge both the depth and breadth of the research problem. Being a data collection tool, the interview guide was manually completed by the ZDI team of researchers deployed in each of the above stated research areas.

In addition to the above, desktop research was done, and it involved the collection of data from existing sources. Bailey (1994) cited in Ahmed (2010:2) notes that desktop research refers to the analysis of documents containing information about the phenomenon under study. In this study, desktop research was used to collect already existing qualitative and statistical data from online and offline archives of government such as ZEC published election results, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). Desktop research was used in this study to fill in information gaps in data solicited using interviews. The technique was chosen for its cost-effectiveness and ability to provide a "rich vein for analysis" (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:173).

1.4.4 Data Analysis and Presentation

The collected data were subjected to a series of thematic and descriptive analysis procedures to ascertain key emerging trends, themes, and supportive evidence on the role of the security forces and the identified four key state institutions in the context of the March 2022 by-election in Zimbabwe. Guest *et al* (2012:13) state that thematic analysis is one of the most common forms of analysis in qualitative research and it emphasizes pinpointing, examining, and recording patterns or themes within the collected data. Thematic analysis was deemed suitable for this study because of its theoretical flexibility. It managed to provide answers to different types of research questions and examine the objectives.

Descriptive analysis of data collected through closed-ended questions in the interview guide was done using Microsoft Office spreadsheet statistical analysis tools. Baha (2016:2) posits that descriptive analysis deals with describing a phenomenon that is, how we think something is. Waliman (2011:10) notes that it seeks to examine the situations in a bid to describe them. This technique provides a knowledge base that can be a foundation and ground for further quantitative analysis, since it maps the landscape of a specific phenomenon (Baha, 2016:3).

Over and above that, the technique is to be more expansive than other quantitative methods and it gives a broader picture of an event or phenomenon (Ibid) and in this case the role of the security sector/military in Zimbabwe's electoral processes and transition politics.

CHAPTER TWO

AUTHORITARIAN RESILIENCE AND DETERRENCE OF THE ZAMBIAN PRECEDENCE

2.1 Introduction

The electoral defeat of the ruling party in Zambia in 2021 has triggered the ruling ZANU PF elites to intensify the building and strengthening of authoritarian capability and resilience infrastructure. The current political economy has therefore been characterised by the deployment of strategies to deter the 2021 Zambian precedent and boost the ZANU PF regime's staying power beyond 2023. This chapter gives a conceptual understanding of this Zimbabwean transition and electoral problem. The problem is interpreted in through theoretical lenses of the competitive authoritarian regime framework of Levitsky and Way (2002; 2010). In this perspective, Zimbabwe is conceptualised as a competitive authoritarian regime that is neither in the transition towards democratic breakthrough nor towards absolute autocracy. It is a deliberate mid-way regime with strong institutional safeguards to keep the system neither a democracy nor an absolute autocracy. In this typology of competitive regimes, the role of the military is visible, particularly in key spheres of decision making that have the potential of causing a political transition in Zimbabwe. The conceptual framework serves to pinpoint key transition pressure points and target areas for a democratic breakthrough in Zimbabwe. In addition to the competitive authoritarian regimes framework used to describe the Mnangagwa regime, this chapter also conceptualises its authoritarian resistance strategies in the auspices of Slater and Fenner's (2011) four capability infrastructures deployed to maintain the staying power of authoritarian systems. This framework helps in explaining the key strategies used by the Mnangagwa government to stay in power.

2.2 The Competitive Authoritarian Regimes Conceptual Framework

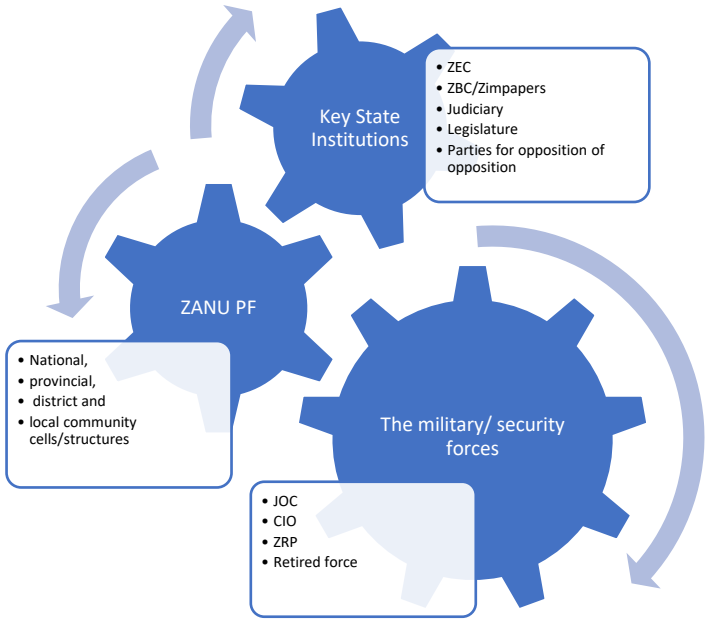
The Zimbabwean electoral problem can best be understood in the auspices of the competitive authoritarian regimes conceptual framework associated with the studies of Lavytsky and Way (2002), Diamond (2002). In Levitsky and Way's (2010: 5) conceptual framework, competitive authoritarianism is "a political regime in which formal democratic institutions exist and are widely used as the primary means of gaining power, but in which incumbents' abuse of the state places them at a significant advantage vis-à-vis their opponents." The ruling elite encourages participation and competition from the opposition in elections although such competition is done under conditions that unfairly disadvantage the opposition (Diamond, 2002; Howard and Roessler, 2006 Morse, 2012). Schedler (2010) refers to these regimes as 'electoral authoritarian regimes' that hold regular elections where multiple parties compete for positions of state power, but the electoral process systematically violates the basic principles governing democratic elections.

Some researchers have named the kind of regime in Zimbabwe a 'semi-authoritarianism', that is, a political system where neither 'absolute authoritarianism' nor 'full democracy' is allowed to flourish for strategic reasons (Levitsky and Way 2002, 2010; Carothers 2018; Schedler 2006). Dixon (2002:3) states that competitive authoritarian regimes "are not imperfect democracies struggling toward improvement and consolidation, but regimes determined to maintain the appearance of democracy without exposing themselves to the political risks that free competition entails". This shows that competitive authoritarian regimes fear both ends of transition. On one hand, they fear full democracy for its exposure of un-electable elites to potential electoral defeat by the opposition, and on the other hand, fear absolute authoritarianism for its inherent proneness to suffer coup d'états, civil wars, and international isolation (Howard and Roessler, 2006; Cox, 2007; Schedler, 2009). After making these calculations, the ruling elite decides to settle for a midway regime to enjoy the international benefits associated with democracies in transition and enjoy internal institutional insulation from opposition electoral defeat.

Key to this study is the assertion that competitive authoritarian regimes capture four key arenas of democratic contestation: 1) legislature, 2) Electoral arena, 3) Media, 4) Judiciary, and engineer them in such a way that elections without democracy are run as a ritual to keep the ruling elite in (Levitsky and Way, 2002: 54). The

Zimbabwean political system adds more sophistication to Levitsky and Way's (2002, 2010) menu of competitive authoritarian regimes. Figure 2.1 below presents a practical illustration of this competitive authoritarian regime framework in Zimbabwe.

Figure 2.1: Zimbabwe's Militarised Competitive Authoritarian Regime



As shown in Figure 2.1 above, the competitive authoritarian regime in Zimbabwe is broadly characterised by three key actors in order of their power relations: i) the military elite, ii) ZANU PF and iii) state institutions for democratic consolidation - the media, judiciary, legislature, and the electoral arena. The gears show the nature of the interaction, direction, and power relations. The military elite is the decisive power bloc affecting ZANU PF decision-making directly while affecting state institutions directly or indirectly via ZANU PF as its medium.

2.2.1 The Military/Security forces

The military elite captured the ruling ZANU PF party through the Mgagao Declaration in 1975, restructured it in a manner to include military allies and retired military personnel in key decision-making positions, and sometimes take directives from the serving military elite, and then deployed the party constituted as such to national, provincial and local government structures to contest power and protect the interests of the military elite.[1] In this manner, the military elite captured a civilian party, re-created it as a military elites' political party used to govern and maintain a competitive authoritarian regime in Zimbabwe. Supportive pro-ZANU PF political narratives and political culture have been engineered to manufacture consent among citizens to be governed through a militarised competitive authoritarian regime. One key narrative is that top ZANU PF leadership positions are filled by retired members of the security apparatus and this legacy has been preserved from Mugabe to the Mnangagwa regime.[2] This has enabled the military to be directly involved in ZANU PF political activities. Second is the narrative that security forces and ZANU PF are Siamese twins operating through an injure one injure all modus Vivendi. The continuity of this situation was reiterated in 2021 by the then ZANU PF acting political commissar Patrick Chinamasa who noted that:

> Always be mindful that there is this unbreakable continuity between the liberation struggle and Zanu PF... between the armies of liberation ZIPRA and ZANLA, and the national army of independence. Thus, any notion which seeks to break this

[1] Mgagao Declaration was a political declaration by ZANLA forces in Tanzania which effectively captured ZANU PF from civilians, populated it with leaders preferred by the armed force, determined the leadership, political agenda setting in ZANU PF. This legacy has been jealously guarded. See the Mgagao Declaration contents at: https://www.sundaynews.co.zw/mgagao-declaration-changed-the-dynamics-of-the-armed-struggle/.

[2] This narrative has been reiterated by top military generals such as the then Commander of the Zimbabwe Defence Forces (ZDF) Vitalis Zvinavashe towards election periods in a manner intended to communicate the military's intention tpo block any transition that destroys the legacy. See also: https://media.africaportal.org/documents/Zimbabwe_At_The_Crossroads_Transition_Or_Conflict.pdf.

> bond should be rejected outrightly. The relationship speaks for itself. I don't need to explain. Who are the commanders of the army? Who is the Commander of Zimbabwe Defence Forces? Comrade Valerio Sibanda, who was he? A leading general in ZIPRA. Who is the Commander of Zimbabwe National Army? Comrade Edzai Chimonyo. A leading commander in ZANLA. Now that culture of defending the sovereignty of this country will continue. It comes from the liberation struggle, and it will be perpetuated into the future. That is the link.[3]

The state media has been very instrumental in entrenching these ideas given at the level of national leadership. This results in creating feelings of hopelessness among citizens yearning for change as it has been known that transition cannot happen without military support in Zimbabwe. This reality is not new to Zimbabweans, it was there before independence in Zimbabwe and it was midwifery to the militarisation of ZANU and ZAPU and the subsequent liberation war.

The military elite controls the electoral and transition politics using either the indirect route, using ZANU PF and retired components, or directly through hands-on military operations. The hands-on direct operations in Zimbabwe's electoral and political transition politics include the Gukurahundi military (5th Brigade and CIO) violence on supporters of the opposition ZAPU, the 2008 presidential election re-run violent military campaign, the 2017 coup d'état, the 1 August 2018 Harare military shootings and the January 2019 military violence to suppress protesters. A common purpose in all these military interventions in politics has been to protect the Mgagao declaration legacy of keeping ZANU PF and the state institutions captured. The Joint Operations Command (JOC) a military elite structure combining heads of the Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA), the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO), the Air Force, and the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) has been depicted as the apex decision making body in Zimbabwe that stirs the electoral and transition politics in ZANU PF and government.[4] In the run-up to the 26 March by-election, two key aspects of militarisation have been identified. The use of ZRP to block opposition rallies, torture opposition supporters, and weaponisation of covid-19 regulations and the Maintainable of Order and Peace Act (MOPA) to clamp down civic society and opposition gatherings has been the most prominent strategy. Another strategy has been the use of military deterrence measures to encourage self-censorship and fearful voters. Such military deterrence strategies include declarations by the military elite reiterating that Zimbabwe is a military state and that ZEC is indeed militarized.[5] Such declarations are intended to make prospective opposition voters lose their morale or fear opposing the military considering the decisive role of the military in the past where it has featured in bloodshed to reinstall ZANU PF.

2.2.2 ZANU PF

ZANU PF has been very instrumental in cascading the militarisation and capture of state institutions on behalf of the military elite and/or to restore the legacy of the Mgagao declaration. In other words, ZANU PF is used to implement agendas and policy tutelage of the military elite in the JOC. The 2008 militarised rerun election and the November 2017 coup d'état give enough evidence of the JOC enforcing the agenda of the military elite using ZANU PF as the means to that end. ZANU PF has also served as an indirect route through which military elites access key decision-making positions in government and public institutions. Under Mnangagwa's leadership, ZANU PF has continued to serve this purpose. Retired army generals have been appointed into ambassadorial posts, cabinet posts and key ZANU PF posts ahead of civilians.[6] A corollary to this approach has been the recruitment of

[3] See, https://allafrica.com/stories/202106250540.html.

[4] https://www.hrw.org/report/2008/06/09/bullets-each-you/state-sponsored-violence-zimbabwes-march-29-elections.

[5] This was said by President Mnangagwa on the 21st of February 2022 when he said "There is no room for hate speech or divisive language. Zimbabwe is a military state. Those who dream of dividing this country ngavamuke vabike doro nekuti mudzimu yavarasha," See full details at: https://allafrica.com/stories/202202220141.html.

[6] President Mnangagwa appointed the late air marshall Perence Shiri as Minister of Lands, Major General Sibusiso Moyo as Minister of Foreign Affairs, retired lieutenant general Engelbert Rugeje as

members of security forces into the ZEC secretariat to run elections. This puts ZANU PF at a competitive advantage given the symbiotic relationship between the army and ZANU PF.

2.2.3 State Democracy Consolidation Institutions

Key democracy consolidation institutions such as the legislature, the judiciary, state media, and ZEC have been manipulated to restore and preserve the interests of the ruling military elite. The manipulation, like the involvement, explained above follows a direct route and the indirect route that goes through ZANU PF appointments.

Legislature

The legislature under Mnangagwa's rule has been captured and used to mutilate the constitution with the intention of maintaining the competitive authoritarian regime. [7] Three approaches have been used to capture and manipulate the legislature. First has been the fielding of zealot supporters or retired members of the military elite to represent ZANU PF in parliamentary elections. This has seen a larger cross-section of parliamentarians vote on a ZANU PF ticket touring the line drawn for them by their bosses in the military elite. The second strategy has been the use of opposition political figures to ease and enable the process of enacting draconian legislation. Two strategies have been used, either opposition leaders have been tricked into dividing the opposition vote through fielding double candidates or name confusion or made to recall elected opposition MPs leaving ZANU PF with more than two-thirds majority in parliament needed when amending constitutional provisions that hinder authoritarian conduct and passing draconian legislation. The third strategy has been the use of ZEC to manipulate elections to ensure more ZANU PF MPs are elected. A shocking case has been the Chegutu West Constituency case where ZEC announced a ZANU PF MP Dexter Nduna as the winner despite having published that he got less votes than the opposing MDC Alliance (MDCA) member.[8]

Zimbabwe Electoral Commission

The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) has been the centre of electoral manipulation to maintain ZANU PF in power. In the post-2023 election cycle, ZEC has been involved in the manipulation of the voters' roll, gerrymandering the process of voter registration process, and militarisation of the secretariat. This election chicanery cannot be underestimated. The manipulation of the voters' roll creates an opportunity for ghost voters for the ruling party, particularly in constituencies where it has lost popular support. The gerrymandering experienced in the voter registration process seeks to disenfranchise citizens in opposition strongholds and/or shrink a total number of registered electorates in the opposition stronghold while increasing the opportunity to register more electorates in ZANU PF stronghold constituencies. The militarisation of ZEC secretariat has been admitted by the ZEC noting that such conduct is legally and morally permissible. However, the symbiotic relationship between the security sector and ZANU PF makes such militarisation a derogation of ZEC's independence. The free and fair conduct of members of the security sector once appointed and/or employed by ZEC is unimaginable.

The Judiciary

The capture of the judiciary became a public secret following president Mnangagwa's ascent to power in November 2017. The capture is evident in five different approaches targeting the composition, conduct, and alignment of the judiciary: (i) the amendment of the constitution to give President Mnangagwa powers to make or unmake judges and subsequent co-optation actions towards the Chief Justice, (ii) the inertia and/or conniving attitude of the judiciary when a violation of the constitution is done by ZANU PF/military elite, (iii) ZANU PF government's public

ZANU PF Secretary for Commissariat, Retired General Constantino Chiwenga as Deputy President among others.

[7] The Mnangagwa-led legislature introduced constitution amendment number 2 giving the president sweeping powers and influence in the appointment of judges and limiting the oversight role of the parliament and ending citizen participation in the process.

[8] https://www.newzimbabwe.com/196537-2/.

statements coercing judges to give judgements in their favour, and (iv) issuance of divisive judgements on internal fights within the opposition whose end give ZANU PF political advantage and (v) the chief justice's authoritarian capture tendencies towards other judges. Read together, these five corroborate the assertion that the judiciary has been captured.

The judiciary has executed its role of being an electoral court in a very contentious and politicised manner. The manner with which it handled the Konjana v Nduna and the Chamisa election petition cases have left its credibility doubted. In the Konjana v Nduna case, the court ruled that the plaintiff failed to bring the case within a reasonable time (three months post-election) and therefore decided to ignore the fact acknowledged by ZEC that Nduna, a ZANU PF MP lost the election.[9] ZEC acknowledged that it made an error by proclaiming a candidate with fewer votes a winner but insisted that it cannot reverse or amend its proclamation. In the Chamisa 2018 election petition case, the constitutional court refused to open the ZEC saver to cross-check the authenticity of results proclaimed by ZEC agreeing with ZEC that there was no saver. This decision was shocking because the supply of the saver in question was done by an American Company IPSIDY Inc after a tender competition process in 2018.[10] In both cases, the judiciary acted in a very contentious manner which benefited ZANU PF.

The amendment of the constitution through Constitution Amendment number 2 to enable the ZANU PF president to extend the Chief Justice Luke Malaba's term in office cannot be understood in isolation from the court's role in enabling ZANU PF the ability to have a two-thirds majority in the legislature necessary to amend the constitution.[11] The extension of Chief Justice Luke Malaba's term in office came as a remuneration for the job well done in running a judiciary that has been friendly to ZEC's electoral manipulation stated above and further manipulation of the judiciary for use as the last defence line for ZANU PF in the 2023 election.[12] Another manipulative evidence has been shown through ZANU PF government Ministry of Justice's public statements against the judiciary aimed at arm-twisting the judges to pass judgements in their favour. For instance, the Minister of Justice and Parliamentary affairs in opposition to a High Court ruling setting president Mnangagwa's extension of the Chief Justice's term in office beyond retirement age noted:

> We have a serious situation of a judiciary that has been captured by foreign forces in this country. We are going to exercise our right in terms of the law and file an appeal against this baseless and meaningless decision of the High Court … How does one judge, whose circumstances of appointment we are aware of, continue to make decisions that are against the government?[13]

Such comments from a Justice Minister administering the judiciary result in intimidation, co-optation, and erosion of the independence of the judiciary. Soon after being given a longer stay at the helm of the country's judiciary, Chief Justice Malaba has been accused of capturing the judiciary and influencing its judgements, and insisting that judges should send judgements for approval before passing them. A letter to the president reportedly written by judges on 26 October 2020 noted that:

> What is repeated in the public domain and on social media about the capture of the judiciary is no longer fiction or perception, it is in fact reality. It is an open secret that right across the judiciary structures, the Chief Justice now rules without fetter… judges are therefore now so afraid of their own jobs that they consciously or subconsciously make decisions that they consider 'safe', even if these do not

[9] Konjana v Nduna (SC 5 of 2021, Civil Appeal SC 837 of 2018) [2021] ZWSC 5 (03 June 2021) accessible at: https://zimlii.org/zw/judgment/supreme-court-zimbabwe/2021/5.

[10] https://www.herald.co.zw/zec-certifies-us-firms-bvr-tender/.

[11] See, https://www.news24.com/news24/africa/news/zimbabwe-leaders-extension-of-chief-justice-tenure-illegal-says-court-20210516

[12] See also, https://africanlii.org/sites/default/files/Judges%20Complain%20to%20Mnangagwa%20about%20Chief%20Justice%20Malaba_.pdf.

