'Unshared vision': Decentralisation in Zimbabwe, a special reference to the Harare City Council

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DECLARATION

I *<u>Steven Masvaure</u>* declare that:

i) The research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated is my original research.

ii) This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

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Signed: …………………................. Date …………………………………

Dedicated

To

My parents

Strong and gentle souls, who taught me to trust in God, believe

in hard work and that so much could be done with little.

Spencer

The bar has been set.

Acknowledgements

God never ends anything on a negative; God always ends on a positive.

Thank you Lord.

I am very thankful to the various people the Lord has placed in my life to make this journey successful. To Professor M P Sithole, a PhD was never part of my plan but you stood with me as my pillar of support, inducted me into who I am and acted as my source of inspiration. Thank you for your wisdom, patience and dedication towards my success. You routinely go beyond your duties to fire fight my worries, concerns, and anxieties and have worked to instill great confidence in both myself and my work. I am forever indebted to you. To Dr H Hargovan, thank you for your enthusiasm, guidance, and unrelenting support throughout this process. Thank you for your relentless insistence on paying attention to detail and quality. It has been my privilege to work closely with you, I have enjoyed the opportunity to watch and learn from your knowledge and experience. Your frequent insights and patience with me are always appreciated. I am very proud of what we have achieved together, thank you both.

I am forever grateful to my family, especially my parents, for their sacrifices, encouragement, and for never doubting my abilities. I could not wish for more, may the Lord bless you. To my brothers, my sisters, and friends - thank you for your support and encouragement. To Spencer, thank you for the early morning session of demands.

ABSTRACT

Decentralisation in most African countries is fraught with problems and failures. A few countries in Africa experienced some successes in their pursuit of decentralisation. Several studies on democratic decentralisation have been conducted in the context of one political party controlling both the central state and the decentralised institution, where it is assumed that there is a concordance of vision between the central state and the local decentralised institution. However, a new context of decentralisation is emerging in the African context with opposition political parties capturing the decentralised institutions; thereby creating a disjuncture in vision between the central state and the decentralised institutions. This thesis examined the impact of shared or unshared vision between the local and central government in the event that there are different political parties controlling the two spheres of government. It also examined how service delivery and public participation plays out in the context of 'unshared vision'. The location of the study was primarily the City of Harare, the capital of Zimbabwe, where an opposition political party is in power. The main theoretical framework in this study is critical realism. Primary and secondary data was collected from various sources. Primary data was collected through structured and unstructured interviews with various stakeholders in the City of Harare. The key findings of this thesis are that there is 'unshared vision' between the decentralised institutions and the central state. This disjuncture in vision is manifested in various contestations between these two spheres of the state; resulting in political battles being prioritised at the expense of services delivery for the residents of the City of Harare. Consequently, the voices of the citizens have been lost. The disjuncture has also resulted in the prime reason for decentralisation, namely; bringing government closer to the people, not being realised. This study contributes to the broad academic debate on decentralisation in situations where there is unshared vision between the local and central state.

Keywords: decentralisation, public participation, service delivery, unshared vision, local government, democracy, state

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ABBREVIATIONS

ANC – African National Congress

BSAC – British Southern African Company

CHRA – Combined Harare Residents' Association

DA – Democratic Alliance

DDC – District Development Council

ESAP – Economic Structural Adjustment Policy

GNU – Government of National Unity

HRT – Harare Residents Trust

ICT – Information Communication Technology

IMF – International Monetary Fund

MDC – Movement for Democratic Change

MLGPWNH – Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing

SADC – Southern African Development Community

SAPs – Structural Adjustment Programmes

USAID –United States Agency for International Development

USSR – Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

VIDCO – Village Development Committee

WADCO – Ward Development Committee

WB – World Bank

WHO – World Health Organisation

WLAN – Wireless Local Area Network

ZANU PF – Zimbabwe African National Union (Patriotic Front)

ZEC – Zimbabwe Electoral Commission

CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION

"Local councils enjoy a delegated authority, and thus should follow government and by extension, ZANU PF policies". Minister of Local Government and Public Works - Zimbabwe. (The Daily Mirror, 30 August 2004: 4)

1.1   Introduction

Some years back, before I even thought of pursuing post graduate studies, I was a resident in the City of Harare[1] and was fascinated with how the city operates. My fascination increased with the taking over of the council (political arm) of the city by a newly formed political party which was the official opposition political party nationally. This created a situation whereby the national ruling party was now the opposition political party in the City of Harare. In the process of being fascinated by this situation; I began to ask myself some questions I could not answer. Questions such as: How does the opposition-controlled city operate within an environment where it is being supervised by a different political party? As a resident, I was also experiencing the deficiencies in service delivery through inadequate water provision, inadequate sewerage and sewage and waste removal, dilapidated roads and lack of housing. My biggest issue was the question of who was actually responsible for this failure to deliver these basic services – was it the national ruling party or the official national opposition political party controlling the city?

In some cases, the most agonising situation was that, as a resident, I was paying the levies and charges to the City of Harare on a monthly basis and in turn, I was not receiving anything in terms of service delivery. I ended up asking myself: is there any reason why we should have an institution such as the City of Harare when it is failing to perform its basic functions? My argument during that time was that as a resident I was in a contract with the City of Harare; whereby the city was supposed to provide certain services which I must pay for those services in return. Within this contract, the city authorities had various options of recouping their levies and charges in the event that I failed to pay, but what were my options if I paid for something the city failed to deliver? My only options were to protest and vote for a different ward councillor in the next election. A more fundamental question that was raised

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[1] Also referred in this thesis as the City or Harare City Council.

by those experiences is: does democracy fail to execute citizen's rights and entitlements in the context of an 'unshared vision' of political players? It is thoughts such as these which influenced this study.

The focus of this thesis is on decentralisation which is defined as the transfer of authority and responsibility or public functions from the central government[2] to local government[3] or private sector (Ribot and Larson 2013). This study not only focuses on the transfer of power but goes beyond that and examines how the central state relates to the decentralised institutions. This relationship is called the centre-local relationship. It also examines how this relationship plays out in the event that the local state is controlled by a different political party from the one controlling the central state. The assumption, in this case, is that there is a difference in vision between two different political parties controlling the two tiers of the state. Differences in vision lead to a situation of 'unshared vision' which is defined in this study as the difference between political parties mainly in ideology, policy and practice. Political parties by nature want to implement and influence the state through implementing programmes which advance their political and developmental agenda. What is lacking in decentralisation literature, especially in the African context, is an analysis of how this situation of unshared vision influences the outputs and outcomes of decentralisation. How does this situation influence the centre-local relationship and whose vision does the local state implement? Is it that of the national ruling party or the local ruling political party? Such situations have happened in Kenya, Botswana, and South Africa etc. but not at the scale as in Zimbabwe where the major opposition political party won the control of the majority of urban local authorities but failed to win control of the central state. The situation in Zimbabwe is unique in the sense that the political environment is defined by the ruling party. Zimbabwe has been under the control of one political party since independence and the nature of political contestation between the ruling party and opposition political parties lacks civility and is marked by polarity and violence. In such situations, the focus of most of the studies is in the central state politics. There is a dearth of literature related to the issue of decentralisation in situations where the opposition political parties have a foothold on power

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[2] Also known as central state in this thesis.

[3] Also known as local state in this thesis.

at the local state level and are a threat to the ruling party nationally. In some 'mature'[4] democratic states the issue of 'unshared vision' might not be as important as in the context of the City of Harare in Zimbabwe. The next section provides a brief description of the context of decentralisation in Zimbabwe.

1.2   Context of the City of Harare

1.2.1   Colonial context

The focus of this study is the City of Harare which is the capital city of Zimbabwe. The City of Harare, like most African cities, has a history of colonisation. Urban and rural areas in Zimbabwe during the colonial era were characterised by racial segregation (Feremenga 1990: 344). In the case of the City of Harare, since colonial settlers set up urban areas in 1899, there was a racially based form of decentralisation with voting in local government elections reserved for white British males with the black majority not having a voice nationally or locally (Kamete 2010: 193). During the course of the colonial period, local government voting was later changed and was based on property ownership which immediately disenfranchised blacks who were not allowed to own properties in the cities. Cities during the colonial period were regarded as white areas; blacks were not allowed to own properties and were regarded as temporary residents of cities (Wekwete 1990: 40).

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[4] The issue of whether there is a mature democracy is contestable. When I am saying mature I mean democratic states which at the very least are marked by defined political civility and their state institutions are clearly or markedly separated from political parties

Figure 1: Map of colonial Salisbury/Harare
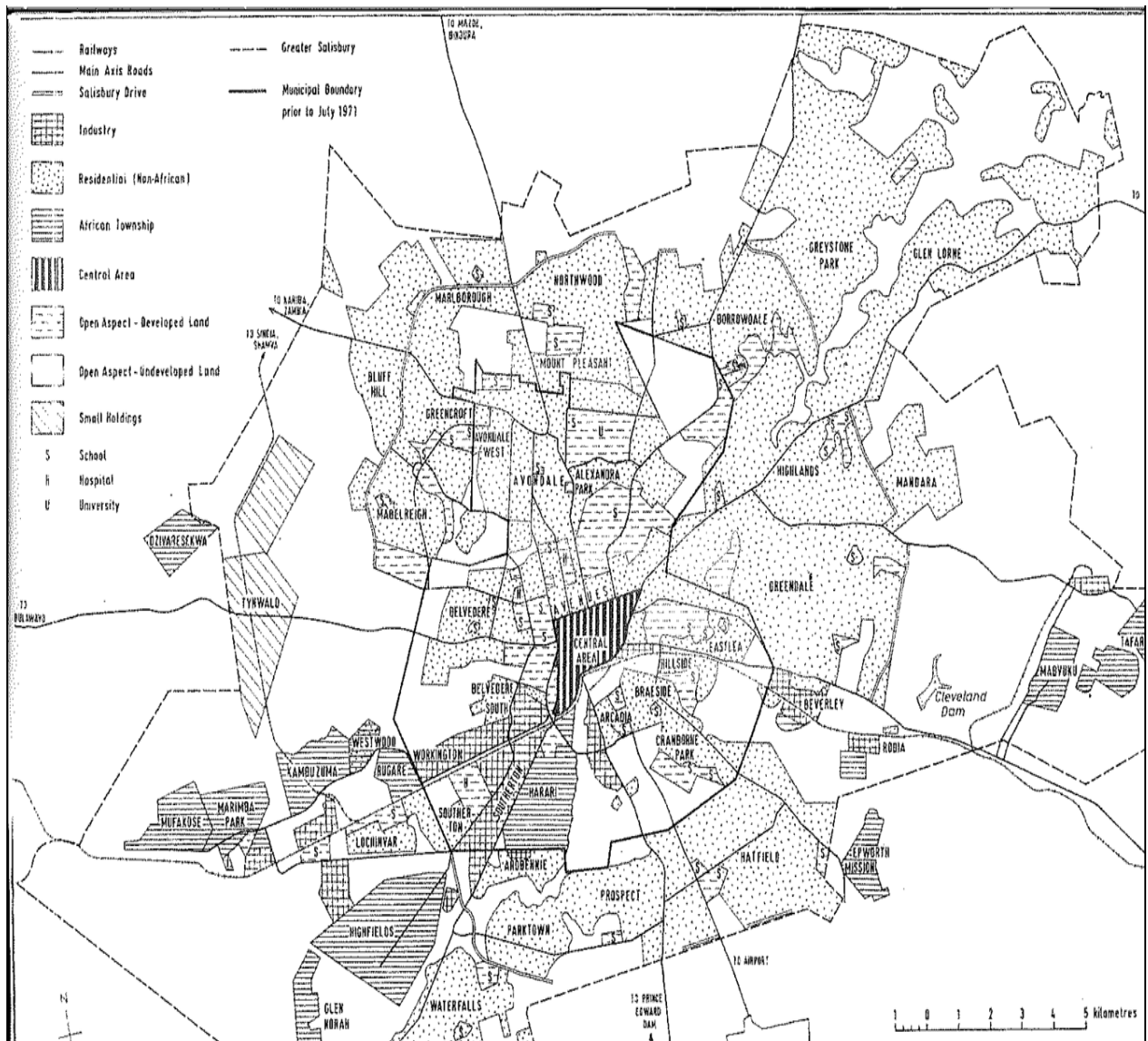
Source: Kay and Smout (1977)

Most townships in urban areas were governed by boards which were composed of coloureds, whites and Asians who were elected as representatives of the blacks (Makumbe 1998). As a result, local government institutions in African areas in colonial Zimbabwe did not enjoy autonomy to pursue local interests but the interests of other racial groups (Chatiza 2010: 4). In the rural areas, black communal farming areas or reserves were separated from white farming areas. Resources were mainly channelled towards the development of white areas creating a disparity between the councils. What the colonial era did to cities and rural areas in Zimbabwe was to divide these areas according to racial lines (Wekwete 1990: 40). At independence, the new government inherited this inequality and it was converted from a

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racial division to economic division with the majority of the affluent citizens now concentrated in formerly white areas and the poor in former black areas.

1.2.2   Post-colonial local government context

Soon after independence in 1980, the central government led by Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) abolished the two racial tiers of local government / decentralisation (Matumbike 2009). Local government legislation which was enacted after independence separated the urban councils from rural councils. Local governance voting was changed to remove racial segregation but voting in cities was still qualified by ownership of properties in the urban areas. This disenfranchised the majority of black urban residents who did not own properties.

By the late 1980s, universal suffrage voting was implemented in the local government elections (Kamete 2010: 200). The introduction of universal suffrage in local government elections in Zimbabwe removed the provision that voters were supposed to own a property in the council where they want to vote. It seems that immediately after independence ZANU PF was more preoccupied with consolidating central state political power hence the slow pace of reform in local government. This is clear from the fact that ZANU PF government never had a clearly pronounced policy[5] on local government / decentralisation. Despite the lack of policy on local government, the ZANU PF government depended on acts of parliament which gave rise to local government in Zimbabwe. Policy pronouncements on local government were only made in the economic policies of the country. Most of the local government reforms in Zimbabwe are as a result of these broad national economic policy pronouncements. One such policy was the Economic Structural Adjustment Policy (ESAP) adopted by the Zimbabwean government in the early 1990s. It is important to note that independent Zimbabwe inherited decentralised local authorities from the colonial masters; what ZANU PF government did was to continuously tinker with the colonial model and acts of parliament on decentralisation so that they were are tailored towards the economic and political trajectory of the country.

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[5] Policy in this study is defined as an outline of what a government or government ministry hopes to achieve and the methods and principles it will use to achieve them. It is different from laws/acts which set standards, principles and procedures to be followed. Laws and acts are enforceable and breaking them will result in prosecution in a court of law.

1.2.2.1 Influence of economic policy on local government

The influence of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) in Zimbabwe in the early 1990s resulted in the central government being forced to relinquish some of the responsibilities, powers and influence in local governance in return for funding (Chatiza 2010: 6). Before the introduction of SAPs in Zimbabwe, local government was highly centralised to the extent that all the funding was distributed by the national government and the national government was responsible for administering funds collected by the councils (Wunsch and Olowu 1990: 51). Multilateral aid organisations preferred to fund certain programmes under local government, thereby by-passing the central government bureaucracy (Kamete 2007). This created a devolved structure of local governance, but it was done in a way that left open a window of intervention for the central government with powers to override decisions taken by the local government through the minister or the president (Conyers 2003, Wunsch 2001: 277). There is still a provision whereby all the local governments' development plans and budgets have to be approved by the central state. Legislation which is used for local government in Zimbabwe such as the Urban Councils Act of 2008, Rural District Councils Act of 2002 and the Regional, Town and Country planning Act of 1998 have a provision whereby powers are bestowed on the minister responsible for local government to fire elected councillors and mayors despite the fact that the minister is a political appointee. A detailed discussion of these acts is to be found in Chapters 4 and 5.

The provisions discussed above cause local government to be subservient to the central state with local elected representatives afraid of going against the minister responsible for local government. This shows the unwillingness of the central state to transfer real power and autonomy to decentralised institutions. It has to be stated that decentralising in Zimbabwe was introduced at a time when the ruling party ZANU PF enjoyed a period of political dominance and there was a belief that the status quo or dominance was going to remain the same for the long term future (Kamete 2010: 196). The approach was to partially pass on administrative duties to the local government with the central government retaining overall supervisory control. Local government councils in Zimbabwe are not regarded as autonomous entities but as a form of sub-national government which is highly controlled by the central government. As will be discussed and supported by evidence later, local government in Zimbabwe is regarded as an instrument of the central state, not a local state / sphere of government with some autonomy in decision making. In such situations, the

question which arises is this: what will happen in the event of the local state being controlled by a different political party which has a different vision?

1.2.3   Development of 'unshared vision'

During the first nineteen years in independent Zimbabwe (1980 - 1999), ZANU PF never experienced any significant opposition politically. During the first decade, the party tried to push the country towards a one-party state (Compagnon 2011). During this period, the ruling party ZANU PF and the state became indistinguishable (Bond and Manyanya 2003: 25). During the second decade, because of various pressures, the country was forced to adopt neo-liberal[6] democracy. The main push was the adoption of SAPs which are economic policies which thrive in the neo-liberal political environment. The adoption of the SAPs resulted in drastic changes to the government's social protection system which involved state subsidies towards basic goods and services (Raftopoulos and Mlambo 2009). The SAPs dictated that the government remove market distortions caused by price controls and subsidies and that the government reduce its expenditure and focus on creating an environment which enables the private business to thrive. These changes resulted in opening up of the Zimbabwean economy to the global economy. This resulted in an increased cost of living and unemployment as companies restructured so that they could compete globally (Mlambo 1997: 4). In turn, this generated various protests mainly in urban areas and the formation of a strong opposition political party, namely, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in 1999 (Compagnon 2011). This changed the political landscape as the opposition political party, formed to lobby for a 'NO' vote during the constitutional reform process, won. It also 58 seats out of a 120 member parliament seven months after being formed. The opposition political party created an Achilles heel for ZANU PF in urban local authorities. In response to the strong opposition, according to Bond and Manyanya (2003: 72), ZANU PF firmed up on centralising all possible power and putting political loyalty above everything else even in state institutions.

The 'Achilles heel' of ZANU PF in local government surfaced when the whole spectrum of urban local government changed in 2002. The opposition MDC managed to win the majority of major urban councils (Harare, Gweru, Bulawayo, Masvingo, Chegutu and Mutare) in Zimbabwe. Scholars such as Kamete (2010: 194) suggest that this was as a result of

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[6] Neo-liberalism is defined by McKinley (2006: 414) as being a practical global offensive of internationalised corporate and finance capital.

mismanagement and non-service delivery by ZANU PF. This thesis argues that the main reason why ZANU PF lost these urban local authorities had more to do with its rigid focus on national politics than poor service delivery at the local level. The capture of these cities by the opposition set the councillors on a collision course with the minister responsible for local government. It is important to note that the ruling party ZANU PF did not lose the national elections. This created a situation whereby the minister responsible for administering local government legislation was from the opposition party in the local government realm, but from the ruling party in the national government realm. An 'unshared vision' was created. The ruling party in local government was now seeking for approval and direction from its opposition political party. It is important to note that within this intricate relationship, the ZANU PF and MDC relationship was acrimonious and marked by violence[7]. There is a well-documented history of acts of political violence between these political parties. Such a scenario motivated this research. This research will try to unravel the impact of this 'unshared vision' on local government service delivery and community/public participation.

The impact of 'unshared vision' on administrative aspects of government requires careful analysis based on questions such as: a) What are the procedural aspects of decision-making and development as outlined in policy? b) What are the practical dynamics of decision-making in a situation of 'unshared vision'? Before these are closely interrogated it is important to spell out the thesis of 'unshared vision' in the first instance. This research portrays 'unshared vision' as the difference between political parties mainly in ideology, policy and practice.

1.3   Objectives

This study seeks to understand the decentralised nature of local government in Zimbabwe, in its political, socio-economic, cultural and state institutional framework context. It seeks to examine the impact of shared or unshared vision between the local and central government in the event that there are different political parties controlling the two spheres of government. It also seeks to examine the guarantees for service delivery and public participation (used synonymously with community participation) in decentralisation. This work examines the mechanisms which influence the outputs and outcomes of decentralisation in the City of

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[7] This view is based on my personal experiences in the City of Harare in Zimbabwe. See also Kamete (2010), Bond and Manyanya (2003), Compagnon (2011), LeBas (2006) and Lindgren (2003).

Harare. This study does not take the processes of decentralisation at face value but believes that there are other underlying factors which influence these processes. This research specifically focuses on municipalities or councils as a unit of local government[8].

The complexity of this research is rooted in the fact that there is no substantive research which actually shows the level of service delivery before the advent of the current state of 'unshared vision' in the City of Harare. This research seeks to map out the different levels and extent of 'unshared vision' in the politics of decentralisation of governance and service delivery. 'Unshared vision' refers to pragmatic party political stalemates as well as unshared vision in terms of the pursuit of the neo-liberal and socio-political agenda of development. The main hint to the latter is the reference to the previous impact of SAPSs as argued earlier. The research questions which have guided this research seek to solve systemic and practical puzzles related to citizen accountability.

1.3.1 Research questions

1. Does the Zimbabwean framework/model of decentralisation yield sufficient power to local authorities to enable them to deliver services in the event of unshared vision amongst governance stakeholders?

2. What are the forms and outcomes of community participation in local government in Harare?

3. How is accountability of local government to the citizenry and to the state feasible in the context of unshared vision?

4. How can the local government be afforded sufficient autonomy in decision-making and practise?

5. What is the impact of the democratic institutional framework on decentralisation in Zimbabwe?

6. What strategies should be implemented to guarantee basic service delivery to the community in spite of disjuncture in vision?

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[8] This unit of local government can also be referred to as decentralised institution, local state and local authority.

1.4 Structure of the thesis

This thesis is structured into nine chapters. The first chapter is the introduction, which presents a brief context of the study. It also presents the objectives and research questions of this study. Chapter 2 presents a broad literature review of decentralisation. The literature review is mainly focused on the African context. It presents the state of decentralisation in Africa. The literature review is focused on the historical context, the nature of the state system and the how decentralisation is implemented in various state institutions in the African context. The final sections of Chapter 2 present the conceptual framework. The conceptual framework is centred on the state system and how decentralisation is implemented within the state system and institutions.

Chapter 3 presents a description and the discussion of the methods used in this research. This chapter presents critical realism as the research philosophical approach adopted in this study. The chapter provides the research design, data collection and analytical methods used. Chapter 4 presents an analytical historical development of decentralisation in Zimbabwe. It presents the development of decentralisation from colonial era to the present. In the process of presenting the historical development of decentralisation, several signposts and events which influenced the current system of decentralisation are highlighted.

Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8 present the empirical results and discussion of this thesis. Chapter 5 presents the institutional framework and the various pieces of legislation which give rise to the current system of decentralisation in Zimbabwe. It describes the hierarchy of institutions controlling decentralisation. Chapter 6 presents and discusses how the various political contestations and disjuncture which have manifested themselves in the City of Harare. Chapter 7 focuses on governance, citizen accountability and public participation amidst the various contestations in the City of Harare, illustrated by a particular case history. Chapter 8 presents the findings and discussion of the state of service delivery in the City of Harare. It describes the state of service delivery and discusses impediments to service in the City of Harare from the perspective of various stakeholders. Chapter 9 concludes the thesis. It presents the summary findings and the core contribution and theoretical contributions of this thesis to decentralisation.

CHAPTER 2 : LITERATURE REVIEW

"...the state rests on the notion that there should be a single, unified source of political authority for a territory, drawing upon the undivided loyalties of its population, operating in a well-organized and permanent way and directed towards the interests of the whole society". (Dryzek and Dunleavy 2009: 2)

2.1   Introduction

Ribot and Larson (2013) define decentralisation as the transfer of authority and responsibility or public functions from the central government to local government or private sector. The main function of local government according to Stoker (2002: 39) is to facilitate and help communities achieve their developmental objectives. Ribot (2002) defines decentralisation as "a realm of local autonomy defined by inclusive local processes and local authorities empowered with decisions and resources that are meaningful to local people". The general belief by government implementing decentralisation is that it is at the local level that policies moulded at the central government level are implemented (Kamete 2003: 196). It can be argued that the reality of decentralisation is complicated: some governments believe they have autonomous local governments, some do not see the point of 'faking' autonomy at all.

The definition of decentralisation brings to the fore two major aspects which will be examined in this study. The first issue is that in decentralisation there are two spheres of the state; the central state and the local state. The central state shapes the political and structural framework within which the local state operates hence this literature review focuses on examining the role of the central state in decentralisation and how it shapes the outcomes and outputs of decentralisation at the local level. I concur with Dryzek and Dunleavy (2009: 2) who aver that "…the state rests on the notion that there should be a single, unified source of political authority for a territory, drawing upon the undivided loyalties of its population, operating in a well-organized and permanent way and directed towards the interests of the whole society". Within the state (whether central or local) there is an intersection of two main components of the state which are politics and administration. The political component of the state defines the vision of the state and is responsible for governing the state hence playing an

oversight role on state administrators. The administration of the state forms the bureaucratic[9] arm which is responsible for implementation and carrying out state programmes.

The second issue highlighted by the definition refers to the role of the local state which is to facilitate and help local communities achieve their developmental objectives (service delivery function). This review will examine how the central state shapes the ability of the local state to perform its functions (delivery of services) at the local level. This literature review will examine the relations between the central state and the local state; the focus will be on examining how central state politics influences the operations of decentralised institutions. Focus will be on how the central state influences the developmental vision of the local state and how the local state responds.

By discussing the central state and local state, there is a critical component which defines these states, that of governance. This study defines governance as the process of exercising power (Heller 2001: 132). In order to exercise power, the state has to create structures which assist it to govern. It is these structures which create the institutions which enable the state to exercise its power. It should be noted that governance is a dynamic outcome of social and political actors; therefore, if changes are demanded then it is those dynamics that should be addressed (Pierre and Peters 2000). Chabal and Daloz (1999) make the observation that states in Africa focus more on changing the actors in governance structures than on changing the structures. When the central state is decentralising it is ceding some of its governance responsibilities to the local state; hence, there is a transfer of decision-making powers to the local state. What is critical and will be examined in this literature review is the argument that governance is not so much about structures as it is about the interaction among central and local state actors.

2.1.1 Scope of the literature review

The scope of this review is to examine decentralisation within its context in Africa. The approach of this review is to gain a holistic understanding of decentralisation without focusing on one aspect of decentralisation. Previous studies in decentralisation focused on a particular aspect of decentralisation (fiscal, political or administrative) hence there is a dearth of literature which analyses decentralisation holistically. The objective of this review is to

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[9] State Administrative officials in this thesis are also referred as bureaucrats.

examine all aspects of decentralisation and appreciate how they are influenced by central and local state relations. The strategy of this review is to examine holistically the state of decentralisation in the African context highlighting the challenges and successes and come up with a theoretical understanding tailored for this study and the African context.

The review starts by defining decentralisation and examining several types of decentralisation. This is followed by a discussion on why different countries decentralise and a discussion of the impact of decentralisation on service delivery. A discussion on the impact of politics on decentralisation and the role of public participation in decentralisation precedes the conceptual framework. Discussion of the conceptual framework includes the various theoretical angles which apply to this study. The final section presents the synthesised conceptual approach to this study.

2.2   Types of decentralisation

Decentralisation is not about dismantling the central state and replacing it with local institutions; it is about strengthening local institutions so that they perform to the aspirations of the local communities. There are different aspects of the central government which can be decentralised. Decentralisation can occur in three ways, political, administrative and fiscal decentralisation. The three forms of decentralisation do not operate independently of each other; a perfectly decentralised local government must be made up of all the three forms of decentralisation.

Political decentralisation involves the transfer of political authority from the central government to the local government. This can be in the form of policymaking and independent decision-making. Political decentralisation normally happens through local government elections in the form of democratic decentralisation. It can only be successful if there is a redistribution of adequate political power from the central government to the local government (Heller 2001: 136). Without adequate power, local government will be affected by over interference of the central government. There is a general agreement among the scholars that the ability of local government to work depends on the legal and financial powers allocated to it (Mabin 2002: 40).

Administrative decentralisation is defined by Rondinelli and Nellis (1986: 5) as the transfer of responsibilities for planning, management, raising and allocation of resources from the

central government and its agencies to field units of government agencies, subordinate units or levels of government. Administrative decentralisation is sometimes referred to as deconcentration (Robinson 2007a: 7). Administrative decentralisation involves mainly the transfer of key management functions from the central government to the local government. It is normally accomplished through the assigning of more management powers to the appointed local bureaucratic officials who will perform the functions and are either accountable to the central government or local elected officials. In administrative decentralisation, there is no ceding of political power from the central state. The administrative officials at local government level only operate as an appendage of the central government.

Fiscal decentralisation is the assigning of financial powers (in the form of grants and tax raising powers) from the central government to the local government (Robinson 2007a: 7). The financial powers are in the form of revenue collection avenues and strategies and power to do with expenditure decision-making. Local government authorities can use financial powers allocated to them to raise revenue through borrowing and selling water and electricity to the local populace. In cases where there are shared financial responsibilities between the central government and local government, a conflict is normally created as the central government is more worried about controlling expenditure whilst the local government is under pressure to deliver services (Lemon 2002: 11). The success of fiscal decentralisation depends on the allocation of adequate resources so that local government can execute their duties (Conyers 2003: 115).

The three forms of decentralisation depend on the level of authority which is bequeathed to the local government by the central government. The level of authority assigned to the local government can be categorised into four types which are regarded as the four variants of decentralisation. Decentralisation can take the form of, devolution, delegation, deconcentration and privatisation. The four variants of decentralisation are described in detail below.

2.2.1 Devolution

Devolution is the transfer of authority to subnational governments. It gives autonomy to the subnational government. It requires that local government be given autonomy and independence and be clearly perceived as a separate level of government, over which central

authorities exercise little or no direct control (Rondinelli, McCullough and Johnson 1989: 75). Normally the authority is transferred through local democratic elections (democratic decentralisation) which are held within geographical boundaries. It confers authority on the subnational government to raise their own resources. Officials of the devolved structures are accountable to the local constituency mainly through local democratic elections. This type of decentralisation espouses the ideals of political, administrative and fiscal decentralisation.

2.2.2 Delegation

Delegation is the transfer of specific administrative and decision-making powers from central government to the local state (Ribot 2002: 1). Powers can be delegated to public corporations or parastatals. Delegation can be autonomous only in those aspects which are devolved. The accountability of the delegated local state rests with the central state. In this type of decentralisation the delegated local state does not have the power to pursue its own agenda or programmes mainly because all the authority rests with the central state. Delegated authority can be withdrawn at any time. The fact that power has been delegated means that it can be withdrawn at any time; therefore, there is a high probability that local state authorities operating on delegated authority are highly compliant with central state directives.