[13] See also, https://allafrica.com/stories/202105170157.html.

> accord with the law … There is also what the Chief Justice calls 'judgment by consensus', a euphemism for discouraging dissenting voices.[14]

This letter is not an isolated incident, prior to these revelations, High Court judge Justice Erica Ndewere, revealed in court papers that suspensions were being used to victimise her for disobeying Chief Justice Malaba's orders to deny ZANU PF opponents such as Job Sikhala bail.[15] A judiciary captured as such cannot guarantee the transition to democracy in Zimbabwe.

The State Media

The state media, ZBC and ZimPapers have been central in the manipulation of the electoral playfield by giving the incumbent president and ZANU PF above 70% coverage whereas giving the biggest opposition led by Nelson Chamisa limited coverage. The limited coverage given to the opposition is calculated to de-campaign and tarnish the image of opposition candidates. These institutions have been operating in a manner that ensures electoral certainty and procedural uncertainty. Reforming these institutions will have to go through the barricades put in place by the military elite.

2.2.4 Supportive Philosophical Infrastructure

The liberation war history has created a strong ZANU PF political culture supported by four key interrelated pillars of political values and/or beliefs. First is that key ZANU PF leadership positions are filled by retired members of the security apparatus and this legacy has been preserved from Mugabe to the Mnangagwa regime. This has enabled the military to be directly involved in ZANU PF political activities. Second is the narrative that security forces and ZANU PF are Siamese twins operating through an injured one injure all modus Vivendi. This has been put to test in the 2008 June rerun presidential election, the coup d'état in November 2017, the 1 August 2018 post-election violence, and the January 2019 protests where the security forces unleashed violence on citizens to defend and protect ZANU PF. Defending ZANU PF has thus been misconstrued to mean defending the country. The third value entails a belief that the presidency is accessible only to those aspirants with a liberation war history. Under this set-up, the liberation war has remained the source of political legitimacy following the role played in the armed struggle by the political elite composing the ZANU PF party. Having this history alone is not enough, the aspirant must be senior in the liberation war hierarchy and have strong links with the military elite. Last but not least is the narrative that ZANU PF is the sole legitimate political party capable of defending the country's sovereignty and independence which is perpetually threatened by former colonisers. This narrative has seen many opposition leaders being vilified as Western surrogates and enemies of the state. The four key pillars of the ZANU PF political culture discussed above form the basis of military involvement in Zimbabwe's electoral and transition politics.

2.3 Authoritarian Resistance and Build-up of Staying power

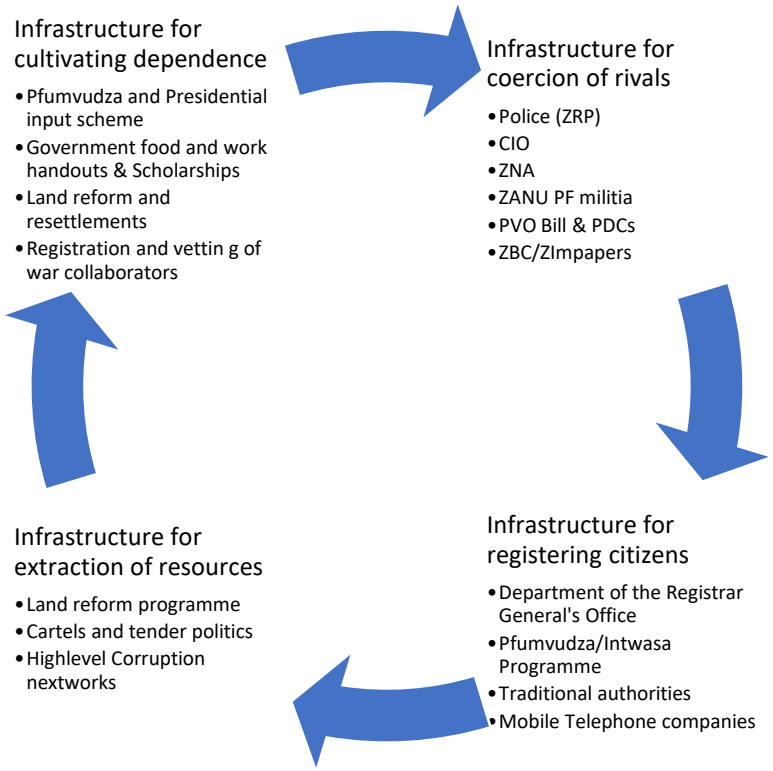
Slater and Fenner's (2011) concept of capability infrastructures illustrates that authoritarian regimes invest in four key capabilities that buttress their ability to last longer in power - conceptualised as 'regime staying power.' Four capability infrastructures are identified: i) infrastructure for coercion of rivals; (ii) infrastructure for the extraction of revenues; (iii) infrastructure for the registration of citizens; and (iv) infrastructure for the cultivation of dependence. Regimes with higher capabilities across these four infrastructures are blessed with long life expectancy despite pressure from opposition and external transition agencies (Slater and Fenner, 2011). Schedler (2010) emphasises that the electoral system should have procedural certainty and substantial uncertainty for it to be democratic. However, these four regime capability infrastructures are used to create procedural uncertainty and the

[14] https://africanlii.org/sites/default/files/Judges%20Complain%20to%20Mnangagwa%20about%20Chief%20Justice%20Malaba_.pdf.

[15] See also, https://www.myzimbabwe.co.zw/news/72646-suspended-high-court-judge-erica-ndewere-lets-the-cat-out-of-bag-exposes-luke-malabas-evil-deeds.html, and https://www.newsday.co.zw/2020/10/judges-confirm-judicial-capture/

substantial certainty of elections (Seeberg, 2014). The Mnangagwa government has been very innovative in building and testing the prowess of these infrastructural capabilities on citizens. Figure 2.2 presents how the Mnangagwa regime has conceptualised the four authoritarian capability infrastructures, key players, and programmes.

Figure 2.2: The Four Capability Infrastructures in Mnangagwa's Staying Power



2.3.1 Infrastructure for Coercion of Rivals

The infrastructure for coercion of rivals under Mnangagwa's rule has been hinged on violence and economic sanctions. Violence as a mechanism of coercion of rivals has been deployed through the Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA), the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO), the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP), and draconian laws such as MOPA, PVO Bill, and ZANU PF party militia. Economic sanctions have been enforced through dismissals from government employment and sponsored contestations and threats on land acquired by members under the Fast Track Land Reform Programme. The infrastructure has been used to intimidate and politically eliminate internal opponents within ZANU PF party and external opponents in the opposition and civil society. Former president Robert Mugabe, the G40 cabal, and Pupurai Togarepi are among the internal opponents who faced the infrastructure for coercion of rivals. Anybody in ZANU PF can fall victim to this infrastructure if he/she acts in a manner deemed unfriendly to the interests of the securocrats. Government appointments targeting critical internal members for expatriation through diplomatic assignments have also been used to politically emasculate key members of the security forces and ZANU PF viewed as threats to Mnangagwa's regime. Key examples include Professor Charity Manyeruke sent to Rwanda, retired Major-General Anselem Sanyatwe, Martin Chedondo, Douglas Nyikayaramba, Air Vice Marshal Shebba Shumbayaonda were retired and sent on diplomatic service, and Matemadanda sent to Mozambique among others. [16] The stoning of Chamisa's vehicles, [17] banning of opposition campaign rallies in

[16] See some details at: , VOA: https://www.voanews.com/a/four-zimbabwe-generals-retired-in-mnangagwa-s-first-purge-of-military-/4792326.htm.

[17] See: https://allafrica.com/stories/202110130385.html.

Marondera, Masvingo and Gokwe by ZRP[18] and the March 2022 violence on Citizen Coalition for Change (CCC) supporters in Kwekwe[19] are some of the instances where coercion of external rivals has been illustrated. Laws such as MOPA, PVO Bill, and Covid-19 regulations have been weaponised to deter opposition and civic society mobilisation. Apart from that, the CIO has been an active scenario mapping architecture for ZANU PF whose surveys and analyses have served to keep the Mnangagwa regime in power. Following the formation of the CCC led by Nelson Chamisa, the CIO has been reportedly very instrumental in giving ZANU PF survey reports showing that the ruling party is likely to get 45% of the vote in the 2023 election thus giving recommendations on how to prevent the Zambian precedent.[20] The recommendations have centered around closing the political spaces of contestation including civil society organisations, reinvigorating the liberation war veterans used as party campaign machinery in rural areas, co-optation of liberation war collaborators through promises of remuneration among others.

2.3.2 Infrastructure for Cultivating Dependency

The Mnangagwa administration has also resorted to the infrastructure for cultivating dependence as a means of consolidating his authoritarian rule. The game plan is always of making people dependent on government food aid programs and other support initiatives so that they always owe the government with support in form of votes. For instance, the introduction of the Command Agriculture Programme (CAP) in the country was one way of cultivating a culture of dependency in areas where farming takes place. This programme was designed in a way that provides farmers with all agricultural inputs that are needed for high productivity (The Herald, 2017). It suffices to say farmers in farming areas across the country now depend on the government for all farming inputs. The ZDI (2020) study revealed that CAP is more of a political project of the ruling ZANU PF party elite and securocrats whose main aim is to foster Mnangagwa's authoritarian consolidation project and buttress state capacities for the same through coercion of rivals.

Mnangagwa has also introduced a scholarship programme for the underprivileged as a means of cultivating dependency on educational needs and support. President Mnangagwa in January 2021 launched a personal scholarship called Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa University of Zambia Scholarship Programme (ED-UNZA) (The Herald, 2021). The scholarship program is meant to help students who hail from disadvantaged communities to go ahead with their tertiary education. The Mnangagwa-led government has also made civil servants, particularly doctors dependent on it for accommodation. The outbreak of Covid-19 in March 2020 triggered an industrial action spearheaded by doctors and nurses over poor working conditions and incapacitation resulting from poor wages (Aljazeera 2020, CNN 2020). After failing to meet the industrial action demands made by doctors and nurses, Mnangagwa commissioned doctors' accommodation at Marimba flats and hinted that accommodation for doctors, nurses and health workers in all major hospitals across the country was at an advanced stage (The Herald 2021, ZANU PF 2021).

2.3.3 Infrastructure for Extraction of Revenue

President Mnangagwa has used the country's resources for purpose of regaining political power. The continued prevalence of corruption and elite accumulation by ZANU PF party senior leadership is a clear testament to this (Helliker and Murisa 2020). This situation is exacerbated by state capture which involves cartels comprised of local businessmen who work hand-in-glove with the ZANU PF party elites. These cartels are involved in allegations of multiple farm ownership and multi-million-dollar tenders (Ibid). Hulec (2019: 10), argued that there was a "revelation that many ministers, members of Parliament, top civil servants and high-ranking army officers had also been awarded leases on choice state-owned farms."

[18] https://thestandard.newsday.co.zw/2022/03/13/chamisas-ccc-under-siege/, and https://www.newzimbabwe.com/just-in-ccc-files-urgent-high-court-application-over-banned-masvingo-rally/.

[19] See, https://www.newsday.co.zw/2022/03/ccc-kwekwe-violence-police-finger-ZANU PF/.

[20] See report at: https://www.zimeye.net/2022/02/07/cio-predicts-embarrassing-mnangagwa-2023-election-defeat/.

According to the Sentry report (2022), President Mnangagwa's close ally and advisor Kuda Tagwirei's company, Sakunda Holdings, won the US$1 billion concession to run the Command Agriculture programme in 2016 without an open tendering process, and the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe gave the company local currency at far above the official exchange rate, a practice that violates the Zimbabwean law.[21]

The Maverick Citizen report (2021) revealed that the Mnangagwa era is characterised by cartels that are linked to the ZANU PF party elites and have effectively taken over mines, public firms, and the fuel sector. The operation of these cartels has led to state capture which Hellman *et al* (2000c: 4) define as "the propensity of firms to shape the underlying rules of the game by — purchasing decrees, legislation, and influence, or efforts of firms to shape and influence the underlying rules of the game (i.e. legislation, laws, rules, and decrees) through private payments to public officials. The Maverick Citizen (2021) report singled out President Mnangagwa as the boss of one of the cartels and his patronage and protection keep cartels in continuous operation. One of the impacts of these cartels is directly linked to President Mnangagwa's authoritarian power consolidation project and it concerns entrenching their patrons' grip on power, hindering democratisation, retarding service delivery for citizens, and creating an uncompetitive business climate thereby leaving Zimbabweans poorer, more severely under-served by their government and disempowered to hold the state to account (NewZimbabwe.com 2021).

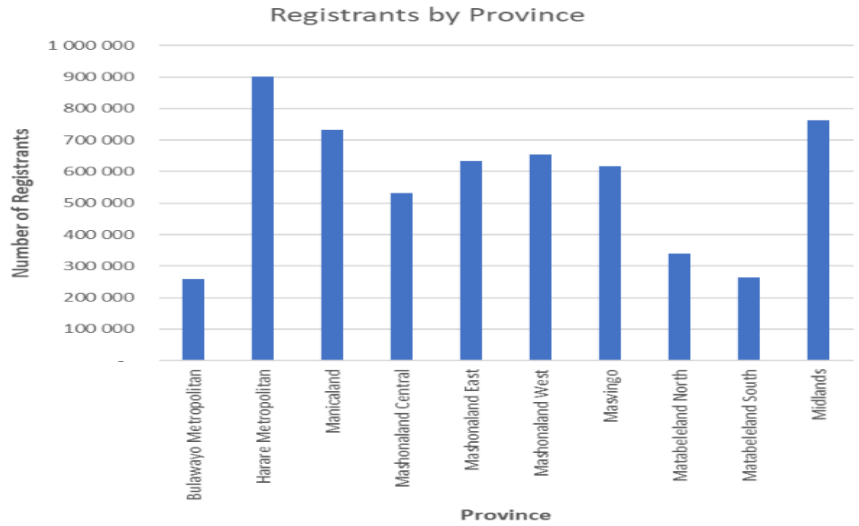
2.3.4 Infrastructure for Registering Citizens

Mnangagwa's administration has adopted the infrastructure for registering citizens through several programs. These are (i) the department of the Registrar General's Office, Pfumvudza/Intwasa farming programme, traditional authorities as well as mobile telephone companies.

Department of registrar's office

A cross-section of people in Zimbabwe is having challenges in accessing national documents particularly the National Identity card (ID). The Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZimRights) in 2021 highlighted that lack of access to national documentation was depriving the affected individuals of their constitutionally enshrined rights, particularly section 35 which provides citizenship right. Due to the deprivation of this right, Zimbabwe is now comprised of hundreds of thousands of people who have become stateless (Amnesty International, 2001 and Anadolu Agency, 2021). In 2021, a rights watchdog, the Zimbabwe Peace Project (ZPP), carried out a study and found out that Zimbabwe has unregistered citizens who were born to victims of the Gukurahundi massacres. The study identified these unregistered citizens' two categories which are (i) children of Gukurahundi victims and (ii) grandchildren of victims of post-Gukurahundi massacres. This situation is deliberately set up to suppress voter registration and voting by people in Matabeleland province where the opposition commands a huge following than that of ZANU PF. The IRI/NDI Zimbabwe International Election Observation Mission Final Report (2018) highlighted that some of the rural districts of Matabeleland North and South demonstrated under-registration ahead of the 2018 elections. The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) 2018 election final report revealed that Bulawayo Metropolitan, Matabeleland North, and South had the least registrants in contrast to other provinces as shown below.

[21] For more details, see The NewsHawks. 2022. Mnangagwa crony made US$90m in dodgy RBZ deal. Available at: https://thenewshawks.com/mnangagwa-crony-made-us90m-in-dodgy-rbz-deal/



Source: ZEC 2018 Election Final Report

In Masvingo ahead of the by-election scheduled for 26 March 2022, residents' associations identified suppressed voter registration process which has the adverse impact on voting. The Masvingo United Residents and Ratepayers Alliance and the Residents Association Coalition for Electoral Reforms singled out rampant maladministration in the issuance of IDs, a practice that obstructed the residents' right to vote.[22]

Pfumvudza/Intwasa farming scheme

This agricultural programme was introduced in 2020 in a bid to help smallholder farmers with the use of small pieces of land and the application of correct agronomic practices for high productivity (The Herald, 2020). Under this farming programme, the beneficiaries register to get access to the inputs. By August 2020, the government had trained over 700 000 farmers countrywide with more forthcoming for registering.[23] In December 2021, the number of Pfumvudza subscribers had risen to 2.4 million people for the 2021/2022 farming season (Chronicle, 2021). This program has provided the government with an avenue of registering citizens' private information under the guise of subscribing to Presidential Inputs for agricultural purposes.

Traditional authorities

Traditional leaders continue to play a partisan role before, during, and after elections in Zimbabwe (ZESN, 2008). Ahead of the 2018 elections, Zimbabwe Elections Support Network (ZESN) and the Election Resource Centre (ERC) noted that violations identified during the voter registration process included harassment and intimidation of registrants who were asked to submit serial numbers on their registration slips to traditional leaders. The IRI/NDI Zimbabwe International Election Observation Mission Final Report (2018) notes that traditional leaders and local chiefs in rural areas were seen "exerting influence over their respective communities by telling citizens whom to vote for, forcing people to attend ZANU PF campaign events, and threatening banishment from a village if a voter failed to vote for ZANU PF." In the same vein, the traditional leaders involved themselves in the partisan distribution of food aid and contributed to fears about the lack of privacy of the vote by recording voters' registration serial numbers and suggesting this information and data collected through the Bio-Metric Voter Registration (BVR) process allowed their vote to be known.[24]

[22] See NewZimbabwe.com. 2021. Masvingo Residents Bemoan Limited Access To IDs. Available at: https://www.newzimbabwe.com/masvingo-residents-bemoan-limited-access-to-ids/

[23] The Herald edition of 3 August 2022 reported that the government had trained 715 000 farmers the Presidential Inputs Scheme under Pfumvudza and more farmers were already registering. Available at https://www.herald.co.zw/pfumvudza-farmers-register-for-inputs/

[24] See, the IRI/NDI Zimbabwe International Election Observation Mission Final Report (2018). Available at: https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/Zimbabwe%20ZIEOM%20FINAL%20REPORT%20Printer_updated.pdf

Mobile Telephone network service providers/companies

The Mnangagwa-led government has also made use of mobile phone network service providers for purposes of reaching out to voters. In the run up to the July 2018 elections, ZANU PF connived with Econet and send messages to the mobile phone network service provider's subscribers that asked them to vote for the party. The sent messages were targeted at subscribers residing in the same constituency as that of the candidate purporting to be sending the messages. [25] This means the data captured by mobile phone network service providers is now also in possession of ZANU PF.

2.4 Possible Transitions from Competitive Authoritarian Regimes

Competitive authoritarian regimes are created for fear of both forms of regime change, the democratic regime change and the undemocratic ones and this has left them vulnerable to both. Two main features of competitive authoritarian regimes make the transition possible: (i) for fear of civil war, coup, and international isolation, elections remain the most important arena for power contestation (Levitsky and Way 2002), and; (ii) for fear of defeat under free and fair elections, 'procedural uncertainty' and 'substantive certainty' are typical strategies for electoral manipulation and thus consolidation (Przeworski, 1986). Allowing competitive elections occupies the minds of citizens with competition for power thus diverting their attention away from opting for coup d'états and civil war to claim back power. However, competitive authoritarian regimes ensure that the procedural quality of elections is contested while the electoral outcome is very certain and predictable, the ruling elite wins. This absence of electoral uncertainty serves as a ground for regime change of any form. Firstly, undemocratic change of government becomes more prone when internal aspirants of power are convinced that party politics will not give them a non-zero chance to rule and thus opt for a coup d'état. This was illustrated in Zimbabwe in November 2017 when the faction of ZANU PF aligned with the then Vice President Emmerson Mnangagwa opted for a coup d'état as means of alternating leadership. The coup players were convinced that power was inaccessible through elections due to inherent and institutionalised electoral certainty and procedural uncertainty. Secondly, the 'procedural uncertainty' and 'substantive certainty' of elections maintained by electoral autocracies is amenable to disruption by citizen-led and/or opposition-led actions. Mobilisation of large numbers of voters and/or mobilisation of large masses to protest electoral manipulation have been the two key strategies used by the opposition to create 'substantive uncertainty' or 'procedural certainty' of elections respectively thereby leading to a democratic change of government. However, protesting electoral manipulation requires a higher degree of vote monitoring, capturing of evidence in every polling station, and having enough manpower to carry out the work. Without making rigging costly and very hard, the election result will always be manipulated.