2.2.3 Deconcentration

Deconcentration is the transfer of responsibilities from the central state to regional offices. However, it has to be noted that no power is actually transferred to these regional offices. Powers still remain with the central state (Makumbe 1998: 8). The regional officers are only there to implement central state policies. Deconcentration acts as a means of exerting control in remote areas by the central state. The officials are appointees from the central state and they are accountable to the central state. In most cases where deconcentration has been implemented it has either hindered project implementation or decision-making at the local level as decisions have to be approved by the head office (Manor 1999: 5). In deconcentrated systems, the local community has no or little say in decision-making as local administrators tend to make decisions driven by the centre, therefore, accountability is upward rather than downward (Mansuri and Rao 2012).

2.2.4 Privatisation

Privatisation occurs when central state divests itself of the responsibility for certain functions or the provision of certain goods and services (Makumbe 1998: 8). The central state will normally regulate the operation of these sectors but the actual fulfilment of these functions is left to the dynamics of market exchange. Privatisation can happen in two ways: through normal decentralisation processes whereby the state privatises some of its function and a situation where it occurs by default; resulting from the failure of the state to provide basic services (Oxhorn 2004: 6). Once privatised the state has no control over these enterprises. Most literature on decentralisation excludes privatisation as a form decentralisation on the premise that once privatised the tasks and private companies are now beyond the control of political systems.

It is important to note that all types of decentralisation can manifest in one unit of the local state. In the case of Zimbabwe, it has to be noted that there are various aspects of decentralisation at play. There is a mixture of privatisation, devolution, deconcentration and delegation. The underlying factor in Zimbabwe is that the ministry responsible for local government retains an overall oversight role on most of the operations of local government in Zimbabwe.

Broad conclusions can be drawn from the variants of decentralisation discussed below. It can be argued that any form of decentralisation which is not supported by steps to democratise at the bottom/local level is not genuine decentralisation (Manor 1999: 6). Genuine decentralisation focuses on giving sufficient power and financial resources to the local government so that it achieves its objectives without relying on the dictates and being at the mercy of the central government. As will be argued in this literature review there are also other various factors besides allocation of sufficient power (democratisation of the local state) and financial resources which influence whether decentralisation will reach its main objective of delivery the development aspirations of the local communities.

2.3   Why decentralise?

It is imperative to understand that the experiences and history of African governments are crucial in analysing the reasons for decentralisation. Decentralisation in each country is as a result of a combination of causes and factors. The nature of decentralisation during the

colonial period has a bearing on the shaping of decentralisation in post-colonial period in Africa. In the African context, most governments who came to power after independence had a socialist/Marxist ideology (Mamdani 1996). The level of decentralisation implemented by post-colonial governments' shows that it was mainly a fusion of a Marxist/socialist approach and western models of local government systems installed by the colonial governments. In the African context during the colonial period, there were two main forms of decentralisation; the first one modelled along the British model of local government and the second tailored toward the French system of decentralisation (Ribot 2002: 4). The British colonisers introduced a form of indirect rule in their decentralisation model which Mamdani (1996) described as 'decentralised despotism'. These two forms of decentralisation shaped most of the post-colonial decentralisation systems in Africa.

Marxists believe that the colonial system of decentralisation was based on the politics of capital accumulation at the centre (central state) and the politics of production at the local state level. This form of state envisages a highly centralised government with powers and authority to control production at the local state level. This type of decentralisation, as implemented during the colonial period, was administrative decentralisation whereby the central government retains control and all authority. It was mainly used to suppress the natives and provide an efficient system to exploit and achieve the goals of colonial masters at the expense of the colonised. In Francophone and Anglophone Africa the colonial masters designed a system of governance which was dual in nature. The colonial masters had their own system of governance different from the one that governed the natives (Chabal and Daloz 1999). The system for the natives ensured that they were subjugated to their colonial masters and had no powers to make decisions.

The colonial approach to decentralisation influenced the reasons why post-colonial governments decentralised. Colonial governments were authoritarian in nature and they used decentralisation as a tool to enforce their authoritarian rule. During the colonial period, decentralisation was used as a tool to rule the indigenous people and as a tool to maximise revenue collection (Makumbe 1998: 12). An analysis of colonial decentralisation shows that traditional governance systems in most colonial systems were converted to administrative systems which served the colonisers. The nature of colonial government resulted in a civil service (a bureaucratic arm of government) which sought to devise pragmatic ways of adapting the colonial directives to the administration of its subjects rather than a method of

'inculcating new political and government habits' (Chabal and Dalonz 1999: 12). The coercive nature of the colonial decentralised institutions delegitimised these institutions. It has to be understood that post-colonial governments in the early years treated the inherited (from colonial powers) governance institutions with suspicion and were preoccupied with matters of consolidating the power of the central state. They did not focus on serious decentralisation to the local level (Olowu and Smoke 1992: 3). The consolidation of governance powers by the central state resulted in a highly centralised state. Most post-independence states viewed local and regional government institutions with disdain as they had been used by the previous governments to perpetuate the colonial agenda of subjugating the natives (Manor 1999: 19). Because of this, post-colonial states depoliticised local government structures to reduce their influence (Oyugi 2000: 16). In countries such as Ghana the central state went even further and banned political parties from contesting in local state elections. Other states reinforced their intentions and strategies for a strong state through recentralisation. Recentralisation was carried out through assigning service provision functions like health, education, housing etc. to the central state (Ribot 2002: 5). After independence, the colonial decentralised institutions became 'de facto extensions of the ruling parties' (Manor 1999: 36), who ran down the institutions resulting in dysfunction and decay.

Socialist states by nature are highly centralised (Olowu and Smoke 1992: 1) and socialists believe that strong central state control is central to their political agenda (Midgley 1987: 8). This explains why most post-colonial states who received assistance during their struggle for independence from China and eastern European countries kept the colonial status quo of decentralisation (decentralisation which serves the political agenda of the central state) when they attained their independence. Why would they do away with a system which served the central state so well? A few examples of such countries that propagated socialist agenda are Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Zambia.

A careful analysis of the literature on decentralisation leads one to postulate that the political ideology of the central state determines the reasons for decentralisation. In the African context, decentralisation was initiated by various stakeholders, including non-governmental organisations, international multilateral aid organisations and the ruling party itself. The reasons, as discussed below must be understood within the political, historical and socio-economic context of the country concerned.

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Several reasons have been put forward to explain why post-colonial states in Africa are decentralised. The first reason for implementing decentralisation is that it is viewed as a way of legitimising the central state (Lemon 2002: 18). In legitimising the state, the central state approach is to justify why the government should exist. Any disparity between what society expects from the state and what the state is capable of delivering undermines the legitimacy of the state and breaks down cordial and constructive relations between the state and the citizenry. It can be argued that in the context of developing countries, decentralisation plays a low legitimising role as compared to developed countries because developing countries have poor levels/record of service provision. In actual fact in developing countries decentralisation has a delegitimising impact as the state fails to provide services which are expected under a decentralised local government.

Most African countries use decentralisation as means to maintain the status quo in society with its inherent inequalities while presenting itself as a legitimate conduit for the expression of all citizen demands. The focus on most decentralised states in the African context (Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Uganda and so forth) is on community/citizen participation in affairs of the government through decentralisation. The approach by these states to community participation was to include local communities in development planning hence the community has a sense of being involved in governing and setting the agenda of the state. However, within the process of community participation, there is very little emphasis on how the afforded participation is converted into improved service delivery. For this reason, decentralisation faces the risk of the opposition political parties capturing the same spaces afforded local communities, therefore, politicising the whole process of development planning.

The third reason for decentralisation is that there is an assumption that decentralisation can be used as a developmental tool (Lemon 2002: 18). There is an assumption that the local state/decentralised institutions can be used to achieve real gains and defend real advances in development because it is designed in a way that it responds to the real needs on the ground rather than to profit or the ability to pay. The understanding is that it is at the local state that the policies of the central state are implemented therefore decentralisation acts as a catalyst for development at the local level. However, critics of this approach believe that the local state is simply an agent of the central state (Saunders 1984) which means that the failures of the central state will be mirrored at a local level.

The fourth reason for decentralisation is based on the argument that decentralised state experiences an increase in accountability and participation at the lower levels (Heller 2001: 132). Accountability at the local level would be achieved in two ways: the local state will be accountable to the central state (upward accountability) and accountable to the receivers of the services the community (downward accountability). There is an assumption that this form of dual accountability increases the chances of service delivery. In this case, decentralisation is executed as a way of improving accountability in governance. The issue of accountability will be explored further later in this chapter.

Several scholars critiqued the reasons for decentralisation. Some of the critiques are that decentralisation has been used as an instrument to deflect blame from the central state to the local state (Lemon 2002: 18). Deflecting blame is mainly effected through the offloading of what politicians controlling government call 'expensive' tasks onto lower levels of the state. The failure of the central state to execute the expensive tasks is as a result of increasing demands, slow economic growth and increasing corruption by politicians at all levels (Manor 1999: 27). In the event of the lower levels of the state failing to execute those tasks the central state puts the blame on the doorstep of the local state despite the circumstances.

Another critique for decentralisation is that it is viewed as a way of strengthening local democracy as compared to improving service delivery. The service delivery agenda of decentralisation is lost through the democratising local state as the main focus becomes strengthening democratic values as compared to improving service delivery (Robinson 2007b: 1). Democratic decentralisation is viewed as an option which offers something resembling a free market economy which brings together 'buyer' citizens and 'decentralised authorities' sellers (Manor 1999: 28). Oxhorn (2004: 14) postulates that even though democratisation is the explicit reason for decentralisation in some countries, there is no guarantee that it will be achieved. Literature from African countries shows that most central governments see decentralisation as a way of holding on to power and strengthening their patronage systems (Chabal and Daloz 1999).

The above reasons can be summarised into two main broad reasons for decentralisation, namely, governance and service delivery functions. It can be argued that some countries only decentralise as part of the central state's approach to governance (especially states pursuing democratic governance system) and aim to include local communities in the affairs of the state. Some states use decentralisation as a tool to deliver better services to the local

communities; this reason has nothing to do with governance hence in some cases it negates issues to do community participation and other governance related functions. Some countries combine the governance and service delivery reasons when decentralising, resulting in a local state which attempts to strengthen its governance function and deliver services. In order to access the outputs and outcomes of decentralisation, it is important to assess the reasons why decentralisation was implemented in the first place. What is clear from the reasons for decentralisation is that the central state is key to decentralisation. The central state has the power to effect decentralisation hence the success and failures of decentralisation are greatly influenced by the nature of the central state. The ability of the local state to deliver its mandate, which is mainly to facilitate development at the local level, is highly dependent on the spaces and powers afforded to it by the central state.

The varying motives behind decentralisation raise a challenge of evaluating the impact of decentralisation. It has to be noted that in the African context there is no one reason for decentralisation in one country. The reasons for decentralisation might be a combination of what is discussed in this section. There is a challenge in understanding the decentralisation process where the main objectives of decentralisation are ambiguous. It also appears that the history of a country (as colony or aggressor), the nature of political ideology and intensity of political competition can all influence the type of decentralisation adopted. The challenge which is faced by most scholars is: how do we evaluate/measure the success and failure of decentralisation? In an attempt to answer this question the section below explains the commonly agreed upon traits of decentralisation.

2.3.1 Traits of good local government

There are several factors which can act as evidence to show that the level of decentralisation is yielding results. These factors include openness, effective community participation, allocation of sufficient political powers and financial resources to local government and effective accountability frameworks. The success of decentralisation can be measured if these traits are evident in the decentralised unit and the broader state apparatus.

Openness in decentralisation is achieved through the facilitating role of local government so that communities achieve their objectives. The major task of local government is to create a conducive environment in which there is a willingness to contribute, debate, develop shared vision and ensure that appropriate resources are used to achieve common goals (Stoker 2002:

33). Openness in local government creates the essence of effective community participation. If the local government is open, sincere and the communities are involved in decision-making then the communities feel that the local government is working for them and this brings success (Olowu and Smoke 1992: 13).

The underlying factor in openness is that proper decentralisation must close the gap between local government and the local community (Lindell 2008: 1882), with effective community participation in the whole system of local government. It has to be noted that community participation must be effective and not tokenistic[10]. In most African governments participation has been measured using the frequency of community consultative meetings. Consultative meetings are not an end to community participation *per se*; what is important is to assess what influence the deliberations in these meetings has on advancing the development agenda of the local authority. Most scholars of decentralisation in Africa highlight the fact that the level of community participation is mainly in the form of tokenism which is not effective as the final say in decision-making rests with the state apparatus. The local community must own and control the process of community participation; state officials must not act as if they are doing the community a favour by opening up the avenues for community participation. Since most African states purport to be democratic, the principles of democracy advocate for citizens to be decision makers themselves not receivers of decisions made by state officials.

Allocation of powers is crucial if local government is going to be successful. Local state structures which lack political power are bound to fail (Olowu and Smoke 1992). Any effort to decentralise must include the redistribution of political power. The local state need not necessarily be independent (autonomous) from the central state but must have sufficient political power so that they can function without unnecessary impediments. Given the nature of Marxist or socialist ideologies being pursued by most African states the issue of allocating political powers to the local state has resulted in contestations where the central state's approach is to decentralise the powers and recentralise when it suits the agenda of the ruling party. It can be argued that the success of decentralisation in the African context has been greatly affected by the nature of vacillation between decentralisation and recentralisation.

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[10] Tokenistic community participation is described by Arnstein (1969) as a form of participation which is characterised by any of the following: placation, consultation and informing.

This vacillation is mainly caused by the political agenda of the central state; hence, the local state finds itself operating at the mercy of the central state.

In order to achieve political power within the local state, a precondition is to have a clear legal status/framework which enables the local state to be able to create its own vision and enforce it. The local state must also be equipped with well-defined political and financial powers and responsibilities (Olowu and Smoke 1992: 10). The legal and financial capacity of local government determine its effectiveness in delivering services (Mabin 2002). In the process of allocating power to local government, there is a need to make a clear distinction between the roles of political local government representatives and administrative officials. Local political representatives should primarily be involved in policy formulation and prioritisation of development projects. Administrative officials should primarily be responsible for technical aspects and managerial duties of the local government. Such clear separation of duties and responsibilities will enable effective accountability. What is missing in most literature on decentralisation is the examination of the role of central state power in decentralisation. A few scholars such as Conyers (2003), Olowu and Smoke (1992), Mamdani (1996), Sithole (2009), and Wunsch (2001) have examined the role of the central state in the broader decentralisation framework and found that the central state plays a critical role in the success of the decentralised institutions being able to perform their service delivery role. The majority of single dimensional literature on decentralisation places the blame for failing to deliver services on the decentralised institutions without examining properly the role and influence of the central state in decentralisation. This study will examine in detail the role of the central state in the broader scheme of decentralisation.

The local state needs to be guaranteed powers to raise financial resources and control them. If the local state is starved of financial resources it will fail to carry out its programmes and its major function of service delivery. Mabin (2002: 40) stressed that for local government to achieve their objectives of better service delivery there is a need for guaranteed legal and financial capacity. However, in the African context, there is ongoing persistence by central government actors seeking to recapture (recentralise) authority and resources which were released during decentralisation (Wunsch 2001: 277). Recapturing usually occurs through the loopholes left during decentralisation and it is a recipe for failure of most local governments as accountability and community voices are lost during the process of recapturing. Recapturing of the local state by the central state, according to Crook (2003: 85), occurs in

situations where decentralisation was introduced with the main objective of enforcing a culture of patronage with local authorities which is controlled by the central state.

The success of decentralisation depends on the mix of various factors such as democratic, fiscal and administrative aspects being incorporated into the decentralisation framework. It is worth noting that decentralisation takes place within a particular political context and, therefore, evolves differently in each country. In concluding this section, the question which needs to be asked is: does decentralisation improve service delivery? Literature available at the present moment does not show a clear answer to this question. The onus of this research is to answer this question.