2.4.1 Elite Disunity Agency

Agency theorists within transitology studies have argued that competitive authoritarian regimes that allow proliferation and continuity of elite discohesion or disunity are prone to transition whose agency are elites within the system (Schedler, 2010). For instance, O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986: 19) key researchers in transitology note "there is no transition whose beginning is not the consequence – direct or indirect – of important divisions within the authoritarian regime." The most serious enemies to the survival of authoritarian regimes are not the masses and their street protests or external intervention but high-level allies within the ruling elite (Geddes, 2005: 6). When divisions within the ruling elite become very certain and apparent, the demise of the system becomes more certain and imminent. However, the incoherence within the ruling ZANU PF elite did not result in a democratic transition but a change of the leading person (Mugabe to Mnangagwa) without a change in ZANU PF's authoritarian governance culture. The democratic forces in the opposition and civil society were beaten at the level of strategic calculation, used

[25] See Techzim. 2018. ZANU PF Sending Personalised Messages To Individuals, Where Did They Get That Database? Electoral Commission And Econet Says Not From Them. Available at: https://www.techzim.co.zw/2018/07/econet-denies-selling-customers-data-to-3rd-parties-refutes-zecs-allegations-so-who-sold-data-to-ZANU PF/

to legitimate a coup d'état, help prevent international and domestic backlash needed to create a transitional government that usually leads to founding elections that give birth to a democratic breakthrough.

2.4.2 Mass Mobilisation Agency

Previous case studies have shown that authoritarian regimes are vulnerable to the threat and/or force of the masses either by a resounding vote or a street protest and uprising (Schedler, 2010). The ruling elite in competitive authoritarian regimes cannot avoid competitive elections and the creation of democratic institutions because they fear absolute autocracy and military despotism and need to benefit from protection, privileges, and incentives given to electoral regimes by the international system (Levitsky and Way 2002, 2010). Mobilisation of large numbers of voters or large masses to protest electoral manipulation has been the two key strategies used by the opposition to create 'substantive uncertainty' or 'procedural certainty' of elections respectively (Schedler, 2010; Levitsky and Way 2002, 2010). However, this type of transition agency is often not effective in absolute and/or closed authoritarian regimes as mass mobilization is quashed with force, spaces of contestation for state power such as the media, the court adjudication system, the legislature, and the electoral process and the internet are either closed or captured.

2.4.3 External Pressure Agency

The external transition agency in authoritarian regimes refers to covert and/or overt intervention by foreign powers to cause democratic transition (Schedler, 2010). This route might include activities such as intervention under the United Nations (UN) responsibility to protect doctrine as was the case in Libya in 2011, intervention to fight terrorists within borders of an authoritarian regime leading to the dethroning of the ruling elite as was done in Afghanistan 2001 and Iraq 2003 by the United States and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies. One of the few historical cases of a successful transition to democracy after the military occupation was Japan after World War 2 (US occupation 1945-52). The previous state administration was retained, although the military was purged. However, this type of transition agency has exacerbated the proliferation of fragile states as has been observed in Libya, Afghanistan, and Iraq. Although the same method was used in Iraq a weaker state than Japan, albeit with some administrative capacity, which was weakened by the US-led purge of members of the ruling Baath party throughout the administration did not result in a democratic transition. In addition, the use of economic sanctions and measures has been another transition agency strategy used to create a hurting stalemate in the regime to force the ruling elite to negotiate a transition towards democracy. This strategy has been used to force the Smith regime in Rhodesia by UN member states and it has been used by the United States through the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act (ZIDERA) but since 2001, it has proven to be failing just like the sanctions imposed on the Smith regime.

2.4.4 Military Cooperation in Citizen-led Agency

In Zimbabwe, elites in the security forces have been identified as key enablers of the competitive authoritarian system by blocking possible democratic breakthroughs. Cooperation of the military in citizen-led transition is the most fundamental facet for a democratic breakthrough in Zimbabwe and the worst feared scenario in the minds of the handlers of the Mnangagwa regime. Some recent studies reveal that strong regimes have been overcome by citizen protests when security forces either join the citizens or decide not to shoot their fellow citizens in defiance of orders from the ruling elite (Chorley 1943; Russell 1974; Chenoweth and Stephan 2011; Barany 2016). Morency-Laflamme and McLauchlin (2020:4) note that "Officers seek to be on the winning side, for the sake both of one's own career (and life) and of preserving military unity. So they often hide their true preferences, going along with a winning side until another looks like it is likely to win." This means the military never openly declares its allegiance to the opposition until the opposition begins to prove its potential to defeat the ruling elite.

Three causal factors have been identified as key to engendering military cooperation with the opposition or citizen-led transition. First is the uncertainty of the ruling regimes' continued provision of financial incentives for the military to continue siding

with it instead of the opposition or citizen movements. Previous studies of military defections in the Arab Spring transitions such as Egypt, Bahrain, and Syria show that competitive authoritarian regimes that iincentivizes loyalty suffer defection of individual soldiers when it becomes apparent that the regime is at risk of collapsing.[26] For this form of cooperation to happen, the military is driven by incentives to act or side with the regime, the moment those incentives are eroded or threatened, armed forces seek greener pastures in the most possible alternative available. The second factor is the ruling elite's attempt to control the security forces through a small group of loyalist military leaders who are given the best economic and political incentives whilst leaving the rest of the security forces suffering. This has led to military disloyalty and cooperation with citizen-led revolutions. Presidents of competitive authoritarian regimes who have fallen because of this strategy include Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines and Suharto in Indonesia wherein the factions of the armed forces who were not part of the elite enjoying incentives from the ruling elite defected with the intent of improving their professional prospects and the military institution's overall standing.[27] The regime's use of counterforces to control the military and the perceivable credibility of the opposition's promises to protect vested interests of the military also determine the decision of the armed forces to disappoint the ruling elite by siding with the opposition in the eleventh hour. [28] The shifts in military loyalties experienced in Benin 1989-1990 and the shift in loyalties from the ruling pro-Mugabe faction to the pro-Mnangagwa faction in 2017 support this assertion. In both cases, the opponents of the incumbent gave the security forces greater prospects to promote their interests compared to the incumbent regimes. Opposition threats and promises must be evidence-based and empirically discernible.

2.5 Summary

This chapter presented the conceptualisation of the militarised competitive authoritarian regime in Zimbabwe. The chapter argues that center of gravity in Zimbabwe's competitive authoritarian regime is the military elite who captured ZANU PF for manipulating key democracy institutions mainly the judiciary, the legislature, the media, and ZEC. The chapter also posits that the capture of ZANU PF is historical and philosophical as it is heavily ringfenced by four interrelated philosophical narratives that have made military involvement in electoral and transition processes a practicable and inexorable culture in Zimbabwe. We argue that the future of transition cannot be thought of or conceptualised without attention to the role of the security forces in that transition. The chapter also used Slater and Fanner (2011) to illustrate how the Mnangagwa government has built its authoritarian resilience infrastructure. Cognisance of the composition and role of each institution under each of the four authoritarian resilience infrastructures is very important in conceptualising possible political permutations following 2023 harmonised elections. The chapter also reviews possible transition pathways using a review of case studies like Zimbabwe's competitive authoritarian regime. The role of the military elite, the nature of the relationships between the ruling elite and the military and the opposition are emphasised under each possible transition pathway.

[26] Nepstad, "Mutiny and Nonviolence in the Arab Spring."

[27] Terence Lee, "The Armed Forces and Transitions from Authoritarian Rule," *Comparative Political Studies* 42, no. 5 (2009): 640-69; *Defect or Defend: Military Responses to Popular Protests in Authoritarian Asia*.

[28]

CHAPTER THREE

THE 2022 BYELECTION LITMUS TEST: AUTHORITATIAN RESISTANCE OR DEMOCRATIC RESILIENCE?

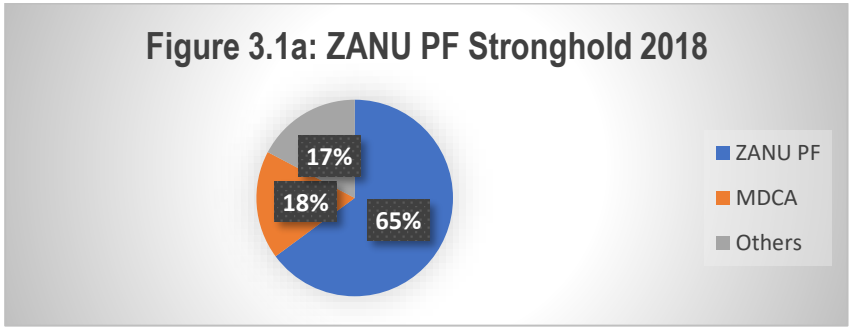
3.1 Introduction

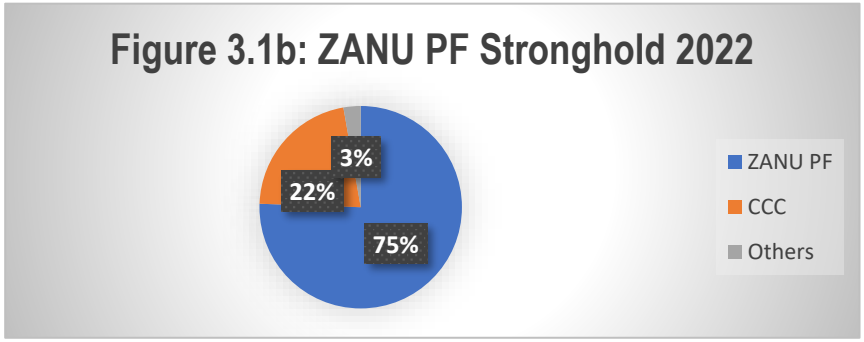
Although the previous chapter shows that the Mnangagwa regime has embarked on many durability buttresses, the voting behaviours of citizens have a final say in determining whether there is democratic resilience. This chapter examines the extent to which Zimbabwe under Emerson Mnangagwa's presidency has shown evidence of democratic resilience and/or authoritarian resistance. This is done through a critical examination of the 26 March 2022 by-election, lessons, and insights therefrom and how the election mirrors the oncoming 2023 election. The results of the 26 March 2022 by-election are used to gauge the resistance and resilience of democratic and authoritarian forces. The 28 parliamentary by-elections are used to study the behaviour of actors and voters in a bid to ascertain the extent of democratic resilience and/or authoritarian resistance.

The MDCA 2018 election results are deliberately used as a baseline for understanding the performance of CCC. Four factors justify the use of MDCA 2018 election results in sampled constituencies as a baseline for CCC 2022 performance analysis: (i) out of the 28 CCC parliamentary candidates in the 2022 by-election in sampled constituencies, 20 contested under MDCA in 2018; (ii) Nelson Chamisa was the face (leader) of MDCA in 2018 elections, he participated in 2022 by-election as leader of CCC; (iii) the human structures in communities that belonged to MDCA in 2018 belonged to CCC in 2022 by-elections; (iv) the massive exodus of supporters shown by-election results (many zeros at some polling stations) of the remnant MDCA led by Douglas Mwonzora testify that what opposed ZANU PF in 2018 under the MDCA name is in fact CCC.

3.2 Voting Behaviour in ZANU PF Strong Hold: A case of Authoritarian Resistance

The voting behaviour and outcomes of the March 2022 by-election in the ZANU PF stronghold reveal key insights into authoritarian resistance realities in Zimbabwe and the possible scenarios in the post-2023 election. [29] Figures 3.1a and 3.1b below presents a comparative analysis of voting behaviour in seven ZANU PF stronghold constituencies.



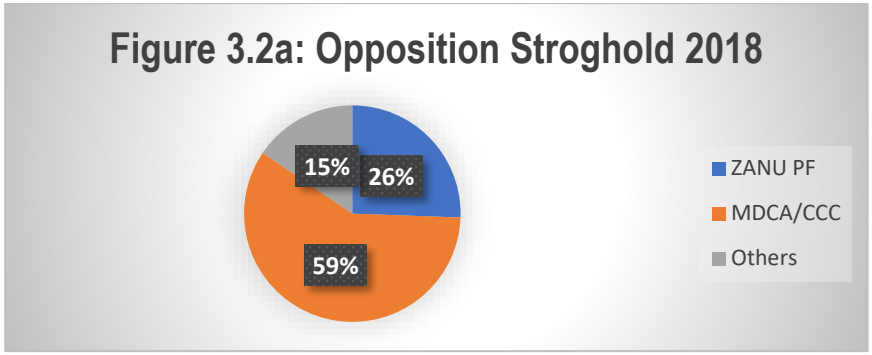


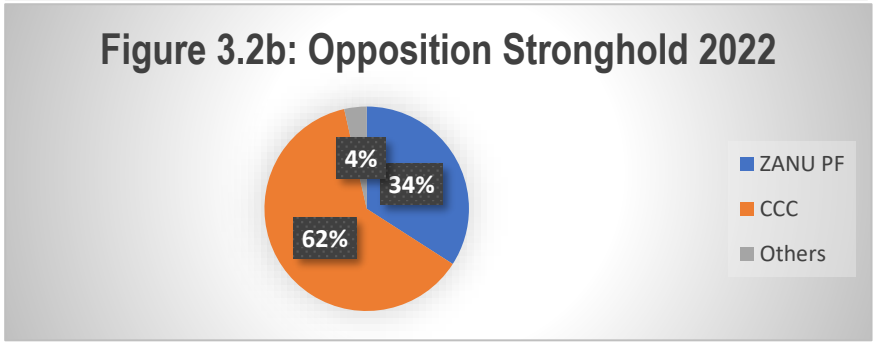
[29] ZANU PF stronghold refers to 7 constituencies previously won by ZANU PF in 2018 which were contested and retained by ZANU PF in the 2022 by-election. Thus the stronghold is comprised of Gokwe Central, Mberegwa South, Marondera East, Murewa South, Tsholotsho South, Chivi South and Mwenezi East. Mutasa South and Epworth were not included in the ZANU PF stronghold sample because they are swing constituencies.

Four key findings should be given special attention here. Firstly, ZANU PF increased from the 2018 baseline of 65% to 75% of the total votes cast in 2022 in its stronghold. There is an additional 10% in 2022 showing that ZANU PF is increasing its performance and popularity in its stronghold regions. Secondly, the CCC performance in ZANU PF stronghold regions increased from the 18% share of MDCA to 22% in 2022. There is an additional 4% showing that CCC performed better than MDC Alliance in ZANU PF stronghold regions. Thirdly, the proportions with which ZANU PF and CCC gained in the ZANU PF stronghold indicate that ZANU PF support is growing faster than that of CCC in this region. Fourthly, ZANU PF's winning margin increased by an additional 6% in its stronghold. In 2018, MDCA fell short against ZANU PF with 47% whereas in 2022 it fell short with 53% in the same region. Read together, these statistics show that if ZANU PF manages to maintain this growth trend, it will completely knock out the opposition from ZANU PF stronghold regions. However, two intervening variables must be maintained constant if ZANU PF is to keep its widening winning margin and these are: (i) the number of contesting candidates in each constituency; (ii) voter turnout in each constituency. The reduction in the number of contesting candidates per constituency in 2022 saw a reduction in the total share of "other" political players from 17% in 2018 to 3% in 2022. This entails that the reduction in the number of contesting candidates had an effect of increasing the percentage share of both ZANU PF and CCC which inversely implies that if more candidates contest in a constituency, numbers drop from the ruling party and the main opposition CCC.

3.3 Voting Behaviour in the Opposition Stronghold

The voting behaviour and outcomes in the opposition stronghold give a clear picture of the extent of ZANU PF resurgence and democratic resilience under CCC. Figure 3.2 below presents a comparative performance analysis of ZANU PF and CCC in the opposition stronghold.[30]





The findings in figure 3.2 above indicate that CCC performance increased by 3% from the 2018 MDCA vote compared to ZANU PF's 8% increase in opposition stronghold constituencies. Whereas ZANU PF got 26% of the total vote in 2018, it managed to improve to 34% of the total vote in 2022 in the opposition stronghold. This is compared to CCC's increase from MDCA's 59% in 2018 to 62% in 2022 in

[30] Opposition stronghold region refers to constituencies that were won by MDC A in 2018 and were contested and retained by the opposition CCC party in March 2022. These include Harare Central, Harare East, Highfield East, Highfield West, Kuwadzana, Kuwadzana East, Glen Norah, Glen View North, Kambuzuma, Mufakose, St Mary's, Mukoba, Mbizo, Nkulumane, Pumula, Marondera Central, Dangamvura-Chikanga, Binga North. Kwekwe central was excluded from the sample for being a swing constituency.

the opposition stronghold. ZANU PF needed 33% +1 to win in the opposition stronghold in 2018 whereas, in 2022, it only needed 28%+1 to win in the same area. There is a 5% shrinkage in ZANU PF's losing margin in the opposition stronghold. In addition, the vote given to other candidates decreased from 15% in 2018 to 4% in 2022 in the opposition stronghold. Again, the nature of voter turnout and the number of contestants per constituency should remain constant for this performance growth to be maintained in the 2023 election.

3.4 The Role of Poor Voter Turnout: Enabling Authoritarian Resilience?

Transitology literature reveals that massive voter turnout makes democratic breakthroughs possible despite electoral manipulation in competitive authoritarian regimes (Schedler, 2010; Levitsky and Way 2002, 2010). However, the 2022 election in Zimbabwe shows that voter turnout is declining from the 2018 baseline in both ZANU PF and opposition stronghold regions. If this trend continues to 2023, authoritarian resistance will be buttressed as more voters will not vote whilst few ZANU PF voters will be marshaled to vote and make a majority vote. Figure 3.3 illustrates voter turnout.

Figure 3.3a: ZANU PF Stronghold Voter Turnout Dynamics

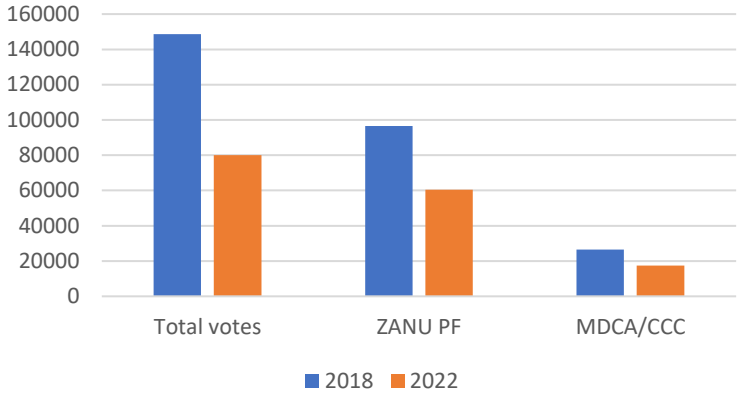


Figure 3.3b: Voter turnout in MDCA/CCC stronghold

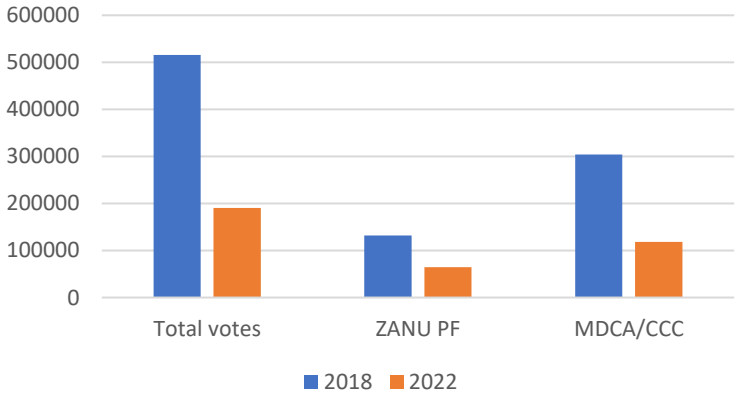


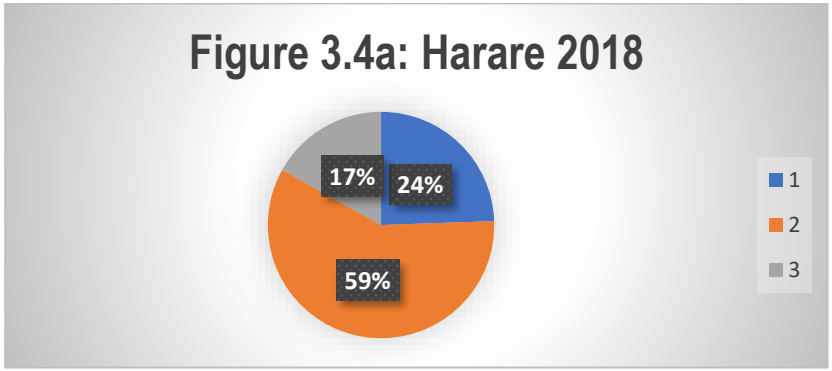
Figure 3.3 shows that in 2022, the total votes in the ZANU PF stronghold declined by 46% of the 2018 baseline whereas they declined by 63% in MDCA/CCC stronghold in the same period. This shows that poor voter turnout affected the CCC stronghold more than ZANU PF stronghold regions. In ZANU PF stronghold, CCC dropped 51% of the 2018 vote given to MDCA whereas ZANU PF dropped 38% of its 2018 vote in the same area. This contrasts with a 61% drop in total votes by CCC and a 34% drop in total votes by ZANU PF in the opposition stronghold in March 2022. The primary explanation for these performance declines is that more opposition supporters did not vote in March 2022 and this trend was worse in opposition stronghold than in the ZANU PF stronghold. The secondary explanation is that ZANU PF is taking opposition supporters in the ZANU PF stronghold regions and in the opposition stronghold regions. For ZANU PF, performance decline is better than the CCC in all regions. Four causal factors have been identified, (i) there is the limited mobilisation of registered voters to actually go and vote in the opposition stronghold than in the ZANU PF stronghold where block voting was practiced, (ii) a large proportion of citizens in rural areas that are ZANU PF stronghold are politically conscious and active than those in urban areas, (iii) structures in rural areas such as village heads, party cells, and polling station-based party mobilisation have a greater compelling power on voters to go and vote than in urban areas, (iv) large numbers of voters were turned away in urban areas than in rural areas. It can be concluded that poor voter turnout affects the opposition more than ZANU PF and if the trend continues to 2023, ZANU PF will win the election.

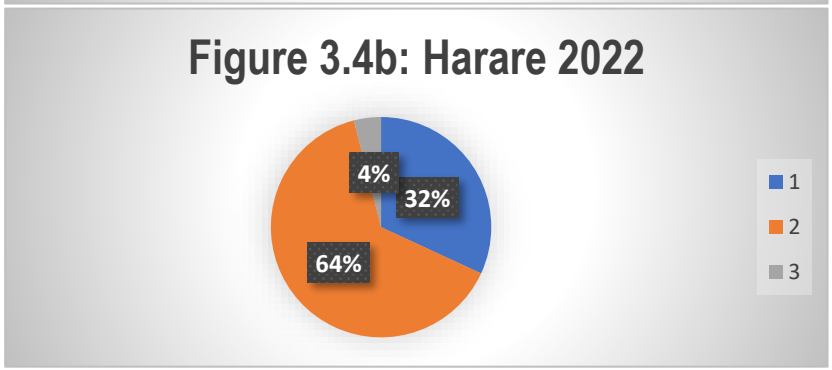
3.5 Comparative Performance Analysis by Province

A total of seven provinces had by-elections in March 2022 and the performance of ZANU PF and CCC in each province is examined to ascertain the extent of democratic resilience and authoritarian resistance as shown by voting behaviour of citizens.

3.5.1 Winning Margin and Voter Turnout in Harare Province

Figure 3.4 shows voting outcomes in 2018 vis-à-vis 2022 in Harare province.[31] This province is an opposition stronghold. Political parties are categorised as 1,2,3 standing for ZANU PF, MDCA/CCC and Other parties.





[31] The Harare province sample refers to all constituencies contested in the March 2022 by-election in the Harare province.

Although all parties improved their performance in Harare province, ZANU PF had a superior improvement to CCC. It improved by 8% from 24% in 2018 to 32% in 2022 whereas CCC improved by 5% from 59% in 2018 to 64% in 2022. Therefore, ZANU PF is closing the opposition-winning margin in Harare province. While at it, the CCC party under Nelson Chamisa has electorally outperformed its predecessor MDC-A, showing that a change in name from MDC-A to CCC has revamped its electoral performance. However, as has been argued earlier above, the preponderance of voter turnout and multiplicity of contesting candidates cannot be ruled out as key factors linked to the performance increase in ZANU PF and CCC. Figure 3.5 below presents the voter turnout and performance declines suffered by both parties in the 2022 election.

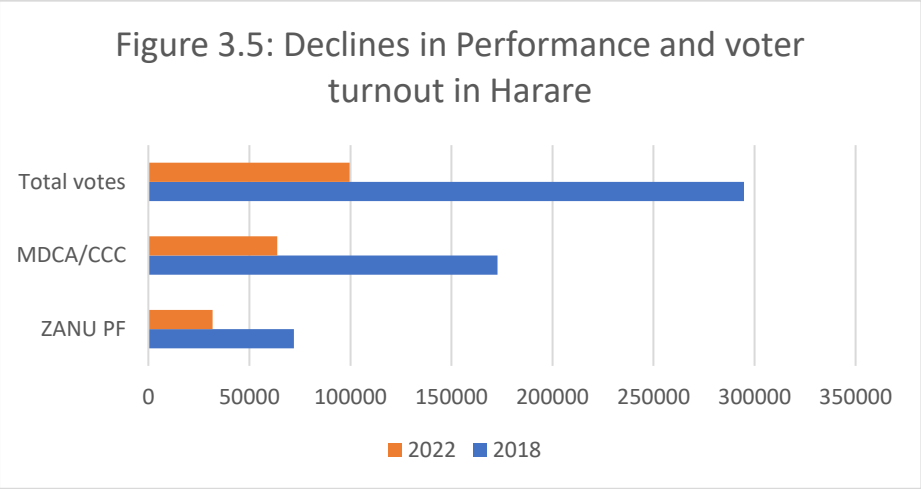
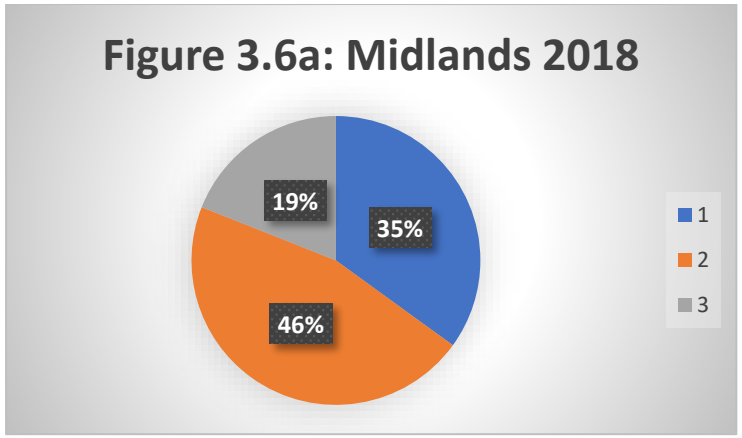


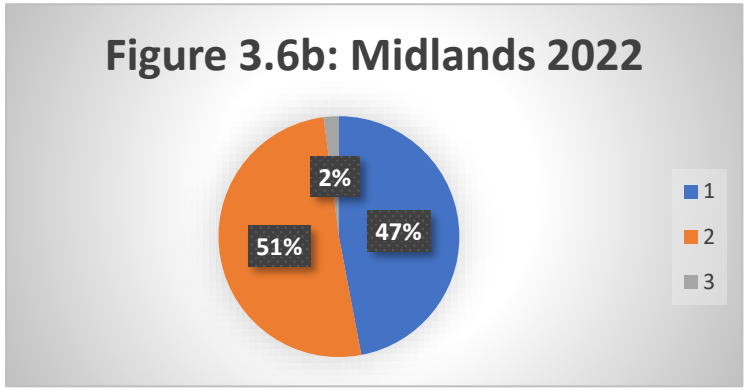
Figure 3.5 above shows that there was a 66% decline in voter turnout in Harare province from the 2018 baseline. The CCC party recorded a 63% decline from the previous MDCA total votes whereas ZANU PF had a 56% decline from its previous total votes in Harare province. Comparatively, CCC total votes declined with higher proportions than ZANU PF in Harare province. It can be said that the decline in voter turnout affected the opposition more than it affected ZANU PF. The winning margin of the main opposition is shrinking in Harare and declining voter turnout worsens the situation. This implies that if more declines in voter turnout are experienced going forward, ZANU PF will recapture Harare province and/or neutralise the impact of the Harare vote.

3.5.2 Winning Margin and Voter Turnout in Midlands Province

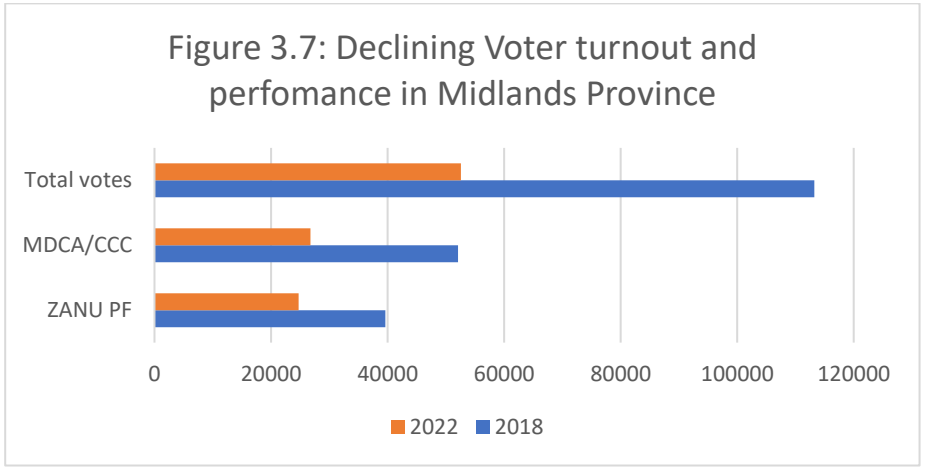
Constituencies from the Midlands province that had by-elections were examined to ascertain the performance dynamics of ZANU PF vis-à-vis the opposition in the province. Figure 3.6 below presents the voting outcomes in 2018 and 2022 in the constituencies of the Midlands province.[32] Political parties are categorised as 1,2,3 standing for ZANU PF, MDCA/CCC, and Other parties.

[32] The Midlands province sample refers to all constituencies contested in the March 2022 by-election in the Midlands province.





Although all parties improved their electoral performance in Midlands province during the 2022 by-elections, ZANU PF improved much better by 12% from 35% in 2018 to 47% in 2022 whereas CCC improved by 5% from 46% in 2018 to 51% in 2022. Therefore, ZANU PF is closing the opposition's winning margin in this province. There is a notable decrease in the total votes going to other players who from 19% in 2018 to 2% in 2022. Voter turnout and performance decline is analysed in figure 3.7 below



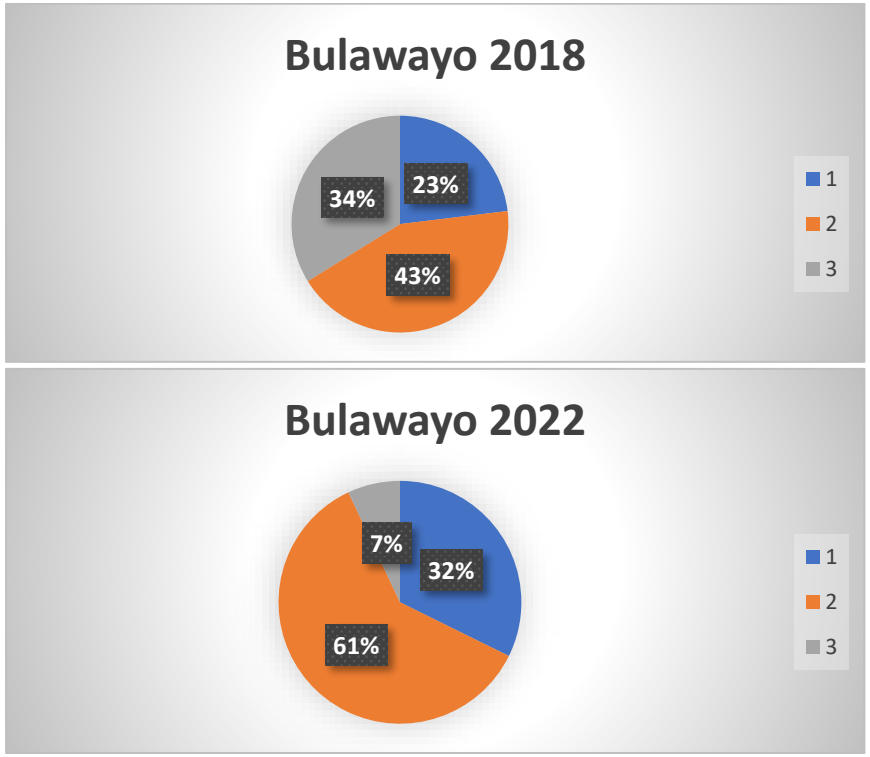
There was a 54% decline in voter turn-out in Midlands province between the 2018 and 2022 elections. Although poor voter turn-out affects both parties, the CCC party is affected the most by poor voter turn-out as shown by a 49% decline from the previous MDC-A total votes as compared to a 38% decline of ZANU PF in the same period.

3.5.3 Winning Margin and Voter Turnout in Bulawayo Province

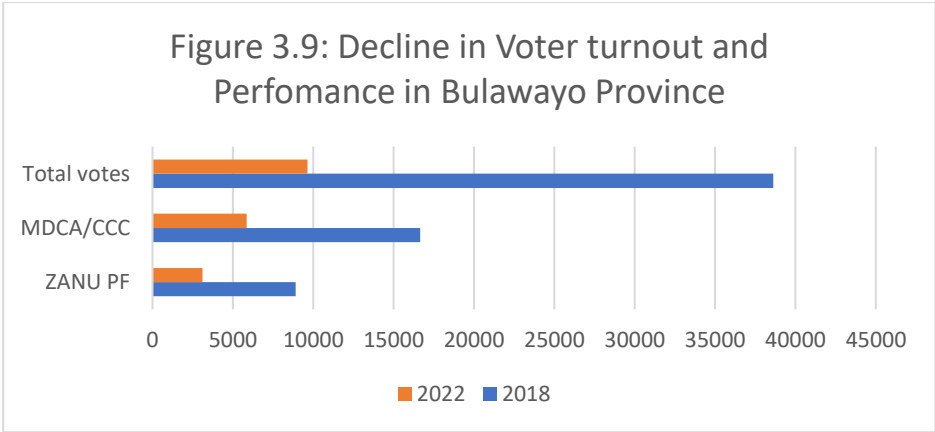
Figure 3.8 shows voting outcomes in 2018 vis-à-vis 2022 in Bulawayo province.[33] This province is an opposition stronghold. Political parties are categorised as 1,2,3 standing for ZANU PF, MDCA/CCC and Other parties.

[33] The Bulawayo province sample refers to all constituencies that were contested in the March 2022 by-election in the Bulawayo Metropolitan province.

Figure 3.8: Election outcomes in Bulawayo Province



Notwithstanding that both parties improved their performance in Bulawayo province, CCC had greater improvement than ZANU PF. The CCC improved by 18% from 43% in 2018 to 61% in 2022 whilst ZANU PF only improved by 9% from 23% in 2018 to 32% in 2022. Therefore, CCC is increasing its winning margin in Bulawayo from the 2018 MDCA baseline.



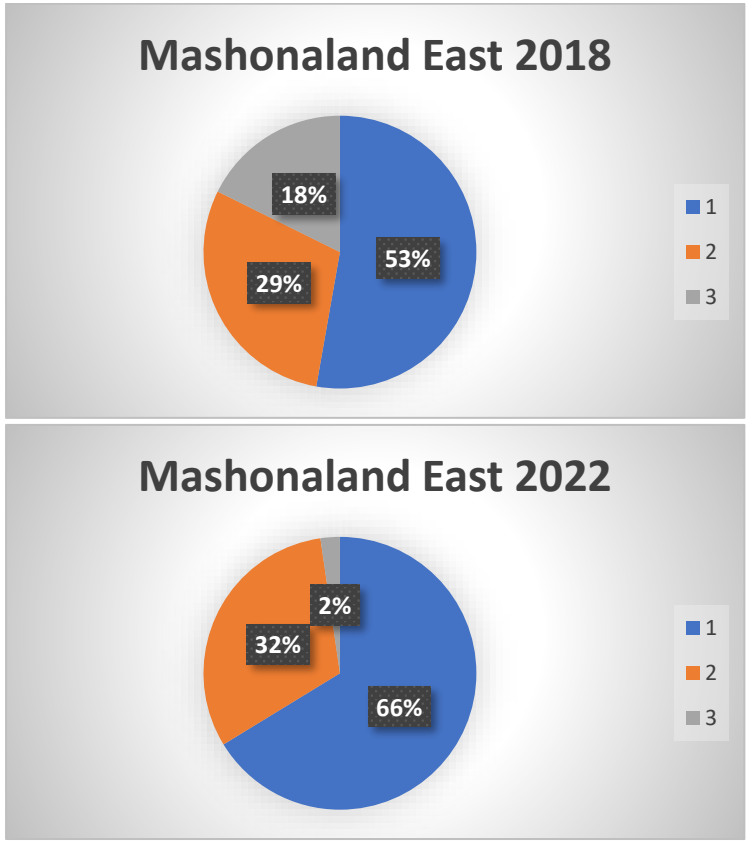
There was a 75% decline in voter turn-out in Bulawayo between the 2018 and 2022 elections. Both parties were affected by poor voter turn-out in Bulawayo in equal measure in terms of the 2018 and 2022 elections as shown by a 65% decline. For both ZANU PF and CCC, 65% of people who voted for the parties in Bulawayo did not vote in the 2022 by-elections.

3.5.4 Winning Margin and Voter Turnout in Mashonaland East Province

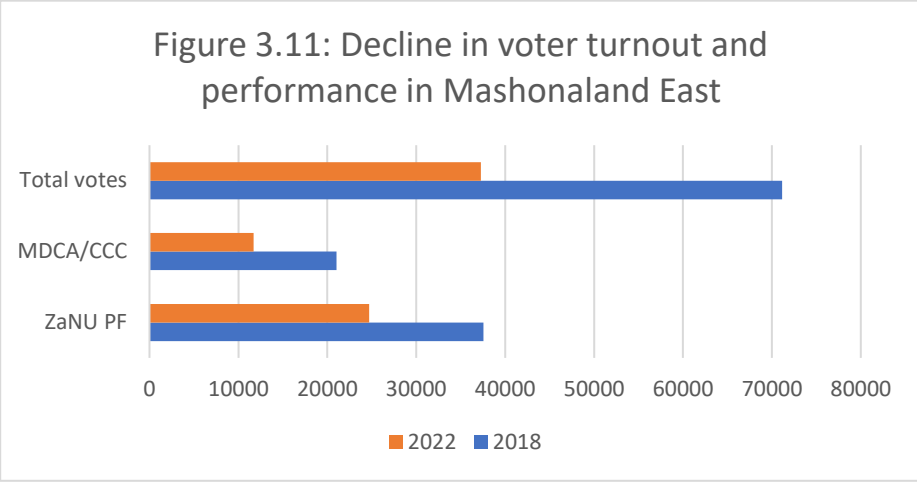
Figure 3.10 shows voting outcomes in 2018 vis-à-vis 2022 in Mashonaland East province.[34] This province is a ZANU PF stronghold. Political parties are categorised as 1,2,3 standing for ZANU PF, MDCA/CCC and Other parties.

[34] Mashonaland East sample was made up of all constituencies contested in the March 2022 by-election in that province.