2.4   Service delivery and decentralisation

Services which are provided by decentralised local states are in the form of education, water, health, sanitation, fire services, transportation, public infrastructure, housing and social welfare services. The local state acts as a microcosm of the central state in terms of its function. Literature shows that there is a greater focus on decentralisation as a tool for strengthening democracy than as a tool for improving service delivery. In the African context, most governments seem to view decentralisation as a way of affording governance powers to local communities. There is a lack of clear focus on decentralisation as a vehicle for improving local service delivery.

The focus for most studies of decentralisation is mainly on participation and accountability; very few studies have their focus on the impact of decentralisation on service delivery. Scholars such as Conyers (2007) and Robinson (2007a) are of the opinion that there is no direct relationship between decentralisation and service delivery. They believe that service delivery benefits indirectly through increased effective participation and accountability. This view can be countered by the fact that the major reason for implementing decentralisation in most African countries is because the central state seems unable to / fails to deliver services. If the central state was efficient in delivering services to the satisfaction of the citizens, then decentralisation would have less prominence in the African context. However, the success of service delivery by the local state is not only related to the political powers and financial resources afforded to the local state by the central state. Some local states without these powers and operating under highly centralised state system deliver services better than local states enjoying some sort of autonomy from the central state (Ludeki 2004). These

observations show that service delivery is not only affected by the level of decentralisation but other factors also play a critical role in the ability of the decentralised institution to deliver services. I posit that failure or success of decentralisation must be measured by the level of service delivery after decentralisation. Care must be taken when measuring the success of decentralisation because factors such as the influence of actors in the central and local state have an impact on determining the ability of the local state to deliver services. My view is that material benefits of decentralisation delivered to the local communities should be at the forefront when considering the issue of decentralisation.

The literature on decentralisation in Africa shows that there is a lack of comparative evidence to show that decentralisation improves service delivery. Robinson (2007b) observed that the available evidence is highly localised and cannot be generalised. A lack of baseline data to compare the level of services before and after decentralisation is the major challenge in understanding the impact of decentralisation.

2.4.1 Relationship between decentralisation and service delivery

When assessing the successes and failures of decentralisation one needs to examine the causal relationship between service delivery and decentralisation. This question has to be asked when assessing the success or failure of decentralisation: "Is this failure or success as a result of decentralisation?" This question must always linger when evaluating the impact of decentralisation. The example of Uganda is celebrated as a success of decentralisation in Africa but the success is mainly due to the massive injection of donor funds through Uganda's Poverty Alleviation Action Plan rather than because of decentralisation (Conyers 2007; Oyugi 2000; Kauzya 2007). Conyers (2007) emphasised that one should not blame the poor quality of service provision in many African countries on decentralisation as there are many other outside factors which affect the results of decentralisation. These factors include prevailing political context, design and implementation of decentralisation, the capacity of individuals and institutions, the balance of power at the local level, the socio-economic context and the available resources (Conyers 2007: 20). A country can embrace decentralisation but fail to realise service delivery. Conversely, a country can also attain service delivery at the local government level in a highly centralised environment (Ludeki 2004: 19).

2.4.2 Impact of decentralisation and service delivery

Several scholars of decentralisation in Africa (Conyers 2007; Oyugi 2000; Ribot 2002; Crook 2003) are of the opinion that decentralisation has done little to improve quality, quantity or equity of public services in Africa. Lindell (2008) observed that in Mozambique decentralisation has failed to the extent that there is now an informalisation of service delivery. This situation is similar to Chad where the communities have to build their own schools because of the failure of decentralised institutions to deliver education (Fass and Desloovere 2004). The failure of decentralisation is not only exclusive to African countries; Robinson (2007b) observed that evidence from six Latin American countries shows that service delivery has worsened since the implementation of decentralisation. As discussed earlier decentralisation in most cases is instituted by the central state hence it can be argued that from the perspective of an objective researcher, decentralisation has failed to produce meaningful results but from the perspective of the central state actors decentralisation may actually be serving the purpose for which it was initiated even though it is failing to deliver services. This argument is based on the analysis of decentralisation during the colonial era; centralisation was meant to serve the interests of the colonial masters, not the local community.

On examination of colonial decentralisation, one would reach the conclusion that it failed to deliver services to the local communities, but to the colonial masters it was a success as it ensured that the colonial masters benefited and resulted in the continuation of subjugation of the native population to the political benefit of the colonial masters. As will be discussed in the next section this researcher posits that decentralisation failures might not be as important to most African central states as political survival of the ruling party hence the argument that if decentralisation perpetuates the ruling party's grip on power then it is regarded as a success by the ruling party.

2.5   Decentralisation in Africa

2.5.1 Rise of decentralisation in Africa

A high level of urbanisation in African cities presents pressure on urban local governments to deliver basic services like housing, water, education, healthcare and so forth In the case where the local government has failed to provide the minimal basic services, communities

have resorted to the informal provision of these services (Lindell 2008: 1879). Current literature on local governance shows that most of the urban problems are caused by issues to do with decentralisation and governance models adopted by the central governments. In some cases, local government models were crafted by the ruling party with the mindset that they would never lose power (Olowu and Smoke 1992: 2). In such cases, the governance model has actors who are conditioned and primed to serve the interests of the central state not that of local state and local communities. Conyers (2003: 115) gives an example from Zimbabwe of decentralisation for local governance which was implemented with little effective power being decentralised to local state structures; in such situations, the local state has no ability to make independent decisions regarding the area it governs. Given the various challenges in decentralisation in Africa, I concur with Mutizwa-Mangiza (2000: 24) that most countries implemented decentralisation without assessing their context and experience. In fact, decentralisation is just one area of non-reflection by post-colonial states as they uncritically inherited colonial systems.

Decentralisation in most African countries, such as Nigeria, Kenya, Mozambique and Zimbabwe and so forth has failed to yield results on the service delivery front because of various factors. The expectation was that decentralisation was a magic bullet which would cure service delivery challenges in these countries. The reason for failure to deliver services was articulated by Conyers who said that the heavy influence of the central state in the African context resulted in the local government mirroring the conditions of the central state in all aspects (Conyers 2007: 27), therefore, the problems at the central state were transferred to the local state. The persistence of non-service delivery in decentralised African cities opens the possibility of opposition parties capturing the urban local authorities (Lemon 2002: 19) through democratic local elections. In Kenya, Zimbabwe, South Africa and Botswana opposition political parties have capitalised on the failure of the central state to deliver services and captured some decentralised institutions, resulting in situations where the political party ruling the central state is different from the party ruling the local state. This situation presents a challenge in governance especially in countries which are highly centralised or have a tendency to use recentralisation as a political tool.

Most African countries are highly centralised compared to western countries (Lemon 2002: 23); this causes decentralised local state dynamics to be fraught with problems. There is a reluctance by central states in Africa to relinquish power to local government authorities. In

some cases decentralised responsibilities and functions have not been coupled with decentralised access to financial resources (Olowu and Smoke 1992: 2). A local government that depends heavily on the central state in terms of fiscal models is bound to face problems of poor funding and non-service delivery (Lemon 2002: 21). A heavy dependence might result in recentralisation of decentralised institutions or some of its functions. Many scholars (such as Olowu and Smoke 1992; Wunsch 2001; Lemon 2002) believe that in the African context, the 'devil [of decentralisation] is in the detail'. The details of decentralisation are spelt out in the legal and policy frameworks which give rise to decentralisation. The legal and policy framework creates the structures and institutions which control these decentralised institutions. It is within these frameworks where duties, responsibilities and powers of the various actors are defined. In most cases where African governments have been decentralised, there was a window left for monitoring and supervising of local government by the central government. There is persistence by the central government to always monitor and intervene in local governments (Wunsch 2001: 277). The argument by the actors from the central state is that they have been given the mandate to carry the development aspiration of the whole country hence there is a need for continuous monitoring to ensure that the local state delivering services to its constituency. However, if the central state has to intervene then the intervention should be tailored in such a way that whatever intervention made should benefit the local community and not subvert local democratic processes.

There is high dependence between local and central states in Africa. In some cases, decentralisation was implemented without decentralising fiscal resources and political power. Decentralising without financial resources is problematic and does not encourage development (Conyers 2003). Local states which depend heavily on the central states face a variety of problems. In situations where there is a heavy dependence, it is difficult for accountability to be ascertained. It becomes difficult for communities to determine who is accountable for what in the case of non-service delivery. Oyugi (2000: 20) concluded that decentralisation in the African context failed to spur democratic development management and efficient delivery of services. There is agreement by most of the scholars on African decentralisation that it is not a catholicon for underdevelopment.

2.5.2 African democracy and decentralisation

Decentralisation cannot be divorced from the prevailing political systems in Africa. The prevailing political factors will determine the impact of decentralisation on service delivery

and community participation (Rondinelli, McCullough and Johnson 1989: 77). A variety of literature on decentralisation alludes to the fact that no matter how good and practical decentralisation is the socio-economic, cultural and political environment in which these models are applied determines their success. It is also prudent to analyse the role being played by actors in decentralisation as their actions contribute to the success and failure of decentralisation. It is imperative to examine the role being played by the liberal democratic institutional framework in Africa so that the success and failures of decentralisation can be understood in that context.

2.5.2.1 African democracy

African governments have adopted liberal democracy in large measure. In this thesis, democracy is defined as 'respect for human rights, the rule of law and the existence of political institutions which are effective, accountable and enjoy legitimacy' (McFerson 1992: 244). In the African context liberal democracy manifests itself in the form of electoral democracy. The adoption of liberal democracy is based on the western theoretical framework of modernisation as a developmental approach to African countries (Chabal 2009: 6). Liberal democracy governments are installed through competitive elections, and the elections are required to meet certain standards so that they can be regarded as valid (Adetula 2011: 18). Elections are regarded in democratic terms as indicators of the relationship between state power and different groups in society. Elections are important as they legitimise state power. The main objective of democracy is to invest power in the people (McGowan 2012: 2). This form of democracy was induced through various ways by the neo-liberal Western world. It is important to note that before liberal democracy, some African countries had a background of socialism based on Marxist ideas (Midgely 1987). Marxism viewed decentralisation as a capitalist way of advancing a dual state thesis, where it divides the state into two centres, the central state which produces politics of production and the local state with politics of consumption cutting across classes at the local level (Saunders 1984). A summative analysis of Marxism shows that it views liberal democracy as a tool of wealth accumulation by the elites. This pinpoints the Marxist view of local government as a simple extension of national government and ensures a reproduction of the conditions under which capital accumulation can occur. Marxist advocates believe that there is very little expectation of decentralisation impacting positively on the life of the poor. Fung and Wright (2001: 6) argue that the government in a liberal democracy is the problem and not the solution. The process of

decentralisation seems entirely dependent on what the central state wants as compared to what the community/citizens want (Mukandala, 1998: 2). There is a well-documented history of African leaders and ruling parties being in continuous power from the end of the colonial era; this history is important in the analysis of decentralisation in the context that the central state determines the level of decentralisation. The argument is that in such situations decentralisation is tailored to perpetuate the grip on the state by the ruling party. It is folly to believe that the central state will legislate itself out of power without resistance, especially in the African context.

The state institutional framework in most African countries does not support liberal democracy. There is a dearth of state institutional frameworks that actually support liberal democracy in Africa (McKinley 2006: 423). Post-independence African governments were interested in consolidating political power as compared to reforming government institutions so that they have a positive impact on the lives of the poor (Olowu and Smoke 1992: 3). In most African countries political and bureaucratic lines are blurred, unlike in the Western model of democracy where the bureaucracy (state institutional actors) cease to be an appendage of the central state but stick to the legal and professional distinctiveness of their roles (Chabal and Dalonz, 1999: 6, Edie 2003). In the African context there is no such type of bureaucracy; the public and the private sector sphere overlap. In most cases there is no marked distinction between the bureaucratic arm of the government and the ruling party; state structures might well be articulated but the main issue is how the actors perform their duties and their level of interaction with all arms of the state. Such a situation results in the creation of bureaucracy based on patronage and kleptocracy (Adetula 2011: 15). The government coffers end up being the feeding trough of the ruling party cadres. If the bureaucracy is an appendage of the ruling party then its decision making is likely to follow "hierarchically transmitted pulses" (Midgely 1987: 14) from the central state. This scenario is exacerbated by the fact that countries experiencing 'democratic transition' usually lack opportunities and mechanisms for public participation and consultation (Lindell 2008: 1882). If public participation is not effective, a huge gap between the local government and the community is created and renders decentralisation ineffective in achieving service delivery.

2.5.3 Influence of democracy on decentralisation

With the advent of democracy, there was a push for countries to adopt free market economic principles. The free market economy agenda resulted in the reduction of government

expenditure on social services. Liberal democracy is described as synonymous with the free market economy (McKinley 2006: 416). The creation of free market economies was accomplished through the agency of multilateral aid organisations whose bias was that African countries should adhere to Western political conditions (Adetula 2011: 11). Structural adjustment programmes were used by multilateral aid organisations as a tool to reduce government expenditure through decentralisation in the form of privatisation. In terms of decentralisation, multilateral aid organisations' objectives were to reduce the influence of the central state and increase the powers of the private sector on service delivery (Heller 2001: 132).

Privatisation of basic services resulted in increased cost of basic services and goods leading to increased unaffordability of these services amongst the poor (McKinley 2006: 417). The adoption of these strategies by developing countries was supposed to be a way of initiating development in these countries. However, the question which has to be asked is: can the poor achieve development through capitalism? McKinley (2006: 424) contributed to this debate by asking the question "how can the poor majority realise a different non-capitalist society by defining and ring-fencing their struggles with [in the context of] institutional frameworks of capitalist representation?" The failure of the state to successfully impose the required conditions for liberal democracy to flourish resulted in the government being unresponsive to the needs of the poor. If the central government is unresponsive to the needs of the poor it is likely that decentralised institutions will not be responsive to the needs of the local poor people either.

Some would argue that the state has been too successful in imposing liberal democracy to the extent that it has relinquished its developmental role. This argument must be viewed in the context of the policy and practice of neo-liberal democracy in Africa. Neo-liberalists ascribe the failure of SAPs as being a direct consequence of the excessive concentration of both economic and political power in the hands of a few state personnel (Leftwich 1993: 609). The failure of SAPs can be ascribed to the fact that there was a failure to understand that liberal democracy under capitalism was mainly concerned with changing the institution of political representation rather than changing the economic and social institutions which impact on the lives of the poor in Africa.

2.5.4 Multilateral aid organisations and decentralisation

The influence of multilateral aid organisation came through the influence of neo-liberal restructuring which pushed for political decentralisation. This was in response to the failure of the central state particularly in the African case (Dauda 2006: 292). Multilateral aid organisations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) the World Bank (WB) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) started shifting their focus from financing central state projects in response to the failure of central planning (Olowu and Smoke 1992: 1). They started propagating the advancement of a free market economy based on the assumption that the private sector and the local state would be more likely to provide better services than the central state. In the case of Zimbabwe, the WB and USAID, instead of providing their funding through the central ministry responsible for housing, funded the City of Harare directly in relation to the Urban I and II housing developments (Matumbike 2009).

According to Mutizwa-Mangiza (2000: 24), because of the pressure exerted by multilateral aid organisations, many African countries implemented decentralisation without even assessing their own experiences and their socio-economic-political contexts. This researcher has seen very little literature which shows that multilateral organisation directed states to decentralise but the literature shows that neo-liberal circumstances created by multilateral aid institutions forced African states to decentralise. The underlying factor in terms of neoliberal political reform is the pressure to curb central state spending. As central states in developing countries reduced their growth and the scope of their own activities in response to economic realities and donor pressure, they increased their influence and strengthened local states. This had a direct influence on central states implementing cost recovery measures at the local state level on services which the local state provided to citizens. This scenario was evident during the implementation of structural adjustment policies in Ghana where decentralisation was encouraged as a way of reducing central government spending (Kyei 2008).