Figure 3.10: Election Outcomes in Mashonaland East



The main parties ZANU PF and CCC improved their performance in Mashonaland East province. However, ZANU PF improved by a greater proportion than CCC as it gained an additional 13% from 53% in 2018 to 66% in 2022; whereas CCC only improved by 3% from 29% in 2018 to 32% in 2022. This means ZANU PF is widening its winning margin in Mashonaland East.



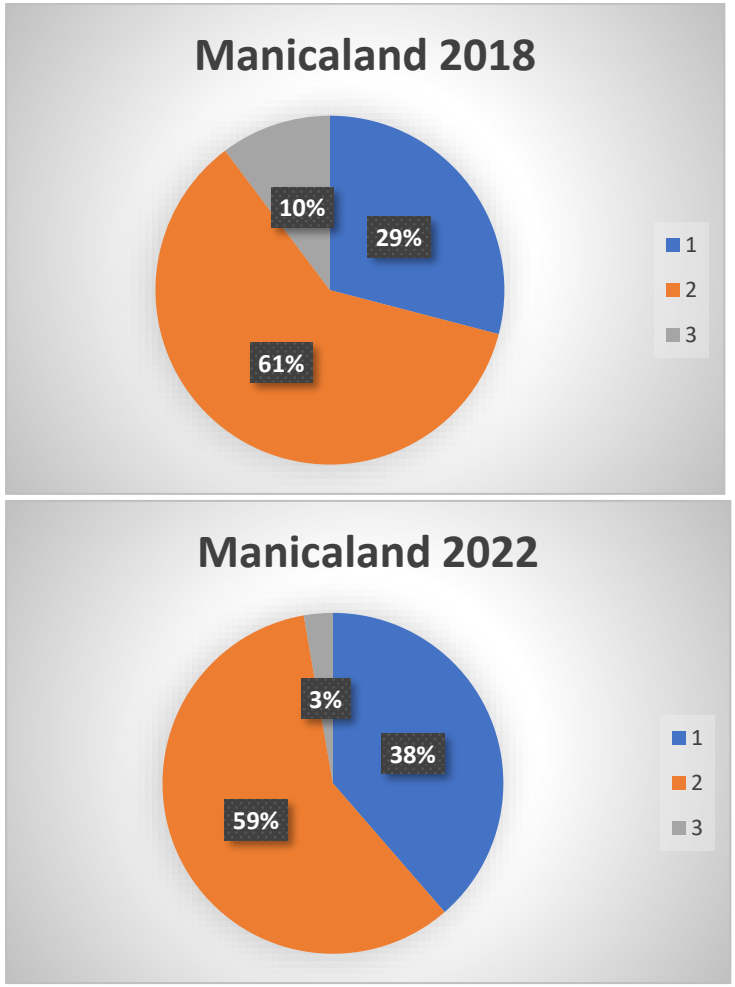
A 48% decline in voter turnout was recorded in Mashonaland East province. The CCC party suffered a 44% decline from MDCA 2018 votes compared to a 34% decline experienced by ZANU PF. This means 44% of opposition supporters who voted in 2018 did not vote or voted for the opponent in 2022 as compared to ZANU PF's 34%.

3.5.5 Winning Margin and Voter Turnout in Manicaland Province

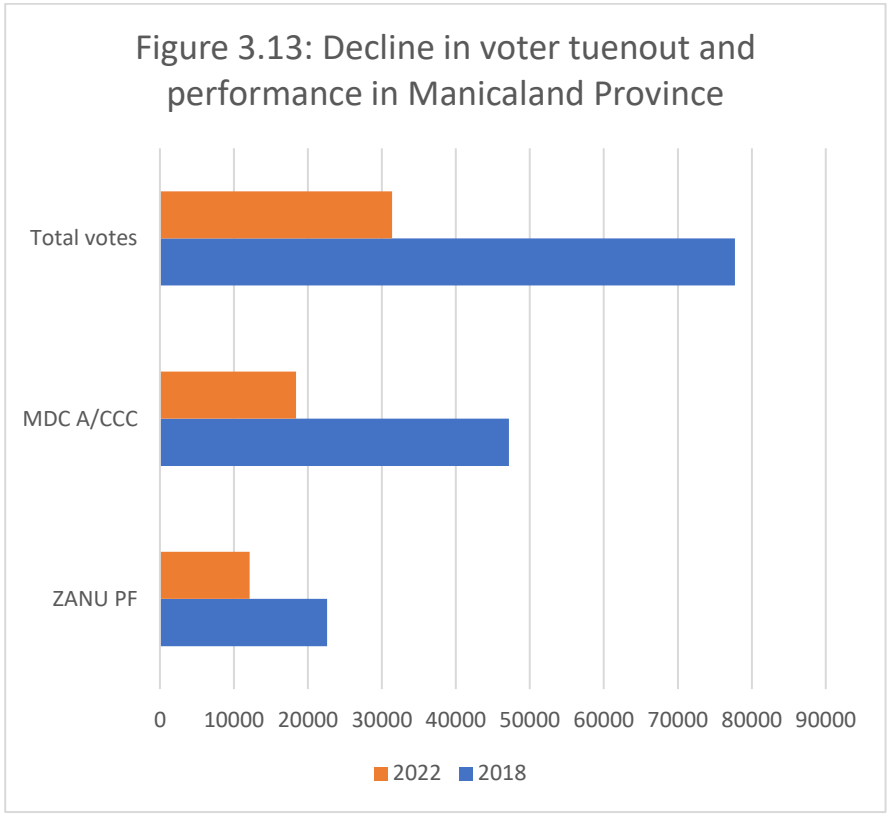
Figure 3.12 shows voting outcomes in 2018 vis-à-vis 2022 in Manicaland province.[35] Political parties are categorised as 1,2,3 standing for ZANU PF, MDCA/CCC and Other parties.

[35] Manicaland province sample was made up of all constituencies contested in the March 2022 by-election in that province.

Figure 3.12: Voting outcomes in 2018 vis-à-vis 2022 in Manicaland province



The CCC party in Manicaland had a reduced performance in the 2022 by-elections as shown by a 2% decrease (61% in 2018 to 59% in 2022) whereas ZANU PF improved its performance by 9% from 29% in 2018 to 38% in 2022. ZANU PF is decreasing the opposition's winning margin in this province.

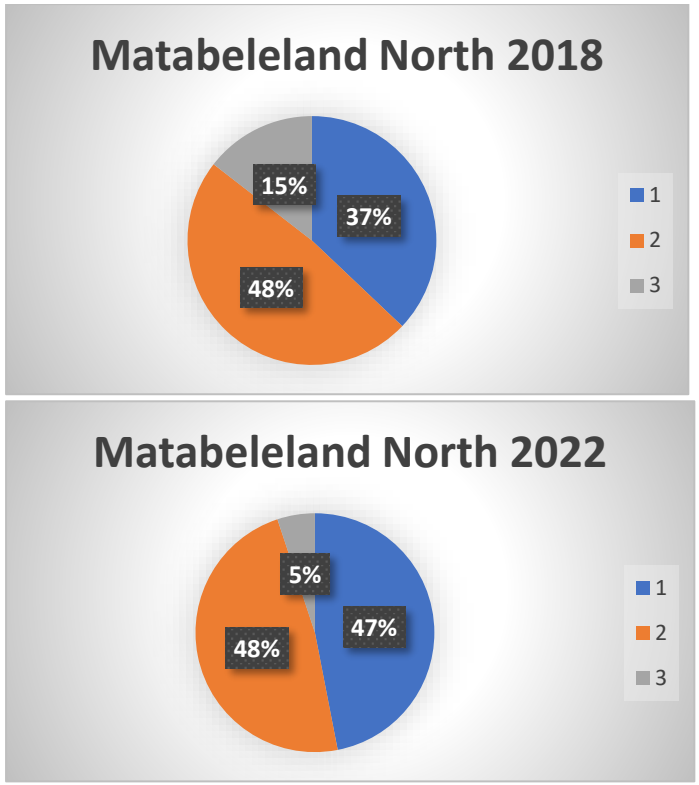


A 60% decline in voter turnout was recorded in Manicaland during the 2022 by-elections. Be that as it may, the CCC party suffered a 61% decrease from the previous MDCA votes as compared to ZANU PF's 46% decrease from 2018 votes in the same areas. Overall, the opposition has underperformed in terms of voter mobilisation more than ZANU PF in this region.

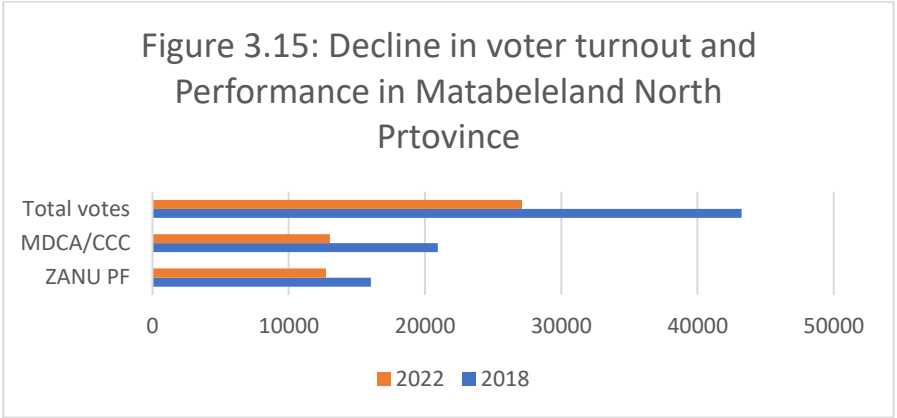
3.5.6 Winning Margin and Voter Turnout in Matabeleland North Province

Figure 3.14 shows voting outcomes in 2018 vis-à-vis 2022 in Matabeleland North province.[36] Political parties are categorised as 1,2,3 standing for ZANU PF, MDCA/CCC, and Other parties.

Figure 3.14: Voting outcomes in Matabeleland North province



ZANU PF improved its performance in Matabeleland North during the 2022 by-elections from the 2018 elections as shown by a 10% increase from 37% in 2018 to 47% in 2022 whereas CCC remained static (48%) between 2018 and 2022. The winning margin of the opposition in these areas is decreasing.



There was a 37% decline in voter turn-out in Mat North between the 2018 and 2022 elections. Although poor voter turnout affects all the contesting parties in Mat North, CCC is affected the most as shown by a 38% decline from the previous MDCA total votes in 2018. In the same province, ZANU PF is least affected as indicated by a 21% decrease from its previous total votes.

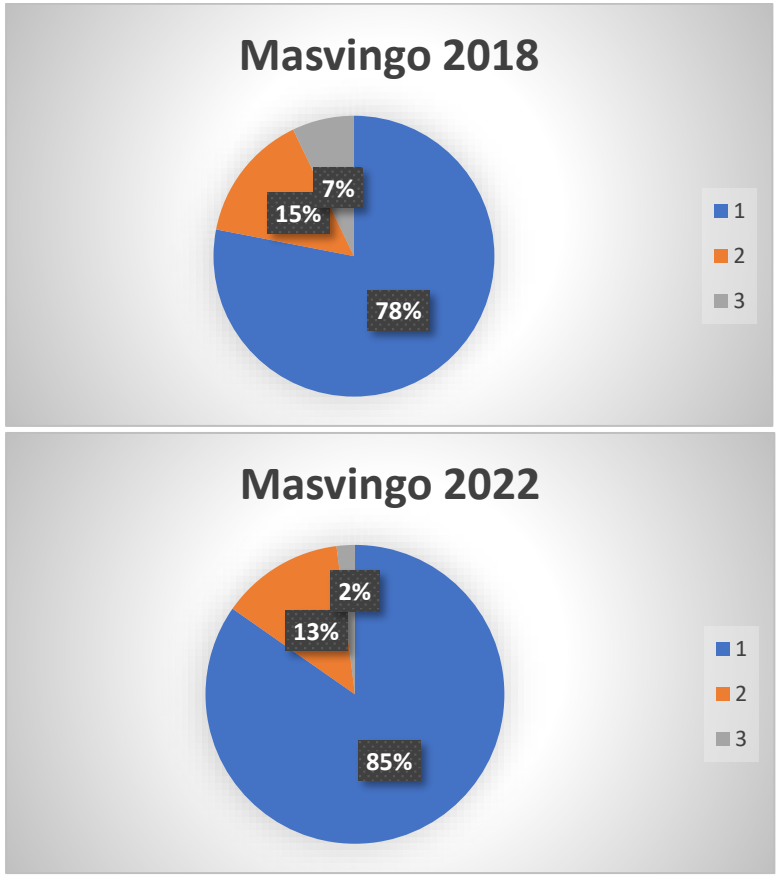
3.5.7 Winning Margin and Voter Turnout in Masvingo Province

Figure 3.16 shows voting outcomes in 2018 vis-à-vis 2022 in Masvingo province. [37] This province is a ZANU PF stronghold. Political parties are categorised as 1,2,3 standing for ZANU PF, MDCA/CCC, and other parties.

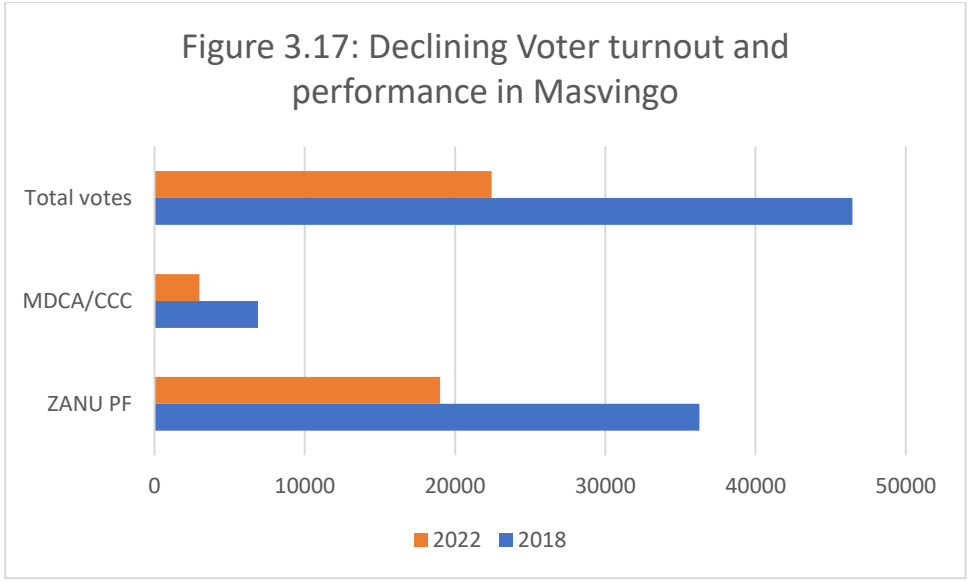
[36] Matabeleland North province sample was made up of all the constituencies contested in the March 2022 by-election in that province.

[37] Masvingo province sample refers to all constituencies contested in the March 2022 by-election in that province.

Figure 3.16: Voting outcomes in 2018 vis-à-vis 2022 in Masvingo province



In Masvingo, the CCC party had a reduced performance as revealed by a decrease of 2% (15% in 2018 to 13% in 2022) as compared to ZANU PF's improved performance of an additional 7% from its previous election score (78% in 2018 to 85% in 2022). ZANU PF is increasing its winning margin in this province.



There was a 52% decline in voter turn-out in Masvingo. Poor voter turnout in Masvingo province affected the CCC party more than ZANU PF. For CCC, there was a 57% decline in total votes whereas ZANU PF had a 48% decline in total votes. This means 48% of people who voted for ZANU PF in 2018 either did not vote or voted for opponents in 2022 as compared to 57% of CCC. The net effect is a ZANU PF resilience.

3.6 Summary

The findings presented in this chapter show that there is indeed more authoritarian resilience than democratic resistance in Zimbabwe. ZANU PF has shown strong evidence of performance rebound in its stronghold and in the opposition stronghold whereas the opposition declined in many provinces and improved in few. In many cases, ZANU PF improved by greater proportions than the opposition which entails a possible opposition defeat if all other conditions such as reduced number of candidates and voter turnout remain constant. The chapter also shows that the

decline in voter turnout was more in the opposition strongholds than in ZANU PF strongholds. This went hand in hand with the decline in total votes by the opposition which was greater than the declines experienced by ZANU PF. The decline in voter turnout was thus observed to be disadvantaging the opposition and pointing to poor voter mobilisation and sensitisation among opposition parties.

CHAPTER FOUR

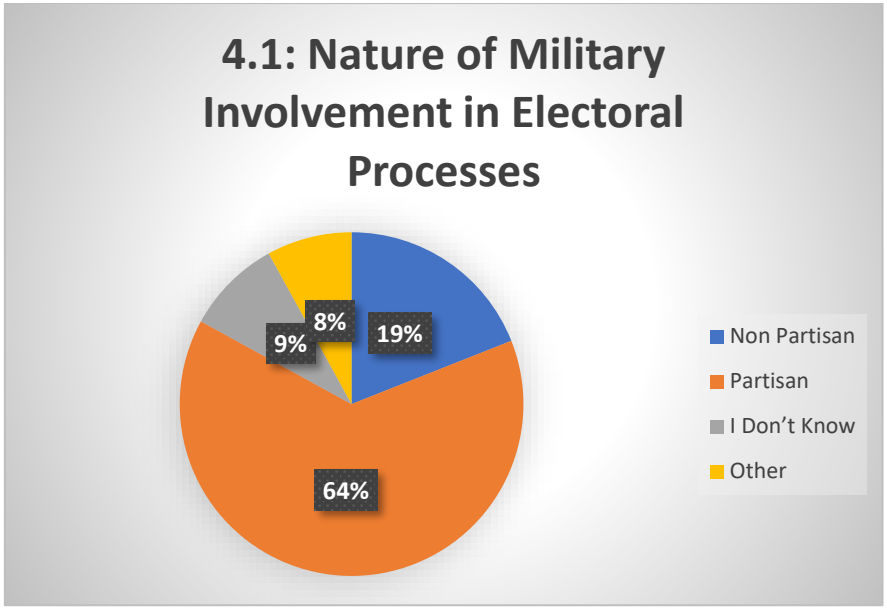
CITIZEN PERCEPTIONS ON KEY TRANSITION FACTORS IN ZIMBABWE

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents perceptions of citizens on the role of the military in electoral and transition processes in Zimbabwe. The chapter reveals that citizens perceive the military as an enabler of the ruling ZANU PF whose interest is to keep ZANU PF in power. It is also revealed that citizens have doubts that ZEC can release electoral results that contradict the interest of the military elite. On the possibility of political transition through elections, the findings reveal that citizens are very doubtful as they think the possible transition is the one supported by the military.

4.1 Perceptions on Militarisation of Electoral Processes in Zimbabwe

In a bid to better understand the nature of the involvement of the military in electoral processes in Zimbabwe, this study interrogated the extent to which the military is partisan or neutral in its operations in the electoral processes. Findings were as displayed below.



Respondents were asked: *How would you describe the involvement of the military in electoral processes in Zimbabwe? Explain why you think so?*

As shown in the study findings displayed above, 64% of the respondents see the military as partisan as compared to 19% who think the military is non-partisan. The partisan nature of the Zimbabwean military can be traced back to its previous role pertaining to prolonging the 'staying in power' and cementing the 'staying power' of the ruling ZANU PF party. One interviewee from Bulawayo highlighted that "the ruling party and the military are connected as a result of the military receiving its orders from the commander in chief who is the head of state and head of the ZANU PF party." This should be understood in line with the context in Zimbabwe wherein the leader of ZANU PF President Mnangagwa is the head of state and commander in chief of the Zimbabwe Defence Forces (ZDF). Another respondent noted:

> The military is always there conducting patrols during election time but seeing military personnel doesn't give people the

> sense of safety, but fear grips them much to the extent that some end up not carrying on with voting.

The presence of the military in communities during the election period sends an intimidatory message to the prospective opposition electorate as they start to reflect on previous military-led political violence during the 2008 election and the 2018 August 1 shooting. The partisan nature of the military as perceived by the citizens is against the law as enshrined under section 208 of the constitution of Zimbabwe. There is huge evidence showing the military's calculative operations conducted towards watershed elections led to the deterrence of opposition voters. The use of the military in the 1980s to kill around 2000 supporters of the opposition PF ZAPU, to intimidate and shrink opposition votes best describes the partisan nature of the country's military. On 8 April 1983, former President Robert Mugabe at a rally in Zhombe told his supporters that security forces would kill people associating with the opposition. He said;

> When dissidents are active in an area, that makes it a war zone and in a war zone, the price of supporting dissidents is death. People who feed dissidents are starting a war with the Government and they should not complain when their relatives die. When men and women give food to dissidents, our soldiers will come and eradicate them. We cannot select who we fight in this kind of war because we cannot tell who is a dissident and who is not.

Under the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP), the military was deployed to drive out in a brutal manner the white commercial farmers from their farms after they were accused of providing the opposition MDC party with financial leverage (Onslow, 2011; Reeler, 2016; Masunungure and Bratton, 2008). To add to this, the military was deployed to brutally assault opposition supporters in the June 2008 re-run elections as highlighted by Onslow (2011) and Reeler (2016). In all these instances, the involvement of the military was partisan and supportive of ZANU PF electoral ambitions.

Since the 2017 military coup d'état that saw Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa reigning to power, the military and the ruling party have become inseparable. A research participant posited that,

> Since Mnangagwa came to power, we have been seeing the military personnel, vehicles, and leaders roaming around our communities as if there is war, some are even found at the roadblocks as if there is a state of emergency in a country, and in 2018, we have heard that at least 7 unarmed civilians were killed by the army in cold blood because some of them were demanding for immediate announcement of electoral results from the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC).

Another key informant who has been a victim of political violence said that,

> The military only shows up in rural areas during elections. They threaten people that if they do not vote pa *Rusvingo/Masvingo* (the term that is used to refer to ZANU PF in rural areas), they will beat them and at times threaten to kill them. I am one of the victims of military victimization because I am a well-known opposition supporter. The military victimized me in 2008 because I had refused to attend a ZANU PF rally, they are still doing it today.

According to section 212 of the constitution, the function of the Defence Forces is to protect Zimbabwe, its people, its national security and interests, and its territorial integrity and to uphold this Constitution. In addition, the military must be impartial and non-partisan so that it can practice its constitutional mandates without fear or favour. This view is buttressed by section 211 (3) of the constitution which stipulates that the Defence Forces must respect the fundamental rights and freedoms of all persons and be non-partisan, national in character, patriotic, professional, and subordinate to the civilian authority as established by this Constitution. However, since 2000, the militarization of Zimbabwe politics in the service of the ruling party became evident at the turn of the millennium especially because of the emergence of the MDC challenge (Masunungure 2009). The research has found that the military has become more partisan and impartial in support of the ruling ZANU PF party, especially during elections where they force citizens to attend ZANU PF rallies, at the same time forcing them to ignore opposition rallies in the rural areas. The use of

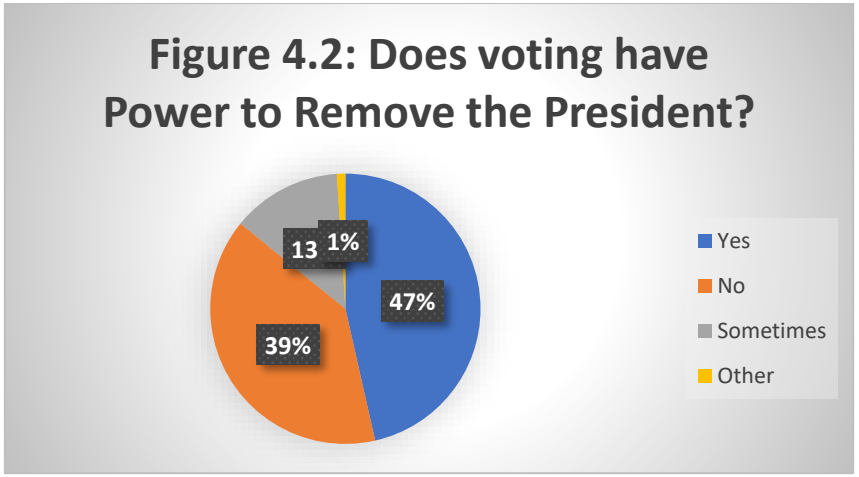
the military by political parties defeats the whole concept of free, fair, and credible elections since there will be no fair and equal electoral playing field for all parties, hence, blocking democratic transition in Zimbabwe.

The partisan role of the military is associated with the incentives and retirement packages enjoyed by military commanders, generals, and lieutenants who are usually appointed to top posts in the ZANU PF party and some even go on to contest in the general elections. For example, after the military coup, General Constantino Guveya Nyikadzino Chiwenga retired from his military post so that he could be appointed Vice President of the Republic of Zimbabwe. As such, it is very hard to differentiate between ZANU PF and the army. This research agrees with Masunungure (2013)'s view that Zimbabwean elections are unlikely to witness the menu of coercion and more likely to be characterized by the menu of manipulation whereby the military existence simply reminds citizens of the sorrowful events such as the liberation struggle, Gukurahundi, 2008 militarized election as well as the August 2018 shootings.

Contrary to some schools of thought who think the military became professional after the overthrow of Mugabe, this study reveals that the partiality and politicisation have worsened. In the aftermath of the 2018 harmonized elections, the military showed its partisanship towards the ZANU PF party when it clamped down and descended on unarmed opposition supporters in Harare on 1 August 2018 and killed at least 6 people (Human Rights Watch – HRW, 2019). Many opposition members were harassed and beaten by the military for peacefully protesting for release of election results. The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum revealed that from 1 to 31 August 2018, the military embarked on extrajudicial killings of 7 suspected opposition supporters, shot and wounded 7 people, assaulted 58 people, abducted 17 people, and arbitrarily arrested 51 people.

4.2 Decisiveness of the Vote in a Militarised Electoral Environment

This study interrogated the power of vote amid the role played by the military in the electoral processes. The results were as displayed below in ***figure 4.2.***



Respondents were asked: *Considering the role of the involvement of the military in electoral processes, do you think your vote has power to vote for the president of your choice in Zimbabwe? Explain why you think so and how?*

The military being a decisive power bloc, is feared of wielding powers capable of overturning electoral outcomes that are not in line with its interests. From the above findings, 47% of the key informants have hope in the power of the vote to replace a president whereas 39% of the respondents doubted the power of their vote to elect a president of their choice if such choice is not the military choice. One interviewee in Bulawayo stated that:

> The military influences the final decision of the electoral process. Even if people vote against the candidate of their choosing, the military still finds a way to make sure that their candidate is declared the winner and if anyone is in protest, they are dealt with just like in 2018 when those protestors had to face bullets.

The empirical evidence of military involvement and interference in Zimbabwe's electoral affairs blurs the possibility of votes becoming a determinant of the next president of the nation. The perceptions highlighted in this study were informed by historic experiences. In the 2008 elections, for example, the military intervened to stop former President Robert Mugabe from losing state power to MDC's Morgan Tsvangirai. This followed MDC's Morgan Tsvangirai defeating the then incumbent President Mugabe. The Human Rights Watch (HRW) (2008) highlighted that the military-perpetrated political violence and repression were aimed at destroying the opposition and ensuring Robert Mugabe would be returned as the president in the runoff elections on 27 June 2008.

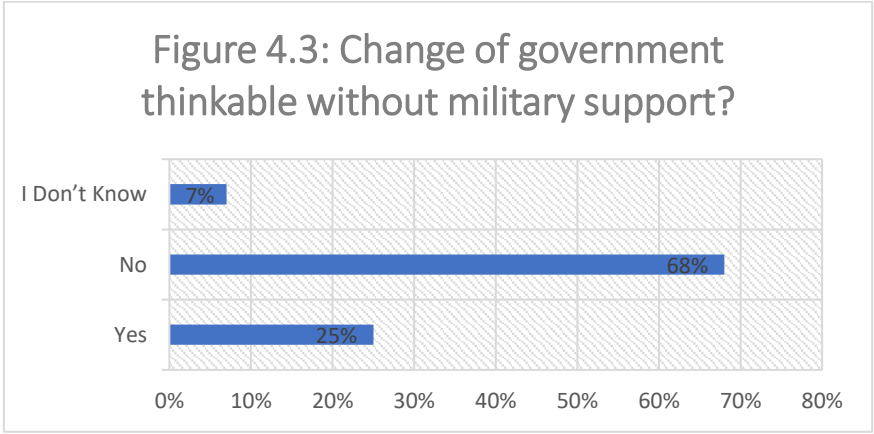
There is still hope for democratic transition as most of the respondents believe that despite the partisanship of the military and intimidation by the military, their vote is powerful and can be decisive to elect the president of their choice. As shown above, 47% of the voters confirmed that their vote has the power to vote for the president of their choice to be president of Zimbabwe. This has shown that there is an improvement in terms of citizens' understanding of their constitutional rights including the political right to vote in all elections secretly and they still have a dependable degree of faith in the electoral processes as enablers of transition. The respondents constantly argued that, if people vote massively for the president of their choice, he or she will be an ultimate winner since rigging will be very difficult. Those who said their vote is not powerful gave the reason that they have been voting since 1980 and there has been no change of leadership, so they accuse the ruling party of rigging as well as trying to reintroduce a one-party dominant state in Zimbabwe. One respondent raised an important point that:

> We do not own guns, tankers, or any other weapon to fight against electoral authoritarianism but, the only weapon that our soldiers have is their inalienable right to vote. If we vote in our numbers as we did in 2008, change will come, but, if we do not vote, the perpetrators will continue to rig, and we will not have an opportunity to punish them by voting them out.

Elections ought to give citizens an opportunity to punish or reward leaders based on whether they have managed to fulfil their promises, or failed. Caleiro (2019) posits that elections are the appropriate mechanism to punish or reward the past behaviour of the incumbent. A total of 47% of the interviewees have shown that their vote has the power to reward the president of their choice despite the military involvement in the electoral processes. The 13% who believe the vote 'sometimes' has power argued that the military can side with the highest bidder and the opposition can be that highest bidder. Some gave examples of the current Malawian president, Lazarus Chakwera who was supported by the military after he defeated Mutharika in 2020. As such, it seems like the levels of voter apathy are drowning as people are already in the electoral mode.

4.3 Possibility of a new Government without the Support of the Military in Zimbabwe

The possibility of a democratic transition via elections was also part of the interrogation done by this study. The results were displayed in ***Figure 4.3*** as shown below.



Respondents were asked: *Do you think a new government is possible or thinkable without the support of the military in Zimbabwe? Explain why you think so?*

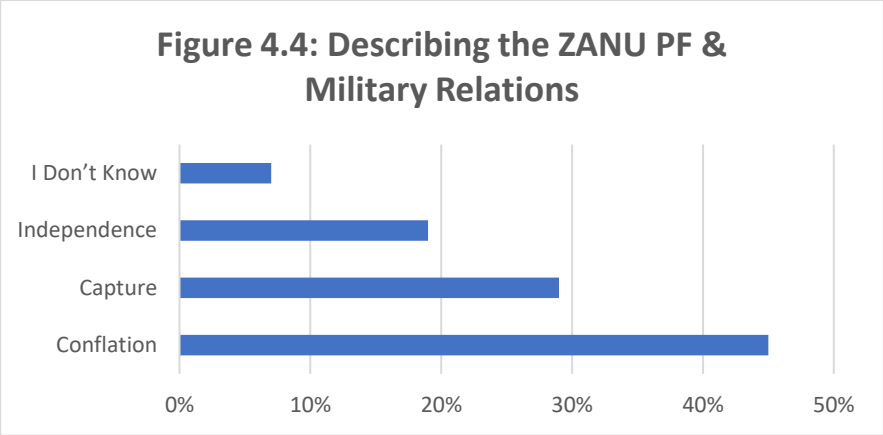
As revealed in ***Figure 4.3*** above, 68% of the respondents doubt the possibility of a new government without getting support from the military. Only 25% of the interviewees highlighted that a new government can assume power in Zimbabwe without the military playing an assistant role. These results are in line with the fact that both the first and the second Republic came after military involvement through the liberation struggle and the military coup respectively. Most respondents referred to the 2008 bloody run-off elections where people were killed and brutalized by the security forces including the military in order to vote for ZANU PF. Masunungure (2009) believes that military involvement in electoral processes defies the winds of change. Overall, the results paint a picture that a democratic transition via elections in Zimbabwe remains an elusive dream as the military is viewed as a decisive power bloc and/or kingmaker in the country. As highlighted by one respondent, it is not possible that a new government can emerge without getting help from the military because "the army eats on the same plate as the government. Look at what happened when Mugabe was removed, Mnangagwa came into power because he was supported by Chiwenga and Sibanda the top-ranking soldiers who commanded their boys to flood the streets." The military, thus, is viewed as the stumbling block in the quest for a democratic transition in Zimbabwe.

The above graph also reveals that Zimbabwe has not yet passed the tipping point that is feared by all despots: a point where the regime fears the people more than the people fear the regime. Most of the interviewees, therefore, think there is a need for some sought of military interference in order to have a new government in Zimbabwe.

4.4 Perceptions on the state of Military-Party Relations

4.4.1 Military – ZANU PF Relations

As shown below, the study interrogated citizens' perceptions on the relationship that exists between the military and ZANU PF and the results were analysed in the ***Figure 4.4*** below.



Respondents were asked: *Given your recent experience and interaction with electoral processes, how would you describe the relationship between the military and ZANU PF? Explain why and how?*

The results displayed above reveal that most respondents believe that the relationship between ZANU PF and the military is characterised by conflation (45%) and capture (29%) than independence (19%). This means there's an inseparable relationship between the two institutions which can be traced back to the long history of Zimbabwe's military politics. One respondent in Bulawayo noted that:

> ZANU PF is a military party. It is controlled by the military given that the now high-ranking officials such as the president and his deputy are former members of the military which makes ZANU PF the military and the military ZANU PF.

Thus, the military and ZANU PF are intertwined since most high-ranking military officials are proud ZANU PF supporters who are handpicked by the president who is also the Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Forces. One response stated that,

> The military and ZANU PF are married to each other, and they are inseparable as evidenced by the appointment of military retirees to key political and civilians'

> positions by Emmerson Mnangagwa. The examples are endless in the so-called new dispensation. For instance, the appointments of Perence Shiri, Constantino Chiwenga, and Sibusiso Moyo to ministerial positions show that the military is just but, a security agency for ZANU PF not for the nation.

Huntington in his book, *The Soldier and the State,* identifies this kind of relationship as subjective control whereby civilian control achieves its end by civilianizing the military, making them the mirror of the state. Huntington opts for objective civilian control which seeks to achieve its end by militarizing the military, making them the tool of the state. Objective control according to Huntington, emphasizes military autonomy, clear divisions of labour enhanced civilian control, and national security. This is a system that maximizes the power position of the leader and the ruling party. In his theory of civil-military relations, Feaver, stresses the importance of military professionalism, a concept which has been adopted by the 2013 constitution of Zimbabwe but is not being implemented practically since the military continues to be unprofessional, and partisan controlled. The unprofessional conduct of the military under the new government of President Mnangagwa was first experienced after the 2018 elections, when the military used live bullets against unarmed protesters on August 1. In a functional democracy, there is a clear distinction between the military and political parties but, illiberal democracies like Zimbabwe use the military to prolong their stay in power and at times to create a single-party state where basic freedoms such as freedom of association, to voting or to choose are denied.

The collaboration of ZANU PF and the military for the purpose of keeping the former in power points to a case of conflation between the two. In May 2021, the then acting ZANU PF national political commissar Patrick Chinamasa stated that the bond between the military and ZANU PF originated from the war of liberation in the 1970s. He noted that:

> This unbreakable continuity between the liberation struggle and Zanu PF" and "any notion which seeks to break this bond should be rejected outright.

To be precise, the military has on numerous occasions worked in cahoots with ZANU PF to maintain the party's grip on power at the expense of the will of the general masses. For instance, soon after the formation of the opposition MDC in 1999, the military was deployed to lead the torture, kidnappings as well as killings of opposition supporters during the 2000 parliamentary elections (Hulec, 2019). Prior to the 2002 elections, the military openly stated that they would not perform their duties under a president other than ZANU PF's former President Robert Mugabe. Ahead of the 2008 elections, the then Commander of the Defence Forces (CDF) Constantino Chiwenga joined hands with the then Commissioner of Prison Services and a retired army general Paradzayi Zimondi in denouncing the opposition MDC party. He stated that:

> Elections are coming and the army will not support or salute sell-outs and agents of the West before, during, and after the presidential elections ... We will not support anyone other than President Mugabe, who has sacrificed a lot for this country.

In the aftermath of ZANU PF's loss to the then leader of opposition MDC Morgan Tsvangirai in the 27 March 2008 election, the military embarked on a violent campaign in the build-up to the June 2008 presidential election runoff. The ZANU PF candidate Robert Mugabe subsequently won the election courtesy of the military intervention. Thus, there is an inseparable relationship/bond between the military and ZANU PF in which the leader of the party at any given time provides the glue for the purposes of cementing, prolonging, and boosting the regime's immunity from transition risks.

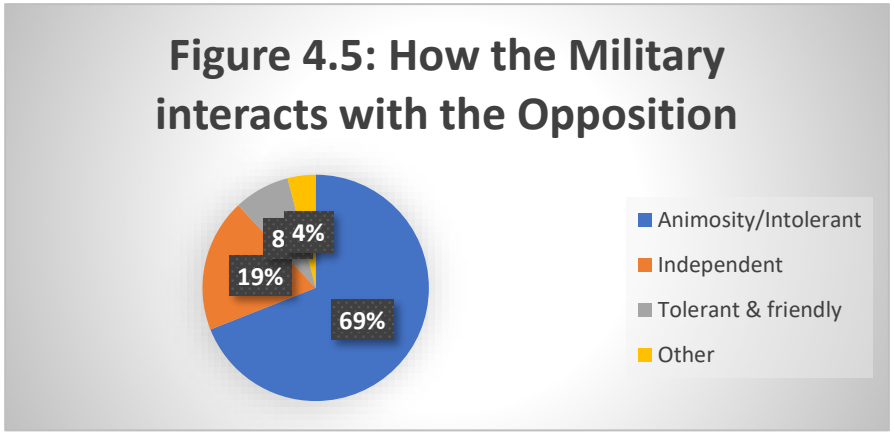
Besides the above, the military elite has spoken of their allegiance to the ZANU PF party. For example, the late Brigadier General Douglas Nyikayaramba on 23 October 2010 told the traditional chiefs, soldiers, and the police that Zimbabwe will never be ruled by people without liberation war credentials. By then, Douglas Nyikayaramba was the serving senior member of the military. He highlighted that:

> I am where I am today because of the party. Some of us actively participated in the struggle and we cannot stand up and say we do not belong to that party.

Taking up ZANU PF positions by former military generals is also an indicator that there is indeed conflation between the party and the military. For instance, the former CDF Constantino Chiwenga is now the ZANU PF party's second secretary. The conduct of the military as indicated above clearly shows that the Zimbabwean army works subserviently and in servitude to ZANU PF.

The results displayed in figure 4.4 also show that 29% of respondents believe the military captured ZANU PF. This is in line with ZDI's previous studies highlighting that Zimbabwe is a unique competitive authoritarian regime wherein the military elite captured ZANU PF and uses it to create a securocratic state which creates electoral certainty for the ruling party. The employment of former military personnel in key ZANU PF-led government positions and other key state institutions speaks volumes about the capture of ZANU PF by the army. In the aftermath of the November 2017 coup that removed Robert Mugabe from power, the CDF Constantino Chiwenga was retired and appointed the Vice President of Zimbabwe. It also happened with Major General Sibusiso Moyo who resigned and was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. This trend has also been happening during the Robert Mugabe era. In 2005, a four-member Delimitation Commission was appointed by Robert Mugabe and it was overseen by a former Judge Advocate in charge for military tribunals in the Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) and the High Court Judge, Justice George Chiweshe. The November 2017 coup d'état, the 1 August shootings, and the January 2019 military brutality on protesters indicate the continuation of ZANU PGF capture by military elites. This shows that the military has always been in control of ZANU PF and transition processes directly or indirectly and this role continued in the post-Mugabe era.