Multilateral aid and non-governmental organisations believed that decentralisation had two benefits – promotion of democracy and increase government efficiency because it brings government closer to the people (Van De Walle 2009: 16). Most Western-funded nongovernmental organisation channelled their aid with an emphasis on local community projects and community participation (Clayton 1998). This was being done under the pretext of developing democracy in developing countries (Olowu and Smoke 1992: 1). The

economic context of developing countries made them 'grudgingly' accept the precondition for international aid. This has caused half-hearted attempts to decentralise in the African context (Dickovick 2003). It can be analysed that the problem of attempts to recentralise which is prevalent in most decentralised African countries emanates from the initial reluctance of central states to decentralise. Bratton (1989) observed that in Kenya, Uganda and Zimbabwe non-governmental organisations preferred to directly channel their interventions to communities because the state was regarded as inefficient, overdeveloped and laden with political baggage.

It is evident; therefore, that multinational organisation played a great role in decentralisation in the African context. The fact multilateral aid organisations and non-governmental organisations were Western-funded meant that they supported and propagated politics of neo-liberalism which encouraged decentralisation under the theme of a democratic framework. It can be argued that the transition of African states from being one party states and pursuing socialist ideology to neoliberal capitalism has not been viable (Onimode 1988: 3).

2.5.5 Democratic institutional frameworks and decentralisation accountability

The success of decentralisation depends upon the level of accountability. Accountability is defined as "the obligation to explain and justify conduct" (Pollitt 2003: 89). This implies that there is an obligation by the actors in public office to account for and justify their actions. Accountability plays a critical role in the delivery of services in local government and involves the monitoring of individuals in public office. According to Ribot (2002: 29), accountability does not end with accounting and justification of actions but also includes an enforcement component which ensures that oversight includes the capacity to apply sanctions to other institutions and agents within the state

In order to understand accountability in decentralised institutions, it is important to examine how one can acquire public office. In institutions of governance, there are three ways of acquiring public office: appointment which is based on merit; elections which are based on public preference (councillors or political representatives fall into this category); and inheritance (rural traditional leaders fall into this category) (Sithole 2009: 78). The method by which someone is appointed to the public office has a great influence on how that official accounts for his/her actions whilst in office.

The institutional framework of liberal democracy government dictates two forms of accountability. The first form is horizontal accountability which involves actors within the state system being enabled to hold to account and apply sanctions on other actors within the state system. A good example is when public officials/bureaucrats are accountable to elected representatives (Chabal and Dalonz 1999: 14). The second form of accountability is vertical accountability where elected representatives are accountable to and can be sanctioned by, the public through elections or recall. For a proper democratic state to flourish accountability must be central to the state structures (Ribot 2002, Baker 1999). As referred to earlier, liberal democracy in Africa shows that in most cases there is an absence of meritocracy in the appointment of public officials. With the absence of meritocracy, public officials tend to offer their allegiance/accountability to the political party or individuals who appointed them (Olowu 2001). This situation creates antagonism between local elected representatives and public officials. Crook and Sverrison (2001: 32) highlighted the fact that the problem of poor accountability is not only a problem of African states but is also prevalent in the so call 'consolidated democracies'. This argument concurs with the view by Manor (1997: 7) that accountability can be difficult to obtain even where there is substantial democratisation at the local level.

A good example of the state creating situations which result in accountability challenges is the practice of cadre deployment practised by the African National Congress (ANC), the ruling party in South Africa (Giliomee, Myburgh and Schlemmer 2001; Tshishonga 2014). African National Congress cadres are deployed in critical bureaucratic/public municipal positions. The question which has to be asked is: who will the cadre be accountable to in the event that there is the capture of the municipality by opposition parties? In such a situation it is obvious that the relationship between elected representatives and the bureaucrats will be strained. Does the strained relationship increase accountability or affect it in a negative or positive way? Tshishonga (2014) observed that the deployed cadres do not only complicate accountability but also have a negative impact on services delivered as some of the deployed cadres are not properly qualified. This issue will be explored further in the discussion of the findings of this study.

In the African context where many of the states are not able to fund their own programmes, the dependence on external state actors or agencies to fund their budgets creates further challenges with regards to how accountability is practised. Ribot (2002) points out that in

such situations it is difficult for the state actors to be accountable to the citizens because the external funders require the state to account primarily to them. This situation weakens other lines of accountability within the state institutional frameworks which in most cases are already fragile (Therkildsen 2001: 8). In the event of failing to deliver services/development to its citizens, the state is likely to blame the funders.

Elected local representatives are normally elected through local government elections. In most African countries local elections are a microcosm of the national elections. The microcosmic nature shows vicious polarity between the ruling party and the opposition. In most cases the relationship between the ruling party and the opposition is acrimonious. Because of this political polarity between the ruling party and the opposition parties some countries such as Kenya, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Uganda, and Ivory Coast and so forth have descended into civil wars or civil disorders. In Zimbabwe, the battle for control of local government is mainly between political party representatives and independent candidates who have little chance of winning the elections. Institutions for community participation can be regarded as pseudo-participation institutions. Participation in these institutions is only tokenism as they are open to manipulation by the political elite (Lemon 2002: 6). The nature of electoral democracy means that after the elections citizens have very little further input on how their communities are governed (Bishop and Davis 2002: 12). Despite all the problems with participation, the key question to be asked is: does full participation have a positive impact on service delivery or are there other factors that determine the quality of service delivery?

The nature of the politically acrimonious relationship between political parties forces the electorate to choose candidates not because of their expertise, but because of the political party which they represent. Previous research which I conducted in Harare shows that residents bemoaned the poor quality of local government elected representatives. If local government representatives are appointed through elections the question to be asked is: are elected representatives accountable to the electorate or the political party which they represent? Whose policies are these representatives going to implement or advocate for? In such cases, the probability is that service delivery becomes a secondary issue as the primary issue is winning political battles.

The issues discussed above show that decentralisation in the African context is controlled not only by how good the decentralisation model is, but by factors such as political, socio-

economic, and cultural context/environment. Heller (2001: 136) said that no matter how good and practical decentralisation is, the socio-economic, cultural and political environments in which these programmes are implemented ultimately determine their success.

2.6 Public Participation and decentralisation

Public participation is a very important concept in decentralisation as it is regarded as the driving force for better governance and service delivery. Gaventa and Valderama (1999: 7) define public participation as the exercise of power by different actors in the spaces created by the interaction between citizens and local authorities. In this thesis, public participation is defined as a process whereby citizens claim the right to participate in informing decisions which affect their lives and well-being (Draai and Taylor 2009). Public participation entails the redistribution of power from the state to citizens as a core element of a democratic governance system (Cornwall and Gaventa 2001). Through decentralisation, state institutions create local platforms for interaction with citizens. It is, however, important to note that the spaces for participation are controlled by state institutions and can influence the outcomes of public participation.

In the African context, the main objective for decentralising is "bringing government closer to the people" (Makumbe 1998). There is an emphasis on the policy framework of involving local communities in decision-making. The argument is that effective public participation will improve the efficiency of public institutions, that it will make decentralised institutions more accountable, and that it will deepen democracy (Gaventa and Valderama 1999: 4). In order to understand various forms of participation strategies and their effectiveness, Arnstein's ladder of participation is discussed (Figure 2). The ladder of participation provides a useful benchmark against which to measure the degree of and quality of participation in decentralisation. The ladder describes a continuum of participation from manipulation (non-participation) to citizen control (citizen power). The proposition for the ladder of participation is that the democratic states must aim to achieve citizen control which means that citizens have the power and authority to make decisions and have control of their developmental agenda.

Figure 2: Ladder of Participation
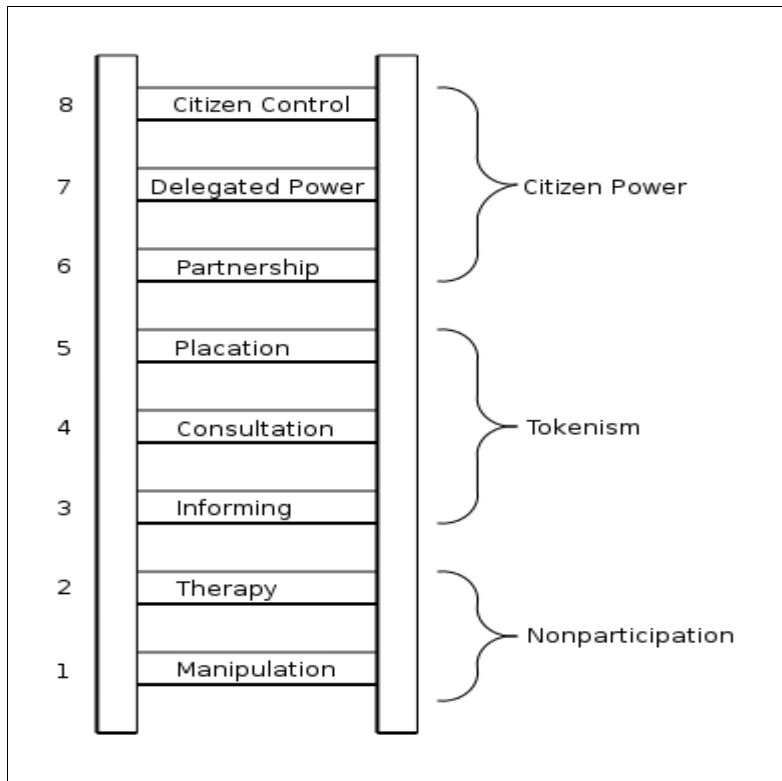
Source: Arnstein 1969

In decentralised institutions it is critical to assess the level of participation and how effective it is. In the African context a lot of attention has been paid to strengthening accountability and responsiveness of government institutions through institutional reform but very little has actually been done to implement effective public participation. In countries such as Uganda, Tanzania, Chad and Zimbabwe public participation can be regarded as tokenistic and is used as a platform to mobilise the electorate by the ruling party (Chabal and Daloz 1999). Mansuri and Rao (2012) contended that main democratic theories place more emphasis on the representative component rather than public participation component of democracy. In the African context, there is an emphasis on stability of the state at the expense of adhering to other democratic principles. Most countries in Africa practise tokenism as a form of participation, where participation is performed in order to tick certain boxes (McKinley 2006; Chabal and Dalonz 1999). This form of participation is not effective and not ideal if the citizens are to achieve full control of state decision-making processes. Hingels et al. (2009) noted that it is not the volume of participants but how effective is the process of participation in terms of incorporating decisions of the citizens in government institutions. The authors highlighted the example of Nazi Germany and other eastern European countries which practised mass participation but without the necessary democratic or beneficial consequences.

This shows that the gap between the rhetoric of participation and the reality of effective participation is wide.

There are various processes for participation in the African context. Most countries have adopted a representative form of democracy. Participation in representative democracy manifests in citizens engaging in political parties and voting in national and local elections (Hingels et al. 2009: 3). It is important to note that voting occurs periodically and what is critical to understand is what happens between elections; do citizens have the power and opportunity to influence decisions between elections? Several studies have tried to answer this question but the answers vary depending on the country. However, the underlying general agreement is that on the African continent there are few attempts by governments to achieve full citizen control of public decision-making processes in decentralised institutions.

The challenge for decentralised institutions is for them to achieve full citizen control. Cornwall and Gaventa (2001) noted that for citizen control to be achieved there is a need for a change of perception on the part of citizens from being 'users and choosers' to being 'makers and shapers' of interventions and services. Gaventa and Valderama (1999) identified citizen education and awareness building, training of officials and alliances with civil society and advocacy as crucial for full participation and citizen control.

Through decentralisation, the central state brings government closer to the people. For this objective to be properly achieved there is a need for the decentralised institutions to craft public participation policies which ensure that local communities over which they preside have the power to make decisions and hold public officials accountable. Without effective public participation within the local state, there is a chance of replicating and mirroring the same problems which the central state is trying to rectify by decentralising.

2.7   Conceptual framework

Using the research paradigm of critical realism as a starting point this research seeks to adopt a conceptual framework which exposes the mechanisms which drive decentralisation in Zimbabwe. Critical realism envisages that the researcher finds out what produces change, what makes things happen, what allows or forces change and presumably, what blocks desirable change (Kitchen and Tate 2000:15). In essence, critical realists posit that reality is not only what can be observed empirically but other factors that are intangible which

influences reality (Sayer 2000). Bhaskar (2008) support this argument by observing that scientific activity involves setting up controlled conditions to ascertain the existence of postulated causal mechanism. Furthermore, if scientific enquiry is set like this, then the enquirer will observe what the postulated controlled conditions seek to observe; hence the lack of objectivity in the enquiry. The meaning of this is that scientists do not cause the activation of causal mechanisms but can only provide conditions for the empirical observation of their working (de Souza 2014). In this case, critical realists argue that there is an interdependence of individuals and society; hence a realist enquiry takes place within an open system that is synonymous with social systems (Williams et al 2016). When examining the issue of decentralisation, especially in Zimbabwe, it is important to use an appropriate conceptual framework which provides appropriate conditions for the observation of how the centre-local relationship in Zimbabwe plays out in the event of unshared vision.   The methodological approach and conceptual framework must guarantee the empirical observation of the various components of decentralisation, which are; fiscal, political, administrative, actors and institutional arrangements in the City of Harare.

When examining the issue of unshared vision in a decentralised local state, the onus is on the researcher to unravel all mechanisms which affect decentralisation. Critical realists argue that a social object's structure is therefore comprised by internal social relations that possess specific capabilities, powers and tendencies to act in a certain way under particular conditions (Roberts 2014). This view is pertinent to the holistic study of decentralisation as a critical realist approach will focus on examining the internal capabilities, power and tendencies of decentralisation. It only through this approach that actors, policy frameworks and political context are examined together to give a holistic view of decentralisation in the City of Harare. Critical realism and its suitability for this study will be further discussed in detail in the next chapter.

The majority of the literature on decentralisation uses a single dimensional analysis of decentralisation which analysed separately the political (Olowu and Smoke 1992; Wunsch 2001; Kamete 2003), administrative (Conyers 2003, 2007) and fiscal (Chatiza 2010; Ekpo 2007) aspects of decentralisation. This is not helpful if one wants a holistic understanding of the mechanisms driving decentralisation in a specific country. The single dimensional analysis does not capture the complex changes associated with decentralisation measures, involving political, economic, administrative, social and cultural elements which often

interact simultaneously. This study foregrounds the political system and its actors because of the understanding that the political system and its actors have a bigger influence on the success and failure of decentralisation. The approach I am taking in this research is to examine how the political system and its actors shape the centre-local relationships taking into cognisance its influence on the state and its actors. The literature on the influence of politics, the state and its actors in centre-local relations has largely been underrepresented in decentralisation studies. This research conceptualises decentralisation as being a broad phenomenon which is affected by various factors which are not only limited to forms of decentralisation.

This conceptual framework is based on the premise that decentralisation takes place within a particular political, socio-economic and cultural context and, therefore, evolves differently in each country (Dauda 2006: 292). I also acknowledge the influence of the actors within and outside the state system on decentralisation. In this thesis, the actors are defined as individuals or institutions with the ability to influence the processes of the state system. Actors can either be political parties, public officials, international aid organisations, civil society organisations or private individuals. It is important to examine how these actors manipulate decentralisation for their own benefit. According to Saito (2008) actors examine problems and issues based on their knowledge and capacity, and act accordingly hence influencing the outcomes of decentralisation.