4.4.2 Military-Opposition Relations



Respondents were asked: *Given your recent interaction with electoral processes, how would you describe the relationship between the military and opposition political parties in Zimbabwe? Explain why and how?*

As revealed above in ***Figure 4.5***, the relationship between the military and opposition in Zimbabwe is characterised by intolerance and/or animosity as highlighted by 69% of the respondents whereas 8% perceived a tolerant and friendly relationship between the two players. Another 19% of the interviewees indicated that the military is independent in its interactions with the opposition. One key informant in Bulawayo reflecting on the treatment of the opposition by the military said:

> The military favours the ruling party so you can only imagine how it relates to the opposition. The Mthwakazi Republic Party here in Bulawayo has suffered a lot at the hands of the military. Many of its members have been arrested without any reasonable cause, beaten up and denied a fair trial.

The military, as already indicated elsewhere in this study, has a long history of ill-treating the opposition before, during, and after elections. Many times, the ill-treatment manifests itself in post-election violence. The delay in the announcement

of the 2018 presidential election results triggered opposition protests in the capital Harare and the army was deployed resulting in the fatal killing and wounding of 6 and 14 people respectively.

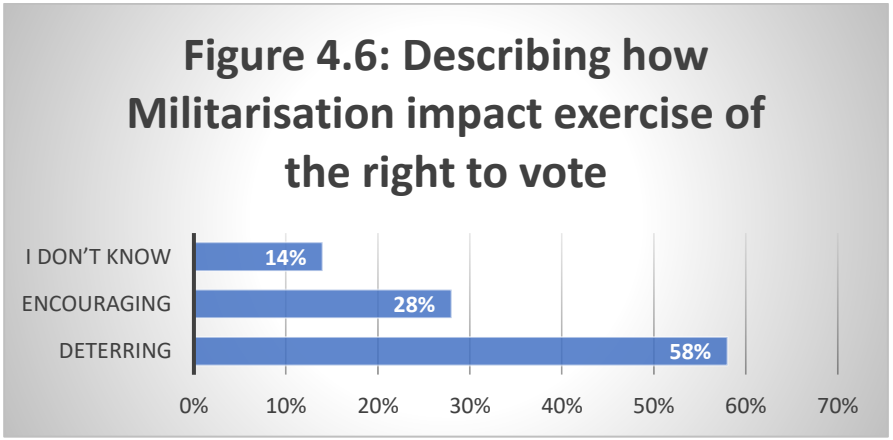
In the Mugabe era, the military has also been fingered in cases of harassment, intimidation, and torture of the opposition. In the early 1980s, the opposition especially ZAPU supporters were regarded as the Chaff that needed to be washed away. This is popularly known as the Gukurahundi Massacres where the government used the North Korean trained fifth brigade to kill people in Matabeleland and parts of Midlands provinces. The Human Rights Watch (2008) revealed that the post-2008 election violence was orchestrated by the Joint Operations Command (JOC) which is comprised of the ZANU PF elite, Zimbabwe Defense Forces (ZDF), police, prison service, and the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO) heads. This led to the internal displacement of more than 3000 people suspected to be opposition MDC supporters. The involvement of the military in civilian politics in Zimbabwe is best described in the auspices of authoritarian consolidation. Masunungure (2011) posited that the beginning of the year 2000 saw Zimbabwe's authoritarianism becoming militarised "with the overt intrusion of the security sector into the political arena." This process reached its peak before the June 2008 presidential rerun election (Ibid). However, the overthrow of former president Mugabe revealed that the 2008 experience was not the peak of the military animosity toward the opposition as it has shown the same features to opposition within ZANU PF. During the GNU, military commanders such as Chiwenga refused to salute, Tsvangirai who was the then Prime Minister regarded him as a sell-out. Fast forward to 2022, the former Army General Constantino Chiwenga threatened to crush the newly formed opposition political party, Citizen's Coalition for Change (during the ZANU PF star rally in Mbizo), with a stone like lice, the same utterances that were used by Mugabe during the Gukurahundi massacres. Therefore, the military in Zimbabwe is intolerant and unfriendly to the opposition because (as alluded to, by one interviewee), "its leaders get direct benefits such as vehicles, farms, and money from the ruling ZANU PF party, as such, they can't bite the hand that feeds them except to follow their orders".



"Retired General Chiwenga, threatens, to crush the opposition like lice", Hopewell Chin'ono

4.4.3 Impact of military-party relations on the right to freely chose leaders in the 2023 election

As the 2023 elections draw closer, the study interrogated the impact of military/party relations on the right to freely elect leaders. As revealed below,58% of the respondents perceived that the military-party relationship is a deterrent to the electorate and dissuades the exercise of citizens' right to freely elect their leaders in elections.



Respondents were asked*: How would you describe the impact of military-party relations on your right to freely chose leaders of your choice in the 2023 election? Explain why and how?*

As indicated in above ***Figure 4.6***, the study examined the military/party relations and the impact it has on the right to freely chose leaders of choice in the 2023 elections. 58% of the respondents said the relationship between the military and ZANU PF deters them from freely voting for their preferred leaders in the 2023 elections, on the other hand, 28% of the respondents noted the relationship encourages them whilst 14% said they don't know. The previous record of the military involved in

intimidation and killing of opposition supporters is the main cause of this deterrence. One interviewee in Bulawayo highlighted that election results are already decided regardless of the majority vote and there is no way of opposing the results due to fear of being imprisoned or killed.

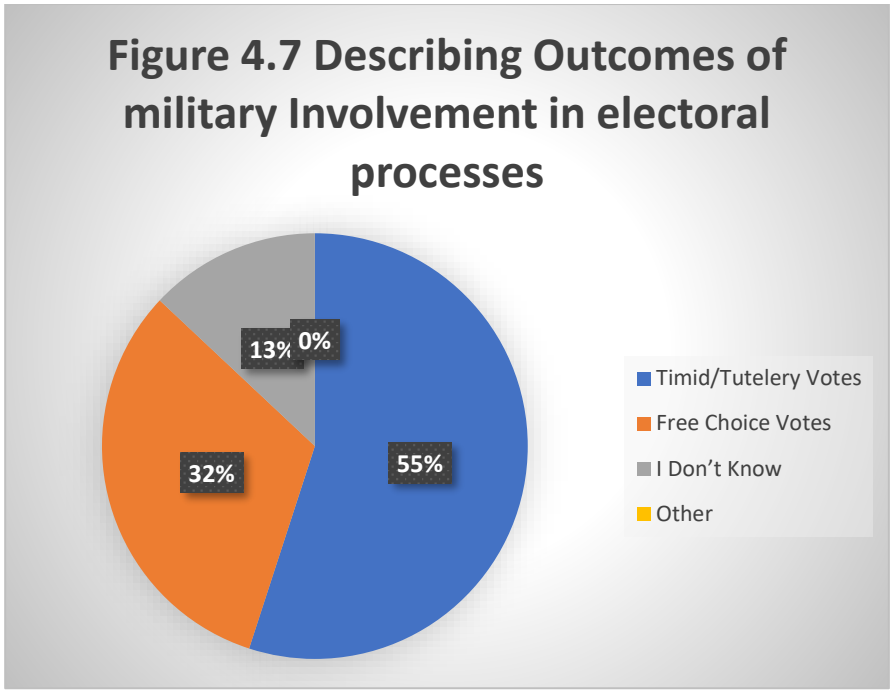
The study found out that most interviewees were feeling encouraged to go and exercise their inalienable right to vote for the leadership they want, in the upcoming 2023 elections. Citizens believe that voting is the only way to deal away with the oppressive rule and militarization of the state once and for all. One research participant said that,

> In the 2023 elections, we are going to vote in our numbers, because our vote will determine who will lead us for the next five years, we will be voting for democracy in 2023, and we will remove the securocrats through our vote as citizens.

Such perceptions help enhance the endurance of the authoritarian regime. The endurance of authoritarian regimes stems from two sources: internal and incidental characteristics. The former refers to factors that are intrinsic to the regime such as the personality of the leader, use of coercive instruments, and manipulations of electoral institutions and processes whereas the latter represents those that are not inherent mechanisms for the regime's durability. Thus, factors such as voter apathy contribute to the longevity of authoritarian regimes and buttress electoral authoritarianism. As such, the frustration of the citizens is a cause for concern because authoritarianism survives on instilling fear among citizens.

4.4.4 Perceptions on the outcomes of military involvement in party or electoral processes

The study also examined the outcomes of the involvement of the military in electoral processes and the results were displayed in **the figure 4.7** below.



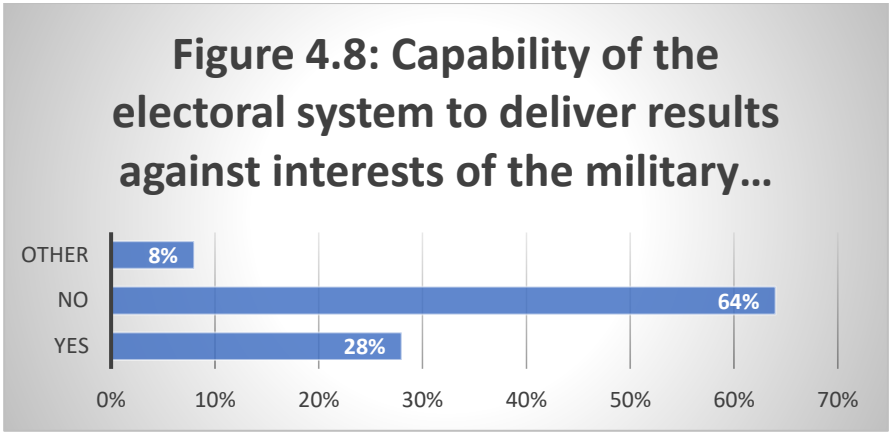
Respondents were asked: *How would you describe the outcomes of the involvement of the military in electoral processes? Why do you think so?*

As revealed above, 55% of the respondents said the military involvement in electoral processes has produced timid voters and/or tutelary votes whereas 32% of the respondents stated that free choice votes are still produced despite military involvement in electoral processes. A close relationship between the military and ZANU PF as highlighted earlier negates the credibility of the electoral processes' outcomes as ZANU PF is a player in electoral contestations. Due to the military involvement in elections, most respondents believe that people will not express their free choice on the ballot because they are scared of the aftermath if ZANU PF loses the election like what happened in 2008 which letter on resulted in the militarization of the runoff campaign. High ranking military officials are historically known for

instilling fear among citizens which either changes voter preferences or may cause citizens' withdrawal from voting or at times intentionally spoiling the ballot. A good example is when, retired Major Gen. Engelbert Rugeje bluntly said, "this country came through the bullet, not the pencil. Therefore, it will not go by your X [voting mark] of the pencil" (Masunungure 2011). The fear of such violent utterances deters popular participation in the electoral process. As such, tutelary votes or voter apathy, do not assist citizens in any way, rather, these are tools used by military states to prolong their stay in power. Although the majority thought voters are timid, 32% of respondents believe that when they cast their ballot, they will be expressing their free choice since the vote is secret. They also accused the rural voters of being ignorant because they are convinced that, there are hidden binoculars, cameras, and their serial numbers are well known, something that is impractical in an election. Thus, the main problem is in the rural areas where the authoritarian regime instils fear among villagers, subtly by their mere presence and physically by attacking opposition supporters in villages.

4.4.5 The capability of the electoral system to deliver a result that is against the military/security sector interests

The study also looked at the capability of Zimbabwe's electoral system to deliver an electoral result that is against the interests of the military/security sector. The results were as displayed in Figure 4.8 below.



Respondents were asked: *Do you think the electoral system in Zimbabwe can deliver any result that is against the interests of the military/security sector? Why do you think so?*

As indicated by ***Figure 4.8*** above, 64% of the respondents said the electoral system cannot deliver a result that is against the interests of the military/security sector. This contrasts with 28% of the respondents who noted that the electoral system can deliver a result that is against the interests of the military/security sector. One of the interviewees noted that:

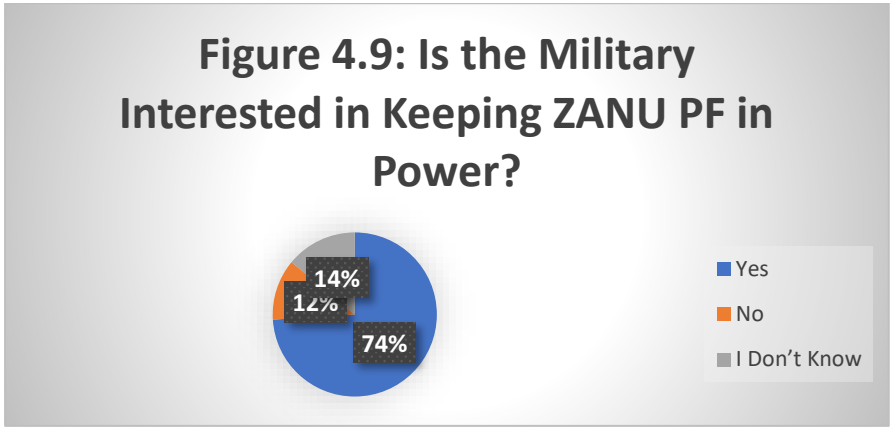
> It (electoral system) is capable to do so but is hindered by its ties to the ruling party making it impossible for them to produce anything that does not benefit the ruling party and the military.

As mentioned above, a securocratic state captures the electoral system so that it becomes an institution that rubberstamps and legitimizes its rule. Masunungure (2009) is of the view that ZANU PF has strategically militarized strategic state institutions such as ZEC by appointing senior military officers to be its members in order to make sure that the electoral process is manipulated along the way. In March 2008 elections, ZEC took more than 4 weeks to announce the presidential election result, a delay that is accused of denying the opposition the right to rule in the

country. The military has also been strategically deployed in the electoral management body, ZEC (ZDI Report 2020) and according to research published by Newsday in 2018, soldiers make up 15% of ZEC staff. Thus, ZEC is militarized and as such, it cannot deliver a result against the military interests. However, other respondents believe that, if people vote massively, there is a possibility that military interests will be overshadowed by the citizens' voice.

4.4.6 The interest of military in keeping ZANU PF in power

Whether or not the military is interested in keeping ZANU PF in power was also investigated by this study and the results are displayed in **Figure 4.9** below.



Respondents were asked: *Do you think the military is interested in keeping ZANU PF in power? Why do you think so and how?*

74% of the key informants of this study said the military is interested in keeping ZANU PF in power whilst 12% said the military is not interested in keeping the party in power. One respondent, argued that,

> … the military bosses are the immediate beneficiaries of the ZANU PF rule in Zimbabwe, as such they will not let anyone outside the party, rule the country at least soon.

Military elites may be threatened by an election and they therefore either sabotage the process and/or decide to disregard electoral outcomes if disadvantageous to them. For example, in Zimbabwe, the Joint Operation Command (JOC) is a security coordination and command committee involving the military, police, intelligence, and penal authorities. There has been a kind of fusion, in effect, between the JOC and ZANU – PF, the ruling party. As a result, it is observed that if ZANU PF lost an election deemed free and fair by the international community, there is no guarantee that the security elites would recognize such a loss and enable the transfer of power. The current ZANU PF regime was born out of a military coup that occurred in 2017 which saw Mugabe's 37-year rule being stopped. Those who led the coup have become government officials under the ZANU PF party. As such, Zimbabwe is simply being ruled by military men who led the coup in 2017. Thus, it is in their interest to keep ZANU PF in power, so that they continue enjoying the benefits that they are getting from the status quo.

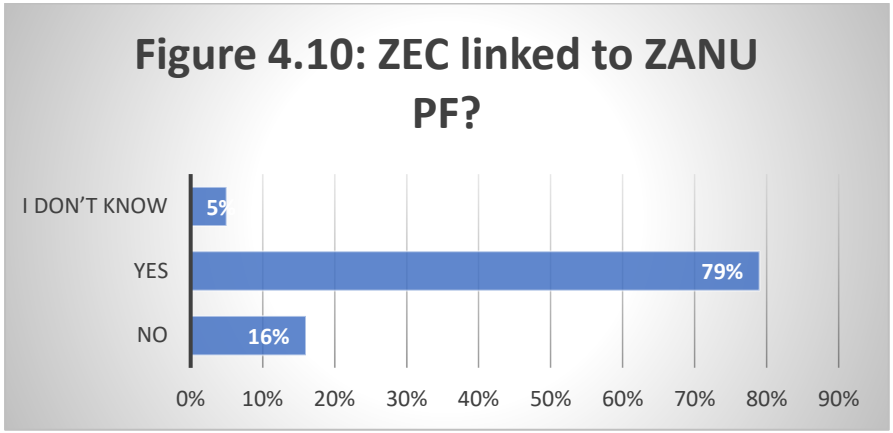
Those who think that the military is not interested in keeping ZANU PF in power, view the military in a down-top approach, whereby the junior military personnel is just suffering like the general citizens and they also want change but they cannot express that publicly in order to protect their jobs, lives and lives of loved ones. In this regard, they argued that those who think the military will support ZANU PF's refusal to hand over power are under a misguided impression that, the decision taken by the commander is the decision that binds all, that is why they perceive that the military is interested in keeping ZANU PF in power.

4.5 Relations between ZEC and Key Transition Parties

4.5.1 The Relationship between ZEC and ZANU PF

The study interrogated whether ZEC is perceived to be independent of ZANU PF. It should be noted that the legitimacy of ZEC comes from the trust citizens bestow in it as an independent election management body. The perceptions of the citizens on the independence of ZEC are therefore very important. As shown by ***Figure 4.10***

below, 79% of research participants perceived that ZEC is linked to ZANU PF compared to 16% who said ZEC and ZANU PF have no links in their lines of duty.



Respondents were asked: *Do you think ZEC and ZANU PF party are linked to each other? Why do you think so?*

In line with the general observation among citizens that ZEC is closely linked to ZANU PF, one respondent in Bulawayo highlighted that:

> ZEC is tirelessly working for the ruling party. All the rigging that has taken place in favour of ZANU during Mugabe's time and now during ED's time shows that ZEC is satisfied with the current ruling party being the only party that heads the state.

The research participants also submitted that the ZEC-ZANU PF relations resemble a child-mother relationship because the two are inseparable entities. The ZEC chairperson, Priscilla Chigumba who was appointed by President Mnangagwa to chair ZEC has publicly displayed herself as a ZANU PF supporter. For instance, she has been captured by the media wearing a ZANU PF-like regalia. The photo below shows evidence of Chigumba wearing ZANU PF- like scarf introduced by president Mnangagwa.



Accessed on https://twitter.com/davidcoltart/status/1010134944121843713

One interviewee from Manicaland argued that,

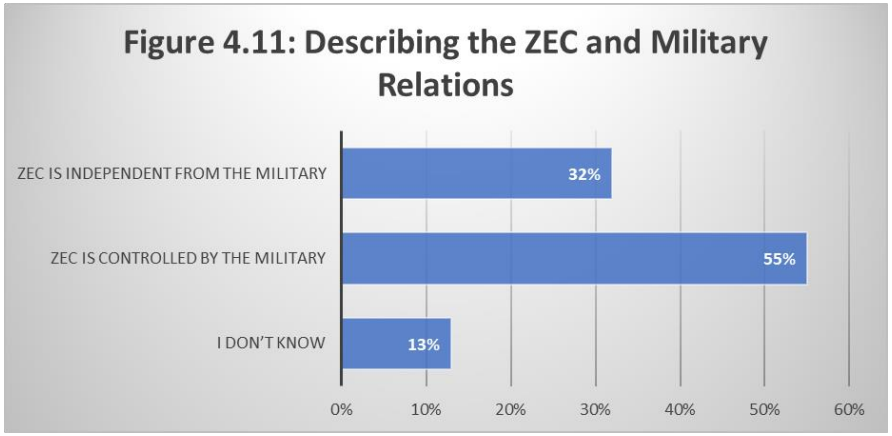
> The main problem with ZEC is that its leaders are handpicked by the President who happens to be a leader of a political party. This undermines the body's independence because, the officials will be accountable, not to the people but those who appoints them. Therefore, there is a need to disband ZEC, and employ electoral reforms which allow an independent body to elect impartial ZEC officials without fear or favour.