It is imperative to dig deeper and unravel other dimensions, linkages and mechanisms controlling and shaping decentralisation in Zimbabwe. The main argument I am putting forward for this conceptual framework is that what is being seen as decentralisation in Zimbabwe is a façade and, therefore, it is more important to move from surface structures of decentralisation to the underlying mechanisms by which decentralisation is operationalised. As discussed in the literature review there are various factors which have a direct influence on the success or failure of decentralisation. Various factors such as the political system, in this case, neo-liberal politics, democratic participation, state institutional frameworks and the structural aspects of decentralisation are crucial in gaining an understanding of how decentralisation in the African context works. Alongside these factors, there is another critical factor which is the influence of actors who are "locked into a series of intertwined battles over, resources, meanings and institutional legitimacy and control" (Long 2001).

Instead of focusing on decentralised institutions only, this study is based on a holistic analysis of the political, socio-economic and cultural context in which decentralisation is at play. The reason for taking this approach is the belief that the degree of decentralisation is largely dependent on the type of political party system and democracy in the country (Riedl and Dickovick 2014: 3). The basis of this approach is that decentralisation does not play out in a vacuum hence the understanding of the context plays a critical role in the process of evaluation of the impact of decentralisation on governance and development in the decentralised community. In the process of analysing the contextual environment of decentralisation, the focus is directed at the state, its politics and the various actors who are involved in governance. As stated earlier, the actors include political parties, bureaucrats, civil society and the general community members. It is these actors who shape and influence the outcomes of decentralisation in various countries in Africa as they are not passive but active participants in the process of decentralisation.

This study is based on how the institution of the state is defined and how the actors influence the processes and outcomes of decentralisation. The way the state is structured has a great bearing on how decentralisation plays out especially in the African context. As a departing point, Dryzek and Dunleavy (2009: 2) define the state as resting on the notion that there should be a single, unified source of political authority for a territory, drawing upon the undivided loyalties of its population, operating in a well-organized and permanent way and directed towards the interests of the whole society. The critical components of the state are government (political arm) and the civil service (administrative bureaucrats / public officials). Although there is a debate on what can be defined as the state, there are some areas of concordance in defining the state. The areas of concordance are that the state involves a unified political authority over a territory, the state is permanent and its interests are directed at the members of the society. The fact that the state has authority over a territory brings to the fore an important facet of the state which is governance. In simple terms, to govern is to exercise power (Heller 2001: 132). Governance is made up of two distinct classes of people, namely, the ones exercising power (governors / the state) and the governed (society). In the process of governing the state seeks to create conditions for ordered rule and collective active citizenry (Stoker 1998).

2.7.1 Unshared vision in decentralisation

The definition of the state assumes that the state is a single and unified political authority. The issue of 'unshared vision' under investigation in this study reflects a form of disjuncture in which is when the state as the political authority controlling the central state is different to the political authority controlling the decentralised institution. In this case, the state ceases to be unified. Assuming that the state is a single and unified political authority poses problems especially in the African context where there is a very thin line and in some cases no line, between the state and the ruling party (Chabal and Daloz 1999). A few examples of this disjuncture within the state are Kenya where the opposition won the local elections in the city of Nairobi, South Africa where the opposition won the local government elections in Cape Town and subsequently the Western Cape Province and Zimbabwe where the opposition political parties have won the majority of urban local government elections since 2002. The capture of the local state by the opposition caused disjuncture within the state as it is no longer a single unified political authority. In developed countries, this disjuncture is not a major issue as disjuncture is countered by the strength of the overall political system and the attitude of state actors (Kamete 2007). However, in the African context, Botswana is an example of the problems associated with disjuncture in the state. In Botswana in areas where the opposition captured local municipalities, the central state used a provision allowing for specially elected councillors (appointed by the central state) to bolster its position and in some cases to reverse the opposition majority (Riedl and Dickovick 2014: 19). Disjuncture can be exacerbated by personality clashes and political ideological differences between the political elites controlling the central and local state (Kamete 2007: 41).

It is important to note that the Zimbabwean state is a unitary state which is devoid of intermediate state components such as provincial governments which mean that decentralised institutions in Zimbabwe operate only within the parameters and powers defined by the central state. Dickovick (2007) argued that most studies in decentralisation focus on the central state and the decentralised institutions neglecting the intermediate state institutions such as provincial governments. In non-unitary states decentralisation tends to weaken the intermediate state and strengthen the central state. With regards to the context of this study, Zimbabwe, the issue of the central state weakening the intermediate state does not apply at least for the moment as the quasi-federal state which appeared in 1980 was appointed by the central state hence it was a willing appendage of the central state as it serves at the pleasure

of the central state. The adoption of the new constitution in Zimbabwe in 2013 ushered in a slightly stronger quasi-federal state[11] but it has not been implemented hence the issue of unshared vision is between the central state and the decentralised institutions (local authorities).

The majority of post-colonial African states never meant to follow democratic state system but one has to agree that democracy was adopted because of donor and economic pressure (Olowu and Smoke 1992: 2) which steered most of the African countries from their political ideology of 'socialism' and in some cases one party state political systems. The implementation of democracy in Africa was accomplished without taking into consideration the client-patron nature of the state; hence, democracy in the African context is closer to a client-patron relationship – a form of relationship where the state resources are used to solicit political favours (Chabal and Daloz 1999). This has a strong impact on how the state institutions and their actors view issues of governance. It is important to examine the context on which the democracy was adopted in Africa and how this influenced decentralisation.

2.7.2 Post-colonial African states

Most post-colonial African states did not adopt democracy as their ideology instead, they tried to reform the state to conform to Marxist and socialist ideology at independence. Pursuing the socialist ideology resulted in most post-colonial African states being highly centralised because the socialist ideology enforces the collective ownership of the means of production and this can only happen through the state (Midgley 1987: 6). According to Boone (2003: 358), the post-colonial governors created state institutions that entrenched and enhanced the state's political authority and extractive powers. The fact that the state was regarded as the agent of ownership and means of production for the people resulted in the post-colonial state in African being involved in the economic and developmental activities in the country. In the African context, the central state is also seen to be the primary initiator and implementer of development (Midgley 1987: 6). In terms of decentralisation, socialist ideology perceives the local state as being a mere extension of the central state (Lemon 2002: 18). This belief influenced how decentralisation was institutionalised and operationalized in countries which once pursued socialist ideology. Centralisation of the state led to the

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[11] The quasi-federal state (Provincial Council) will be discussed in detail Chapter 5

personalisation of politics and the development of authoritarian rule in Africa (Crook 2003: 80). Because of personalisation of politics, decentralisation was implemented in such a way that the local state is ever dependent on the central state so that it bolsters the political ambitions of the central state. This is consistent with the Marxist perspective that state reforms occur because governors see these as a way of entrenching their economic and political interests (Long 2001).

In former African socialist countries which adopted democracy, there are ongoing attempts by the central state to try and recapture the decentralised local state and its resources (Wunsch 2001: 277). Because decentralisation was implemented by central state actors / political elites with vested interests, various loopholes were left which will allow the central state to have a say in the future vision of the decentralised local state. In some cases, there have been attempts to recentralise through using these loopholes. The argument put forward by the central state in recentralising is that it is at the local state where development interventions are implemented hence there is a need for the central state to have control of the local state so that it can pursue the national developmental agenda. It can be argued that the continued attempts to recentralise are as a result of the central state pinning its development vision on the local state given the fact that the central state views itself as the final institution which carries the vision for development. This can explain why the constitution, acts of parliament and decentralisation policies have loopholes. This enables the central state to intervene. The interventions are favourable for the ruling party to use to its political benefit. In the event that the political party controlling the local state has a different development agenda for the local state, a disjuncture is created. In Zambia, a study by Dauskardt (2004) in Kitwe shows that central state interventions caused the local authority to lose its autonomy and thereafter it became reluctant to make decisions.

2.7.3 State politics and decentralisation in Africa

The post-colonial state was set in such a way that it dismantled the colonial legacy and political system which served the colonial government. In the process of dismantling the colonial legacy, the state institutions which were used and abused by the colonial state were reformed through the appointment and secondment of politically connected individuals whose responsibility was to further the interests of the new ruling party (Thomson 2000). In other words, it can be said that the post-colonial government just substituted colonial actors with new ruling party actors in state institutions who furthered the interests of the ruling

party. There was no urgency of reforming the state institutions so that the institutions could be depoliticised. Clearly, it was not in the interest of the post-colonial government to dismantle a system which could consolidate and perpetuate its hold on power (Chabal and Daloz 1999: 14). This process affected the nature of and influenced the partiality of state institutions and the civil service. This, in the end, resulted in the overlapping of the civil service public sphere and the private political sphere. The opposition political parties and their supporters operated in an environment which was narrowly prescribed by the ruling party (Joseph and Pinkney 1999: 240). This tilted the political contest heavily in the ruling party's direction.

It can be argued that the post-colonial state was based on clientelism. A clientelistic state is defined as a form of state (patron) which gives state favours in the form of civil service jobs, and economic benefits in the distribution of public sector resources through contracts and projects (Thomson 2000). In return for the material benefits the client mobilises political support and loyalty to the patron (Bratton and Van De Walle 1997). Wantchekon (2002: 61) argued that clientelist politics are most attractive in conditions of low productivity, high inequality and starkly hierarchical social relations. In Africa, ruling parties of countries such as Ivory Coast, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Kenya used the local state for patronage purposes and to consolidate their political power (Crook 2003: 81, Branch and Cheeseman 2009). In the case of Zimbabwe, the client-patron relationship was built over a long period where the post-colonial government pursued a socialist and version of the one-party political system. A study carried out by Wantchekon (2002) in Benin shows that because of the clientelist nature of politics voters voted for public representatives based on what they could offer them in return, in this case, the promise of public sector jobs. In some countries such as South Africa, the client-patron relationship is reinforced by ruling party policies which deploy party cadres to top civil service jobs at the expense of meritocracy. In summary, the success or failure of decentralisation is heavily based on the influence of political factors (Rondinelli, McCullough and Johnson 1989: 77).

Client patron relationships do not advance the principles of decentralisation as the decentralised institutions created under such conditions owe their allegiance to the central state / ruling party (patron), not the local communities which they are supposed to serve (Wunsch and Olowu 1990). Keating (1995: 129) rhetorically asked the following question: in such a situation, is the local state an agent of the central state or is it an expression of the

local community? Patronage within the state entrenches superiority of the power holders over the administration / civil service of the state (Sithole 2009: 48). In such a situation the governed find themselves deprived of spaces to hold the governors accountable for their actions. This deprives society crucial means of control over decisions which affect them. The impact of client-patron relationships is not only on accountability but also on the quantity and quality of service delivery as the individuals appointed to state public office may not be the best for the position (underqualified or unsuitable) therefore unable to perform their duties. This, in turn, negatively affects the level of service delivery.

2.7.4 Neoliberal approaches to decentralisation in Africa

Neoliberalism in the African context was introduced as a package of democratic reforms by international institutions. Neoliberalism argues that underdevelopment is caused by government policies that distort economic incentives, inhibit the market and work against economic development (Gilpin 2001: 311). Neoliberalism seeks to create a free market economy with an emphasis on economic growth. In the process of converting the 'Marxist/socialist' to democracy, significant pressure was put on the state and authoritarian African governments to reform and embrace multiparty elections (Adetula 2011). The pressure was in the form of carrot and stick (Eddie 2003: 118); countries willing to reform were rewarded with increased access to international finance and aid for their budgets from donors, those which resisted experienced isolation and received no budgetary support. The presumption was that if democracy worked in developed countries it would also yield positive results in Africa (Kalu 2004: 528). The objective of the push for democracy was to ensure that African states followed the model of Western democracy. African one-party states and authoritarian governments were expected to be transformed overnight and adhere to Western bureaucratic structures and procedures (Chabal and Daloz 1999). This was not achieved, mainly because of poorly developed state institutions and weak democratic culture (Adetula 2011: 13). In the process of democratising the African states, elections were regarded as a fundamental tool which could transform the African state and make it compliant with the Western ideals of democracy.

In the African context, there has been an obsession with holding acceptable elections which are normally used as a measure of democracy. What is missing from this obsession is the understanding of the underlying context on which voting patterns emerge. McKinley (2006: 42) highlighted the problem of obsessing on elections in the following statement:

"…elections have become the political background of those with access to capitalist patronage and where electoral choice is reduced to different sheds of grey. Democracy and fair elections need a neutral state which the African highly centralised state never provided. McKinley (2006) makes the observation that in most cases in the African context it is evident that democratic elections are not enough in that citizens are now relying on social movements as an avenue of expressing themselves on issues to do with development. In electoral democracies, between elections, communities have little say or control over what their representatives do or their developmental agenda (Arblaster 1987: 84).

Democratisation did not result in improved political systems, but in an effort to present reformed democratic governance systems, most the African governments created a democratic façade which hides the real political system of patronage beneath it. This highlights the pitfalls of democracy in Africa; although democracy's intention is to create an environment where issues and policies are contested, genuine victory is only possible if all the actors agree to abide by the rules (Kalu 2001: 529). As described earlier, there is no clear distinction between the ruling party and the central state so the ruling party has access to state machinery and resources for patronage purposes; hence, the electoral playing field is not level. It seems the main objective of African political elites is to use democracy as a means to political power (Ake 1993).

The same rhetoric on multi-party elections is also evident in decentralisation whereby decentralisation is used as "theatre pieces to impress or appease international donors" (Agrawal and Ribot 1999: 474). Elections of this nature are not sufficient for a country to be called democratic (Breytenbach 1996). What is clear is that democratic decentralisation in the African continent did not create an accountable local government system or sort of the powers that would encourage democratic decentralisation (Ribot 2002: 71). What is clear is that the African governments created institutions which are accountable only to the central state instead of the ordinary citizens.

In the process of democratisation, most African countries adopted the SAPs which were an economic policy package imposed by multilateral organisations. The aim of SAPs was to roll back the state's involvement in the economy. The implementation of SAPs had the effect of shrinking the patronage largesse through the reduced civil service and privatised parastatals.

According to Thomson (2000: 188), this caused declining legitimacy[12] and growing political instability especially in the urban areas, thereby opening the door for strong opposition to capture the urban councils / municipalities through the democratic avenue of elections. The economic situation also resulted in the intensification of rent-seeking and patronage-based politics hence the fierce resistance of opposition political parties (Van De Walle 2006: 212). The capture of the urban councils or municipalities by the opposition resulted in two centres of power being created; one at the central state level and another at the local state level thereby creating a situation of unshared vision.

2.7.5 Democratic institutional framework

As discussed previously, neoliberalism was brought about by multilateral aid organisations which had a stranglehold on government policy making processes. Neoliberalism creates institutional frameworks which support it. The success of neoliberal politics is heavily dependent on the institutions it creates for its success. In the African context, the institutional framework context does not always support decentralisation and is open to abuse by the central government (Adetula 2011: 15). Chabal and Daloz (1999: 3) echo a critical view that the state in Africa has not been institutionalised hence there is no distinction between political parties, the society and the state. Others scholars such as Adetula (2011: 11) reinforce Chabal and Daloz's view by saying that the state in Africa is an empty shell which is devoid of an impartial civil service.

Democratic institutions enhance democratic competition; they also mitigate the chances of personalising administrative issues into political conflicts (Kalu 2001: 539). In the African context, state institutions are highly politicised to the extent that separation between state institutions and ruling party are blurred which is not the case in viable democracies. If lines are blurred the ruling party will be dependent upon government institutions for its political survival (Chabal and Dalonz 1999: 6). In such situations political office is no longer a privilege but an entitlement. This results in democratic participation being token participation as one political party controls the state. It has to be noted that state institutions should enhance democracy not impede it. I posit that the development of the state lies with the establishment of a strong civil service which is separated from the pressures of society and

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[12] In Zimbabwe state legitimacy started declining in the 1990s when SAPs were implemented (Hammar 2005).

political parties. Appointment to the civil service needs to be based on merit, not political loyalty or patronage.

2.7.6 Democratic participation in the context of decentralisation

The state is not complete without actors like ordinary people, the private sector, international stakeholders, political parties and civil society. These actors are responsible for holding the state and political parties accountable for their actions through various democratic instruments such as elections. The state does not serve itself but its citizens; hence the need for citizens' involvement in the issues of the state through active citizenry Active citizenry ensures that citizens are makers and shapers rather than just users and consumers of state services (Cornwall and Gaventa 2001). The involvement of civil society and citizens in the issues of the state in a democracy is called democratic participation / active citizenry. This participation affords communities an avenue to participate in choosing their representatives in government (Young 2000: 130). An active citizenry is important as it helps form better citizens who are conscious of their rights to participate in state decision-making processes. In decentralisation, active citizenry is very important in the sense that the objective of decentralisation is to bring government closer to the people (Makumbe 1996). Decentralisation calls for increased participation of citizens in activities of the state which traditionally formed part of the public sphere (Gaventa and Valderama 1999: 4).

This study seeks to examine how the issue of citizen participation plays out in the event of disjuncture in the state. The specific questions to be answered are: What are the forms and outcomes of community participation in local government in Harare? How is accountability to the citizenry by the local state feasible in the context of unshared vision? The assumption is that citizens find themselves caught amidst the political battles between the local state and central state with the result that their opinion and decisions on how the local state should function are discarded by both the central and the local state.

2.8   Conclusion

The objective of this research is to examine the effectiveness of these institutions, not only in supporting the values and principles of democracy but to focus on understanding the impact of the institutional framework and various actors on decentralisation. In the case of Zimbabwe, the research area, the political system is shifting from a highly centralised

socialist leaning form of government to a neoliberal political system bordering on dictatorship. How the state has evolved and how accommodative it is in relinquishing power to local communities during decentralisation needs to be carefully examined. It is also imperative to analyse how the state institutions and the various actors have transformed from being centrally controlled to being decentralised. One of the challenges of this study was to design a research methodology to examine the various components which influence the outputs and outcomes of decentralisation. The most suitable approach was deemed to be critical realism. The next chapter presents the research methodology of this study.

CHAPTER 3 : RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

"Social scientists are obligated to use the findings of context-based enquiry to change the social world in such a way as to bridge the gap between knowing and doing which should in turn lead to emancipation". Bhaskar (1989: 90)

3.1   Introduction

In order to understand the methodological approach described in this chapter, it is pertinent to reiterate the objectives of this study so that the methodology presented here is understood in its context. This study seeks to understand the nature of local government in Zimbabwe, in its political, socio-economic, cultural and prevailing state political context. It seeks to examine the impact of potential 'unshared vision' in local and central government spheres in the event that the political parties controlling the two spheres of government are different. It also seeks to examine the guarantees on service delivery and community participation in decentralisation. The approach to this study is to specifically focus on the municipality or council as a unit of local government hence the focus on the City of Harare.

The study also seeks to map out the different levels and extent of 'unshared vision' in the politics of decentralisation of governance and service delivery. The 'unshared vision' in terms of this research refers to the pragmatic party political stalemates as well as unshared vision in terms of party political differences in ideology, policy and practise. The study is mainly focused on understanding the mechanism controlling decentralisation in the City of Harare and to examine whether differences in which political parties control the central and local state have any impact on how the decentralised institution operates and its outcomes.

This chapter begins by outlining the philosophy of research adopted for this study which is critical realism. It then outlines the study context, research design, sampling and sampling methods, and data collection methods and data analysis. The later sections of this chapter discuss the limitations and delimitations of this study. There is also a section which deals with the reliability and validity of the data.

3.2   Research philosophy

The research approach to decentralisation until recently has focused on the various components of decentralisation (fiscal, political and administrative), separating these as if

they are closed and completely isolated from each other in local authorities. This is because decentralisation is not confined to one discipline, hence varying approaches to its understanding. The approach to decentralisation was to examine it in an 'objective' way and some of the studies employed approaches which only focused on the system of decentralisation (legal set up and the policy framework) in Zimbabwe. Scholars such as Chakaipa (2010), Coutinho (2010), Helmsing et al (1991), Mtisi and Nicol (2003) and Chitsike (2000) pursued this kind of approach in decentralisation. Such studies portrayed the actors as rational professional individuals who act according to the confines of legal and policy frameworks hence these studies treated the actors involved in decentralised institutions as objective not subjective. This study will take an approach which goes beyond the legal and policy framework of decentralisation in the City of Harare; the approach is aimed at examining the subjectivity of the actors in decentralisation and their influence on the outcomes of decentralisation.

The approach to this study is guided by the quest to achieve a holistic understanding of the dynamics of decentralisation in local authorities in Zimbabwe with a special reference to the City of Harare. Based on past studies on decentralisation it is acceptable to argue that decentralisation in the African context is marked by fluidity and unpredictability. Approaches to decentralisation which are successful in one country are not necessarily successful in another country; studies in Uganda, Tanzania and Zimbabwe revealed that despite following a similar model of decentralisation the outcomes are different. It only seems logical that new directions in decentralisation research should point towards alternative philosophical approaches that aim to simultaneously critique orthodox approaches as well as give voice to the silent and marginalised stakeholders in decentralisation.

In order to achieve the objectives of this research, the paradigm of critical realism is adopted as the analytical/philosophical basis of this research. Critical realism was introduced by Roy Bhaskar in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Potomaki 2003). Bhaskar (1986) argued that social scientists must be critical when explaining social practices, and this critique gives social science an emancipatory grapheme. Criticism brings to the fore the possibility of a better social reality as it exposes illusions and contradictions in social reality (Sayer 1997). While traditional theory is oriented only to understanding or explaining society, critical theory is a social theory that is aimed at critiquing and changing society as a whole (Sayer 1997). According to Bhaskar (1989: 90), *"social scientists are obligated to use the findings of*

context-based enquiry to change the social world in such a way as to bridge the gap between knowing and doing which should, in turn, lead to emancipation".

The adoption of critical realism philosophy in this study enabled the researcher to address the high level of vicissitude in decentralisation. According to Kitchen and Tate (2000: 15), realists want to find out what produces changes, what makes things happen, and what allows or forces changes. Critical realists believe that there are many dimensions of social reality – the surface dimension we see and the other layers we cannot see. Egbo (2005: pg?), emphasised this by pointing out that the philosophy of critical realism transcends surface appearances and aims to reveal enduring social structures that ratify special interests and the status quo in society. It is imperative for critical realists to dig deeper and unravel the other dimensions and mechanisms (causality) controlling social reality. In order to achieve this, there is a need to penetrate the surface layers of social reality and unearth the underlying relationships that determine the real characteristics of decentralisation in the City of Harare. Following the tenets of critical realism, the aim of this research is to unravel decentralisation as informed by institutional practice and politics, as well as context or circumstances.

The main argument of this research is that what is being seen in decentralisation in Zimbabwe is a façade, and that there are many dimensions or mechanisms that control decentralisation that are not visible. The current social reality in decentralisation is as a result of processes and practises that are hidden beneath this facade. It is, therefore, important to move from surface structure of decentralisation to the underlying mechanisms by which decentralisation is maintained. If decentralisation has to be examined under the philosophical framework of critical realism, then it can be assumed that reality in decentralised institutions is constructed from the struggles of those with power in society. This could mean that decentralisation serves the interests of those in power because they manipulate and condition other actors involved in decentralised institutions to accept their reality as correct. This in turn creates a false consciousness which people accept as being natural. Consequently, they unconsciously reproduce the social structure that governs them (Long and Long 1992). It is, therefore, the responsibility of the researcher to employ research methods which enable examination of the various factors and mechanisms of decentralisation; and how these factors, ideologies, and mechanisms shape the outcomes of decentralisation. The main argument is that the actions of the actors cannot be explained by structural logic alone.

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3.2.1   Research context

The background of the research area, Zimbabwe and the City of Harare is fraught with political polarity. Several academic and media reports have highlighted Zimbabwe as a dictatorial state with various instances of abuse of power and political violence meted out to those with different political views mainly during the election period. Makumbe (2009: 9) agrees with this perspective, saying: "Confronted with the inevitable prospect of losing political power, since early 2000 the ZANU-PF regime has transformed Zimbabwe into a fascist state where the rule of law is not only selectively applied, but new and effectively draconian legislation is generated and used as a tool of repression". From personal experience in Zimbabwe, there is fear within the general public to discuss politics in public. In most cases, people are afraid of showing their political allegiance/preference, even during the period of calmness. The main reason why people are afraid is that they do not want to be labelled as belonging to a certain political party. Political labelling can result in political violence during election periods and exclusion from ruling party initiated activities. Even political paraphernalia like T-shirts of certain political parties are not worn publicly, there is a local saying in Shona which says *"Hembe dzemusangano ndedzekurara nadzo kwete kufamba nadzo pachena"* which, loosely translated, means that political paraphernalia is only good as pyjamas, and it is not to be displayed in public. There is also a general suspicion that the majority of the senior local and central state officials are politically partial and support ZANU PF. What is not clear is whether they are actually ZANU PF or do they just put a façade to save their jobs? In this context, my research design had to be cautious in terms of ethics and, in particular, confidentiality of responses, and safety of respondents. In addition, the design had to deal with how to minimise political bias or plain reservation of responses for fear of politics.

3.2.2   Research design

In order to achieve the objectives of this study under the theoretical framework of critical realism, mixed methods were employed in this study. Although mixed methods were used, this study was heavily influenced by qualitative methods. As a critical realist, the argument for this approach was that unlike quantitative methods, qualitative methods refuse to bury the 'voice' of the of the research subjects beneath the piles of anonymous standardised data (Roberts 2014). Therefore, the quantitative data that was collected was not used to generalise the study, but to triangulate and bolster the rich qualitative data collected.

The mixed method approach provided a platform in this research to use "multiple sources of information from multiple approaches to gain new insights" (Axinn and Pearce 2006: 1) into how decentralisation operates in the City of Harare. The quantitative component of the research involved the collection and analysis of demographic and related data from the councillors. The reason for collecting this data is that previous research on decentralisation in the city of Harare cited lack of skills, experience, and advanced educational qualifications as the reasons for the failure of local authorities to deliver services. This data was used for triangulation purposes with the in-depth inquiry component of the study. The qualitative aspect of the study focused on unravelling the mechanisms driving social reality in decentralisation. The qualitative in-depth inquiry was aimed at various stakeholders involved in decentralisation in Harare. The aim was to examine and gain an understanding of why stakeholders act in a particular way.

A combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques in this study reveal the illusions, contradictions and areas of concordance (through triangulation) of perspectives in the understanding of the mechanisms influencing social reality in the City of Harare. As will be highlighted in the results and discussion chapters, the mixed methods approach managed to remove the façade covering the mechanisms driving decentralisation in the City of Harare. This study confirmed the view of Axinn and Pearce (2006: 27) that by using mixed method approaches that integrate different types of data collection methods, investigators have a greater opportunity to both discover and document the mechanisms responsible for a particular causal relationship, such as those involved in decentralisation in the City of Harare

The study was divided into two parts. The first part was descriptive/ exploratory in nature. The exploratory phase of this research explored the historical development and context of decentralisation in Zimbabwe. This phase was made up of three main time periods: the colonial period, post-colonial (1980-2001) and the advent of unshared vision (2002-present). The focus was on service delivery, governance functions and the developmental agenda of the local government in Zimbabwe. These functions were explored while focusing on the relationship between central government, local government and local citizens in Harare.

The second part of the research was the interpretive phase. The objective of the interpretive phase was to interpret the relationship between central government, local government and the local community in Harare. The interpretation was done in a streamlined way by focusing on only two functions of local government in Zimbabwe, namely, development (service

delivery) function and governance function. The rationale for selecting these two main functions is that governance defines the official and unofficial procedure of administering decentralisation and the development function defines the service delivery which is the end product of decentralisation. In the process of examining outputs or outcomes of decentralisation and testing whether it works, specific cases of governance and service delivery were observed and discussed.

3.3   Sampling

Sampling was designed after careful consideration of other studies on decentralisation in Zimbabwe. The approach by several studies in decentralisation is to focus on the decentralised institution (local authority) as a unit of study without considering other stakeholders who are not within and who act outside the decentralised institution but have a critical influence on the affairs of the institution. This approach in most cases fails to examine and present a holistic approach to decentralisation. Research in decentralisation should not be focused only on the local authority as the ability of local authorities to deliver services must not be isolated from the influence of national state politics and the residents who are the receivers of the services.

This study took a slightly different approach to investigating decentralisation by including a variety of stakeholders in decentralisation. The target of the study was not the decentralised institution alone but the broader system, framework and actors of decentralisation in Zimbabwe. The focus was not only to focus on the current system of decentralisation but also the historical context of decentralisation. As revealed in this study the historical context of decentralisation played a major influence on the current system of decentralisation.

3.3.1   Sampling methods

This study adopted a purposive sampling technique to create a qualitative sample. In purposive sampling, the goal is to select a sample relevant to the research objectives. A purposive sampling procedure was applied to the senior officials from central state and local state, residents of Harare and civil society. The objective was to sample officials in these institutions who are responsible and influence the operations of the City of Harare. Within the City of Harare, the target was senior officials from the following administrative departments: Town Clerks' office, Corporate Services and Housing, Finance, Harare Water, Works, Health

Services, and Human Capital and Public Safety. The approach was to target those officials who sit on the city's Council Committees and are responsible for governance and service delivery functions within the city. All the elected City of Harare councillors were included in the final sample. Data collection from the central state was targeted at the officials from the ministry controlling local government in Zimbabwe. The approach focused on those officials responsible for supervision of urban local authorities in Zimbabwe.

The sampling for the residents of the City of Harare was done through infusing aspects of quota sampling into purposive sampling. Quota sampling can be defined as a method of choosing participants with certain characteristics. The objective of residents' sampling was to capture a sample which represented the socio-economic, political and cultural aspects of the population of the City of Harare. The objective was not to generalise the research findings but to acquire an in-depth understanding of the residents' views on governance and development / service delivery in light of how vision is shared. The residents were chosen according to the ward which they come from. Gender representative was taken into consideration in the selection of the residents' sample; the objective was to strike a balance between males and females. The targeted residents were those of voting age, particularly those with the ability to speak on behalf of their households and communities. The strategy was to divide the electoral wards into high income, middle income and low income. The sample size was determined by the level of theoretical saturation. Purposive sampling was used to select the civil society organisations which are involved in governance and service delivery in the City of Harare. During the exploration of this study, it was discovered that they are two main civil society groups which purport to represent the residents of Harare in local government.

There was no need to apply any sampling techniques for the quantitative aspect of the study as the target population was all the 46 City of Harare councillors. The objective was to administer the questionnaire to all the councillors thereby collecting demographic and related data. Within the questionnaire, there were also open-ended questions which were not analysed as quantitative data but as qualitative data. From the total population of the City of Harare, certain councillors were selected for in-depth inquiry using the following criteria: councillors who were chairpersons of council committees, political affiliation and their position in the party hierarchy. The summary of the total sample for this study is presented in Table 1.

3.4   Data collection methods

To achieve the objectives of this research, there was a need to collect data from both primary and secondary sources. Understanding decentralisation in Harare required the collection of the following textual data for analysis:

- National government policy documents;
- National legislations on local government;
- Council committee minutes;
- Council meeting minutes;
- Local government policies of political parties represented in the City of Harare council; and
- Central government directives documents.