ZANU PF-ZEC links are not a new phenomenon, in the past, the electoral body has been accused of manipulating elections in favour of ZANU PF. For instance, in 2008, ZEC withheld presidential election results for a month and in 2018, ZANU PF was given at least 0.05% votes by ZEC, a fact that was exposed in the constitutional court after the contested election. As such, ZEC continues to breach the simple guides for Electoral Management Bodies which requires independence, impartiality, transparency, efficiency, professionalism, and service-mindedness. According to the Independent Model of electoral management, elections must be organized and

managed by EMBs that are institutionally independent and autonomous from the executive branch of government and its members must be outside the executive. However, as shown above, Zimbabwe's elections are being run by an executive Chairperson who was appointed by the ZANU PF party president, and who also wears party regalia even though her position does not allow that. The AU Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance provides that "State Parties shall establish and strengthen independent and impartial national electoral bodies responsible for the management of elections." But, even though Zimbabwe is a signatory to this pact, ZEC, and ZANU PF continue to ignore the calls for electoral reforms.

4.5.2 The relationship between ZEC and the military

The study also examined the links and relations between ZEC and the military. Lavytsky and Way (2002) note that in competitive authoritarian regimes like Zimbabwe, the ruling elites capture election management bodies for use as machinery for running elections as a ritual to keep the ruling party in power. The results, as indicated below in ***Figure 4.11***, showed that 55% of the respondents believe that ZEC is controlled by the military. On the other hand, 32% of the respondents highlighted that ZEC is independent of the military.

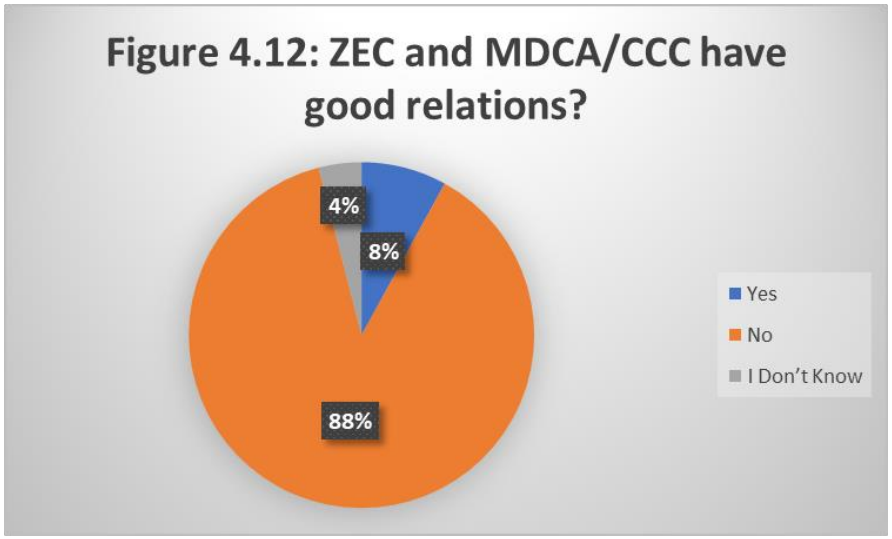


Respondents were asked: *How would you describe the relationship between ZEC and military? Why do you think so?*

Most interviewed participants think that ZEC is controlled by the military. One of the interviewees observed that ZEC is an ally of the military because, the chairperson of ZEC is appointed by the Commander in Chief of the Defence Forces whereas, ZEC has a history of employing former military officials to serve in its secretariat. For example, in 2018, Chigumba admitted before the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs that about 60 of 383 ZEC employees had a military background. Recently, Chigumba declared that ZEC will not stop hiring ex-soldiers as there is no evidence that has been brought before her that proves that they have ever acted contrary to the mandate or interest of the registered voters. However, the symbiotic relationship between the military and ZANU PF and the history of political violence caused by the military during elections to fight opponents of ZANU PF has compromised the independence of retired and serving members of the army. This compromised position of the members of the military taints the independence of ZEC once it decides to hire them. As such, this raise concerns about the impartiality, neutrality, and independence of Zimbabwe's electoral body which has long been accused of being captured by ZANU PF and the military.

4.5.3 The relationship between ZEC and Opposition

The study also examined the relationship between ZEC and the main opposition MDCA/CCC and the results were shown in ***Figure 4.12*** below. 88% of the respondents noted that there is no good relationship between ZEC and opposition parties whereas 8% of the interviewed respondents believe there is a good relationship between these two institutions.



Respondents were asked: *Do you think ZEC and MDCA/CCC party have good relations? Why do you say so?*
In Bulawayo an interviewee said:

> This is the relationship I have no doubts about. ZEC and the opposition MDC have no relations because the MDC has always been cheated by the system like in 2008 and ten years later in 2018.

Some interviewees argued that this is because, ZEC is captured by ZANU PF, and its leaders are on the ZANU PFs payroll, as such, they cannot bite the hand that feeds them. In 2018, ZEC revised and amended electoral results several times which raised eyebrows on whether the whole electoral result was tampered or not. Such anomalies were in favour of the ruling ZANU PF party. ZEC has also been quiet on the lack of a level playing field for the opposition political parties during elections. For example, the opposition is denied to host open meetings in the rural areas, there is no state media coverage for the main opposition political parties, electoral violence against the opposition continues to erupt and ZEC remains mute about such violations of free and fair election ethics. Interviewees also described ZEC as ZANU PF's rigging machine and a respondent from Masvingo raised added that ZEC's ignorance of the anomalies that are caused by ZANU PF in the pre-election, election and post-election period is a sign of rigging since an election is a process rather than an event. This respondent raised an important point that resonates with Schedler (2002)'s view highlighted in ZDI (2018) that electoral fraud, manipulation, and rigging do not start during the election day, but also happens during the pre-election, and post-election periods. In Zimbabwean history, rigging has never been done in support of the opposition but against it.

4.6 Summary

This chapter presented research findings on the perceptions of citizens on key transition and electoral processes in Zimbabwe. The findings revealed that the military of Zimbabwe lacks impartiality as it is closely linked to ZANU PF and indulged in civilian politics. The military has been hostile to the opposition whilst conflated with ZANU PF. The findings also show that ZANU PF and ZEC have a symbiotic relationship mainly caused by the appointment of either retired elements of the army into the ZEC secretariat or the appointment of ZANU PF supporters to serve as ZEC commissioners. ZEC has been perceived as a compromised body due to its close links with the military and ZANU PF. ZEC has shown animosity and impartiality when dealing with main opposition political parties. The next chapter presents the conclusion and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

This report presented findings on the role of the military in transition and electoral processes in Zimbabwe. The study found that the military is involved in the transition and electoral processes directly through deployment to suppress opposition mobilisation, deployment in ZEC, and indirectly through ZANU PF. The study also revealed that the Mnangagwa government has entrenched authoritarian resilience infrastructures in an attempt to prevent the Zambian authoritarian overthrow precedence from happening in Zimbabwe in the 2023 elections. Using the conceptual framework of militarised competitive authoritarian regimes, the report argues that the centre of gravity in Zimbabwe's competitive authoritarian regime is the military elite who captured ZANU PF for manipulating key democracy institutions mainly the judiciary, and the legislature, the media, and ZEC.

The report also posits that the capture of ZANU PF is historical and philosophical as it is heavily ringfenced by four interrelated philosophical narratives that have made military involvement in electoral and transition processes a practicable and inexorable culture in Zimbabwe. Thus, the report emphasises that the future of transition cannot be thought of or conceptualised without attention to the role of the security forces in that transition. The report was also informed by theoretical frameworks in Slater and Fenner (2011) to illustrate how the Mnangagwa government has built its authoritarian resilience infrastructure.

Despite the heavy authoritarian resilience infrastructure put in place by the Mnangagwa regime, the report posits that there are still more than one options for a democratic transition that are still possible in Zimbabwe. The role of massive voter mobilisation and turnout is emphasised as the most important facilitator of transition in Zimbabwe. The role of the military elite, the nature of the relationships between the ruling elite and the military and the opposition are emphasised under each possible transition pathway.

In addition to the strengthened authoritarian resilience infrastructure, the findings from the 26 March 2022 election showed that there is indeed more authoritarian resilience than opposition resistance. ZANU PF has shown strong evidence of performance rebound in its stronghold and in the opposition stronghold whereas the opposition declined in many provinces and improved in few. In many cases, ZANU PF improved by greater proportions than the opposition which entails a possible opposition defeat if all other conditions such as reduced number of candidates per constituency and voter turnout remain constant. The March 2022 by-election results also showed that the decline in voter turnout was more in opposition strongholds than in ZANU PF strongholds. This went hand in hand with the decline in total votes obtained by the opposition which was greater than the declines experienced by ZANU PF. The decline in voter turnout was thus observed to be disadvantaging the opposition and pointing to poor voter mobilisation and sensitisation among opposition parties.

This report also presented research findings on the perceptions of citizens on key transition and electoral processes in Zimbabwe. The findings revealed that the military of Zimbabwe lacks impartiality as it is closely linked to ZANU PF and indulged in civilian politics. The military has been hostile to the opposition whilst conflated with ZANU PF. The report also shows that ZANU PF and ZEC have a symbiotic relationship mainly caused by the appointment of either retired elements of the army into the ZEC secretariat or the appointment of ZANU PF supporters to serve as ZEC commissioners. ZEC has been perceived as a compromised body due to its close links with the military and ZANU PF. ZEC has shown animosity and impartiality when dealing with main opposition political parties.

5.2 Recommendations

The main goal of the Zimbabwe Democracy Institute is to promote a democratic transition in Zimbabwe. Hence the recommendations proffered in this report focus on enhancing democratic transition and democratic resilience in Zimbabwe. For democratic transition and democratic resilience to be achieved in Zimbabwe, ZDI avers that there is a need for:

1) Security sector transformation to enable the emergence of working synergies with various political players;
2) Programming that engenders synergies between CSOs, opposition, and the security sector.
3) Major reforms and transformation of ZEC to engender independence, integrity, and transparency. If this fails, proportional representation of key stakeholders in the election should be engendered at all levels of ZEC.
4) Increased voter mobilisation and sensitisation.
5) Increased voter registration, particularly among youth and urbanites.
6) Increase voter education and awareness.
7) Increase citizen-led vote monitoring and securitisation, particularly in remote rural polling stations. Every polling station must have enough polling agents and observers to curb polling station-based election manipulation.
8) Increased voters' roll monitoring and awareness at a polling station level.
9) Capacitate CSOs and CBOs to monitor elections at a polling station level.
10) Increase monitoring, reporting, and resolution of political violence.
11) Depoliticise government aid.
12) Increased international monitoring of elections.
13) Challenge the shrinking political space for CSOs and the Opposition.
14) Programming and advocacy on the PVO Bill.

Bibliography

Adams, W.C. (2015). *Conducting Semi-structured Interviews*. Washington DC: Jossey-Bass.

Ahmed, J.U. (2010). *Documentary Research Method*: New Dimensions. Dhaka: Spring.

Alvarez, R.M, Bailey, D and Katz, J.N. (2008). *The Effect of Voter Identification Laws on Turnout*. Available at: https://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1084598.

Baha, H. (2016). *An Introduction on Descriptive Analysis; Its advantages and disadvantages*. Lüneburg: Leuphana University of Lüneburg.

Bailey, K.D. (1994). *Methods of Social Research*. New York: The Free Press.

Bernard, H. (1998). *Research Methods in Cultural Anthropology*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Carothers, C. (2018). The Surprising Instability of Competitive Authoritarianism. (29)4: 129 – 135. Available at: https://www.journalofdemocracy.org/articles/the-surprising-instability-of-competitive-authoritarianism/.

Creswell, J.W. (1994). *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Thousand Oaks. CA: Sage.

Creswell, J.W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J.W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications, Inc.

Cox. G.W. (2007*). Authoritarian elections and leadership succession, 1975-2000*. Available at: https://www.haas.berkeley.edu/wp-content/uploads/cox_20071119.pdf.

Diamond, L. (2002). *Elections without Democracy: Thinking about Hybrid Regimes*. Journal of Democracy, (13)2. Available at: http://web.pdx.edu/~mev/pdf/Diamond_470570.pdf.

Dixon, P. (2002). *Political Skills or Lying and Manipulation? The Choreography of the Northern Ireland Peace Process*, (50)4: 725-741. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9248.00004.

EISA. (2007). *CONSOLIDATING DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA: ZIMBABWE*. Johannesburg: EISA.

Fox, N.J., Mathers, N. and Hunn, A. (2000). *Using Interviews in a Research Project*. Sheffield: Radcliffe Medical Press/Trent Focus.

Guest, G., Macqueen, K.M. and Namey, E.E. (2012). *Applied Thematic Analysis*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Hammersley, M. and Atkinson, P. (1995). *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*. London: Routledge.

Howard, M.M and Roessler, P.G. (2006). *Liberalizing Electoral Outcomes in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes*, American Journal of Political Science, 50(2): 365-381. ODOI: https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5907.2006.00189.x.

Human Rights Watch (HRW). (2008). *State-Sponsored Violence since Zimbabwe's March 29 Elections*. Available at: https://www.hrw.org/report/2008/06/09/bullets-each-you/state-sponsored-violence-zimbabwes-march-29-elections.

Human Rights Watch (HRW). (2019). *Zimbabwe: Events of 2018.* Available at: https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/zimbabwe

Hulec, O. (2019). *The development of an authoritarian regime in Zimbabwe from 1980 to the present day*. Available at: https://www.sav.sk/journals/uploads/0521122404_HULEC_final.pdf.

Levystky, S. and Way, L.A. (2002). *The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism*. Journal of Democracy. 13(2): 51-65. Available at: https://scholar.harvard.edu/levitsky/files/SL_elections.pdf.

Levystky, S. and Way, L.A. (2010). *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes after the Cold War*. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511781353.

McAlister, L.N. (1965). *Changing Concepts of the Role of the Military in Latin America*. (360)1: 85 – 98. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/000271626536000108.

Makumbe, J. and Compagnon, D. (2000). *Behind the Smokescreen: The Politics of Zimbabwe's 1995 General Elections*. Harare. University of Zimbabwe.

Maringira, G. (2017*). Politicization and resistance in the Zimbabwean national army*. 116(462): 18–38. Available at: https://academic.oup.com/afraf/article/116/462/18/2605671.

Maverick Citizen Report. (2021). *Zimbabwe: Explosive cartel report uncovers the anatomy of a captured state*. Available at: https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2021-02-09-zimbabwe-explosive-cartel-report-uncovers-the-anatomy-of-a-captured-state/.

Masunungure, E V. (2011). *'Zimbabwe's Militarized, Electoral Authoritarianism'*. Journal of International Affairs 65(1).

Masunungure, E. (2013). *THE 'MENU OF MANIPULATION' AND THE 2013 ZIMBABWE ELECTIONS: Towards explaining the 'technical knockout*. Journal of African Elections, 13(2).

Masunungure, E. and Bratton, M. (2008). *Zimbabwe's Dying Dictatorship. The Country Prepares for Life After Mugabe*. In Foreign Affairs.

Morency-Laflamme, J. and McLauchlin, T. (2020). *The Efficacy of Ethnic Stacking: Military Defection during Uprisings in Africa*. 5(4): 695–702. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1093/jogss/ogz015.

Morse, Y.L. (2012). *The Era of Electoral Authoritarianism*, 64(1): 161-198. Available at: https://www.jstor.org/stable/41428375.

Onslow, S. (2011). *Zimbabwe and Political Transition*. [Online]. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/277071927_Zimbabwe_and_political_transition.

Przeworski, A. (1986). *Some Problems in the Study of the Transition to Democracy*. In G. O'Donnell, P. C. Schmitter, and L. Whitehead (Eds.), *Transitions From Authoritarian Rule: Comparative Perspectives* (Vol. 3). The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Ruhanya. P. (2017). *Post-Mugabe Zimbabwe will be someone else's fiefdom*. Available at: https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2017/11/21/post-mugabe-zimbabwe-will-be-someone-elses-fiefdom.

Schedler, A. (2006). *Patterns of Repression and Manipulation: Towards a Topography of Authoritarian Elections, 1980 – 2002*. [Online]. Available at: http://paperroom.ipsa.org/papers/paper_5180.pdf.

Schedler, A. (2009). *The New Institutionalism in the Study of Authoritarian Regimes*. *Totalitarismus und Demokratie*, 6(2): 323 – 340. [Online]. Available at: http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-311637.

Seeberg, M.B. (2014). *State capacity and the paradox of authoritarian elections*. (21)7: 1265 – 1285. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2014.960210.

Sentry Report. (2021). *Report: Zimbabwe's Tagwirei and His Companies Received Millions in Possibly Unlawful Payments Under Command Agriculture*. Available at: https://thesentry.org/2022/03/23/6936/report-zimbabwes-tagwirei-companies-received-millions-possibly-unlawful-payments-command-agriculture/.

Sharma, K. (2018). *Basics of Research Methodology for Management and Social Sciences*. Available at: https://www.amazon.com/Basics-Research-Methodology-Management-Sciences/dp/6139899990.

Slater, D and Fenner, S. (2011). *STATE POWER AND STAYING POWER: INFRASTRUCTURAL MECHANISMS AND AUTHORITARIAN DURABILITY*. Journal of International Affairs, 65(1): 15 – 29. Available at: http://www.jstor.org/stable/24388179.

Tashakkori, A and Creswell, J.W. (2007). *Exploring the Nature of Research Questions in Mixed Methods Research*, 1(3): 207 – 211. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689807302814.

Taherdoost, H. (2016). *Sampling Methods in Research Methodology: How to Choose a Sampling Technique for Research*. Vancouver: University Canada West.

Walliman, N. (2011). *Research Methods: The Basics*. Oxford: Routledge.

ZDI (Zimbabwe Democracy Institute). (2017). *Zimbabwe Transition in a Muddy Terrain: Political Economy under Military Capture*. Available at: https://kubatana.net/2017/12/14/zimbabwe-transition-muddy-terrain-political-economy-military-capture/.

ZDI (Zimbabwe Democracy Institute). (2020). *Transition Politics in the Post-Mugabe Era: Public Perceptions on the role of the military in transition politics post Mugabe and attendant effects*. Available at: https://kubatana.net/2020/09/30/zdi-research-report-transition-politics-in-the-post-mugabe-era/.

Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum. (2005). *Political Violence Report: December 2005*. Available at: http://hrforumzim.com/press/agenda_statement_2006.htm#sdfootnote1anc.

ABOUT ZIMBABWE DEMOCRACY INSTITUTE

The Zimbabwe Democracy Institute (ZDI) is a politicallyindependent and not for profit public policy think-tank based in Zimbabwe. Founded and registered as a trustin terms of the laws of Zimbabwe in November 2012 (Deed of Trust Registration Number MA1223/2012), ZDI serves to generate and disseminate innovative ideas, cutting-edge research and policy analysis to advance democracy, development, good governance and human rights in Zimbabwe. The Institute also aims to promote open, informed and evidence-based debate by bringing together pro-democracy experts to platforms for debate. The idea is to offer new ideas to policy makers with a view to entrenching democratic practices in Zimbabwe. The ZDI researches, publishes and conducts national policy debates and conferences in democratization, good governance, public finance and economic governance, public policy, human rights and transitional justice, media and democracy relations,electoral politics and international affairs.

ZDI was born out of a realization that there is an absence of credible policy and research analysis by Zimbabwean organizations. A careful assessment of most publications on Zimbabwe's political economy shows that a majority of them are generated from outside Zimbabwe. ZDI's team of trustees includes eminent Zimbabwean scholars and experts.

The vision, mission and Objectives of the organization are as listed below:

Vision

A democratic Zimbabwe in which citizens fully participate in all matters of governance, realize and assert social economic and political rights.

Mission

To promote cutting-edge research and public policyanalysis institute for sustainable democracy

To be the leading cutting-edge research and public poli-cy analysis institute for sustainable democracy

Organisational Objectives

1. To strengthen policy formulation and implementation through public policy debate in Zimbabwe.
2. To inculcate a culture of critical debate on public affairs among Zimbabwean citizens.
3. To ensure that Zimbabwe's development trajectory is shaped by locally generated information andknowledge.
4. To stimulate citizen participation by strengthening the capacity of state and non-state actors in under-taking research and analysis of public policy.
5. To ensure the direct participation of women in public policy formulation and implementation.
6. To ensure direct participation of youths in public policy formulation and implementation.