These documents were used to ascertain the practical manifestation of decentralisation at local and national level. Journal and newspaper articles also provide another critical source of data for this study.

3.4.1 Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from administrative officials, elected local ward representatives and local community samples (See Annexures B and C). At central and local state level the focus for the in-depth inquiry was administrative officials who were responsible for service delivery and governance functions. It was also necessary to evaluate their views on governance coordination in the decision-making process and their relationship with the elected councillors. The interviews were mainly conducted with senior officials who interact with the councillors and those who are the link between the City of Harare and the ministry of local government. For the purposes of confidentiality and ethical considerations, the specific department which the senior officials represented were not identified in the findings section because of the sensitivity of the responses. Instead, a general term of 'senior administrative official' was used.

Local ward councillors in the City of Harare are crucial to the operations of the city. They are an integral part of the governance structure and are a link between the city and the residents of Harare. Since this research focuses on 'unshared vision' (2002-present), it was imperative for this research to collect data from the current representatives so that a clear understanding

of 'unshared vision' in local government could be achieved. The target was to collect data from the local elected representatives using a semi-structured questionnaire (see Annexure A). In-depth interviews were conducted with Harare City council committee chairpersons since they were likely to provide information on the impact of decentralisation on the performance of specific mandates.

Residents of the City of Harare were sampled for an in-depth inquiry. The initial strategy was to recruit residents who were part of community leadership in various wards. The recruitment strategy was supposed to have been done through referral systems by the elected ward councillors. The initial justification for the use of local elected ward councillors was that they are knowledgeable of their wards, so they understand the social movements and community leaders with views which represent their communities. During fieldwork I discovered that residents in wards were not organised in forums or social movements, instead, the ward councillors were referring me to party political ward structures. Social movements are important in the sense that they act as avenues where prodemocracy skills and attitudes are learnt (Matte and Bratton 2007: 198; Sachs 2003). A decision was made to not have an in-depth inquiry with political party ward leadership because of their potential bias. A new strategy was developed to carefully select residents who were knowledgeable and conscious about the issues of governance in the City of Harare. During the selection, a conscious effort was made to maintain a fair distribution of the selected sample across the low, middle and high-income areas. The target was not to quantify the data collected but to get an in-depth understanding of community perspectives on decentralisation and unshared vision in Harare. The instrument which was used to collect data from the local community members was a semi-structured interview schedule.

3.4.2 Focus groups

It is important to note that I also considered using the focus group approach in soliciting community views but decided not to pursue it for the following reasons. It is important to note that the level of political polarity in Zimbabwe between the ruling party and the opposition is so high that people are not willing to show which party they actually support in public. From personal experience, people will only show their political party preferences one-on-one when they are with people they can trust. I was doubtful that a focus group on issues to do with governance would yield anything more than potential conflict. After careful consideration of context, I was not prepared to take the risk. Another consideration was that

by virtue of discussing politics in a focus group with a variety of people I could not guarantee confidentiality and the safety of the participants in the focus group setting hence I made a decision to pursue individual in-depth individual interviews with the residents.

Data was collected from in-depth interviews with civil society groups operating in Harare. The civic groups in Harare are in the form of resident associations and resident trusts with a focus on governance and service delivery issues both at local and national government level. Thus, a balance of perspectives from formal governance structures as well as interest groups from civil society was solicited. Field observations also complimented the various sources of data collected for this study. Tables 1 and 2 show the various sources of data collection and compare the targeted and realised interviews.

Table 1: Sample for structured instrument

Name of stakeholders	*Target responses*	*Actual responses*
MDC councillors	40	33
ZANU PF Councillors	6	3
Total (structured instrument)	*46*	*36*

Table 2: Semi structured interviews sample

Type of Respondent	*Target responses*	*Actual responses*
Chairpersons of committees (Councillors)	5	5
Civic organisations:		
HRT[13]	1	1
CHRA[14]	1	1
Administrators:		
Ministry of Local Government	3	4
City of Harare	7	5
Community Members:		
High density (low income)	5	12
Middle density (Middle income)	5	8
Low density (High income)	5	9
Total interviews	*32*	*45*

Some challenges were experienced when doing fieldwork especially with getting hold of councillors for the administration of the structured questionnaire. The target was to administer the structured questionnaire to all the councillors in the City of Harare but only 36 were willing and had time for the structured interview. It is important to note that most of the

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[13] Harare Residents Trust.

[14] Combined Harare Residents Association.

administrative officials were not comfortable with the recording of the interview despite the assurances of confidentiality. The main argument which one official offered is that the research topic was too political and the general perception is that people were not prepared to discuss political issues with strangers let alone being recorded while doing so. Most of the administrative officials were of the opinion that the research topic was important as it had the potential to inform decision making on decentralisation in Zimbabwe hence their interest in participating in the study.

3.5   Data analysis

Data analysis for this study was guided by critical realism methodology which aims at a detailed description of ideology, circumstances, context and dynamics of decentralisation, in order to understand how the observed events can be explained (Bygstad and Munkvold 2011: 3). The first step for data analysis was to describe the structures of decentralisation in Zimbabwe and place them in their context i.e. the socio-economic, political and cultural environment. The second step of data analysis was to describe the mechanisms[15] which lead to certain outcomes in decentralisation, bearing in mind that the outcomes of mechanisms are contextual, meaning that a mechanism may produce a certain outcome in one context but a different outcome in another context (Smith 2008). This understanding has been the main characteristic of decentralisation in Africa where similar structures and policy frameworks of decentralisation are producing different outcomes in different countries because of the differences in context. This view influenced how data in this study was analysed.

Since this study adopted a mixed methodology, the challenge was to balance data analysis methods. According to Mouton (2001: 105), data analysis involves breaking up the data into manageable themes and patterns, trends and relationships in order to understand it. The approach in this study was to analyse the quantitative and qualitative data separately. The approach was to later combine the analysed data during the interpretation phase of the analysis. Quantitative data was analysed through the use of descriptive statistics. Data from structured questions was coded and entered into Excel spreadsheet. Frequencies and summaries were then produced mainly on demographic data, experience, educational

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[15] A mechanism, thus defined, refers to a constellation of entities and activities that are organized such that they regularly bring about a particular type of outcome, and one can explain an observed outcome by referring to the mechanism by which such outcomes are regularly brought about (Hedström and Ylikoski 2010).

qualifications of councillors, gender, political affiliation and so forth This made it possible for me to have an understanding of the current description of the governance composition and structure of the City of Harare.

Qualitative data analysis was guided by the philosophy of research of critical realism and of holism. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the approach adopted was that data was analysed during data collection where it was organised and evaluated and then used for further data collection. This process was repeated until saturation was achieved. The advantage of using this method is that it "allows the researcher to refine, confirm and test the validity of the conclusions drawn so far, establish commonalities and eliminate cases, leading to a degree of consistency" (Sarantakos 2012: 345). The final refined analysis was prepared after completing all the data collection. The main approach for analysis was interpretative analysis being careful to not merely replicate the façade of the social reality of decentralisation in Zimbabwe.

In order to achieve the objectives of this research through critical realism, popular approaches to qualitative data analysis data coding were not used. Coding data decontextualizes and fragments data, therefore distorting the richness and complexity of the data produced during interviews. I adopted the process of indexing segments of the data collected. Indexing is defined as the process of assigning several non-exclusive index codes brought up in the interview (Crinson 2001). This ensured that the data was analysed in its context and was not fragmented. During the final analysis, care was taken to ensure that the interpretation of the data combined both the quantitative and qualitative data. In chapter 7 a case study is presented to examine public participation within the context of budget formulation process in the City of Harare. The case study adopted a research design which ensured that various sources and methods were used to collect data from different social actors. The data collection methods used include; observations of budget consultative meetings, document analysis (both primary and secondary) and unstructured interviews with city officials and residents. Data collection was done in a systematic way; the first step was to perform a document analysis from both primary sources and secondary sources. The documents analysed include City of Harare pre-budget statements, actual budget, public participation policy, City of Harare election reports, and local government policies which have an impact on the affairs of the City of Harare directly and indirectly.

After document analysis, the second step was to conduct observations of the consultative meetings. In order to address the issue of validity, this researcher used an observation schedule with predetermined key components for observation these components were mainly descriptive. I also recorded my reflective information during the observations. The observations were also done covertly so there was no procedural reactivity amongst the respondents. During the observations, this researcher also managed to identify to participants for the in-depth unstructured interviews which were conducted after the consultative meetings. The target was to interview at least 3 attendees of the consultative meetings per ward. The researcher also purposefully selected those who did not attend the consultative meetings and asked them only two questions which are: why did they not attend the meeting and what was their opinion on the budget consultation process? Data analysis was done using the same strategy employed in the broad study.

3.6   Limitations and delimitations

In cognisance of the political situation in Zimbabwe, the major limitations of this research were related to the political polarity and a tendency of secrecy by the state. The thrust of this research design was to find research methods which would produce valid findings amidst political polarity and the reluctance to discuss politically orientated research topics. In a perfect democracy, focus group discussions amongst Harare residents would be an ideal method of collecting data from community members. In the case of this research, although focus group discussions even on mere service delivery issues were not suitable as they would have exposed the respondents to probable political labelling and persecution. There is a general trend in Zimbabwe whereby most of the citizens are not comfortable discussing politics in the presence of strangers or in public. I adopted individual interviews as the best approach for data collection as it afforded me the opportunity to build trust with interviewees so that they could respond to the research questions with confidence.

In relation to local council representatives, previous research conducted in Zimbabwe on decentralisation tried to use focus groups as a method of data collection amongst councillors but this did not yield results. Councillors failed to turn up for scheduled focus group discussion. I opted for a questionnaire as an instrument of data collection amongst councillors because this approach afforded them the opportunity to fill in their responses privately at their own convenience. The questionnaire was designed in such a way that it collected highly

structured data and but also contained open-ended questions which elicited semi-structured data. The option of self-administering the questionnaires was acceptable to 22 councillors. In some cases, telephonic interviewing was used to clarify responses from self-administered questionnaires. In cases where I administered the questionnaire, I used the opportunity to probe further on open-ended questions thereby producing rich qualitative data and a deeper understanding of decentralisation in the City of Harare.

A major limitation for researchers who do not have a proper background of the political system in Zimbabwe is that most responses from councillors are subjective since there is blame game between political parties hence most of the responses on face value absolves the political party represented by the respondent. To overcome this challenge and ensure the validity of the study, I adopted a strategy of conducting interviews after reviewing relevant secondary texts. This enabled me to probe using questions which unmasked the reality underlying the party political mantras. My background also played a critical role as I am able to speak the local language and had been a resident of Harare city for nearly ten years, therefore, understood the context underlying the responses.

3.7   Conclusion

Research on decentralisation in the African context should be tailored towards understanding the context in which decentralisation was implemented. There is a need for a holistic approach to decentralisation if the mechanisms influencing decentralisation are to be understood and impacts ascertained. Approaches which focus on particular aspects of decentralisation can be explored but one should be aware that there are other factors which influence the outcome of that aspect of decentralisation. This researcher is of the opinion that the best philosophy of research when holistically examining decentralisation is critical realism. The influence of central state politics must also be acknowledged when designing methodologies for decentralisation research. It is also important to ethically ensure that the respondents' safety and confidentiality are assured especially in political environments characterised by high political intolerance.

CHAPTER 4 : A HISTORY OF DECENTRALISATION IN ZIMBABWE

"By contradicting and destabilising African Councils the liberation struggle (essentially ZANU PF as de facto appropriator of a national process) installed structures around which early independence local government reforms were built. This sowed the seeds of party political appropriation of local government" (Chatiza 2010: 5).

4.1 Introduction

The focus of this chapter is to provide the historical background and context of Zimbabwe as a country and how local government developed over the years. The chapter also examines how governance in Zimbabwe evolved from precolonial Zimbabwe to the present day governance structures. The focus is mainly on examining how the selected and specific events influenced the development of local government. The approach in this chapter is not to provide a detailed history of Zimbabwe, but to focus on significant developments which influenced the current processes and actors in local government. The first part entails an examination of the Zimbabwean state from the period of colonisation up to the present moment. The second part is a critical analysis of the events which have shaped the present-day local government system in Zimbabwe. Throughout the chapter, I will argue that the present status of decentralisation in Zimbabwe was shaped by the country's history.

4.2 Pre-Colonial Zimbabwe

Before the advent of colonialism, the present-day geographical area covered by Zimbabwe comprised of two powerful states. The last precolonial Shona state was preceded by the Monomotapa state / empire which was in existence from 15th century to the 18th century (Pikirayi and Vogel 2002). The empire was a Shona state stretched from the Zambezi River in the north to the Limpopo River in the South. The state also stretched eastwards to the Mozambican shores (Nyangoni 1978: 15). The Monomotapa state had its headquarters at Great Zimbabwe. The state was sustaining itself through peasant agriculture, mining, hunting, and trade (Auret 1990: 68). The state was also trading with the Portuguese who were domiciled on the shores of Mozambique. The state which succeeded the Monomotapa state

was the Rozvi state, which was also made up of mainly Shona. According to Arrighi and Saul (1973: 183), these states were highly centralised; with the King as the head of the state, residing at the headquarters of the state. The King was supported by various chiefs, whose responsibility was to help the King to rule. The chiefs were responsible for various tribes located across the kingdom. It is important to note that the traditional leadership formed a critical part of the religious beliefs of the Shona (Auret 1990). The chiefs and kings were regarded as the custodians of the Shona religious beliefs; hence traditional leadership and governance were synonymous with religious beliefs. It was during the Mfecane[16] that the disintegration of the Rozvi state started. The Ndebele migrated from present-day South Africa and settled in the southwestern part of present-day Zimbabwe (Nyangoni 1978: 15). The Ndebele were led by Mzilikazi, a commander who had helped Shaka to establish the Zulu Kingdom (Phimister 1988).

The Eastern part of the Rozvi state was cut-off from the present day Mozambican shores by another group moving away from South Africa during the Mfecane. This group was led by Soshangane. The Rozvi state found itself sandwiched between states which were mainly known for their raids in the Shona occupied area. Because of the disintegration of the Rozvi state, the Ndebele overran several chieftainships and extracted tribute from them and the Shona became vassals. According to Bourne (2011: 6), 'the Ndebele were extremely brutal in their raids on the Shona villages, slaughtering adults, enslaving children and capturing cattle and supplies'. The death of Mzilikazi in 1868 saw his son Lobengula ascending to the throne. A few years later, in 1890, the white settlers, through Cecil John Rhodes' British Southern African Company (BSAC), tricked the King of the Ndebele, Lobengula to sign a mining agreement (Karumbidza 2009). Rhodes used the agreement as a tool to colonise not only the Ndebele state but also the areas occupied by the Shona. The territory colonised by Rhodes was named Southern Rhodesia or Rhodesia.

4.3 Colonial period

The colonial period in Rhodesia stretched from 1890 to 1980. During the initial stages of colonisation until 1923, Rhodesia was under the administration of the BSAC. Thereafter, the administration was handed over to an elected council which was led by a governor, Sir John

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[16] A period of war and migration in Southern Africa (Hamilton 1995)

Chancellor (Nyangoni 1978). Rhodesia was governed by a governor until 1965 when the colony declared itself independent from Britain through the unilateral declaration of Independence in 1965. Like all the colonial states in Africa, the natives (blacks) had no voting rights and suffered from racial discrimination and disqualification from certain economic activities (Matumbike 2009). Inequality was entrenched through the enactment of several taxes for example dog, hut, dipping, poll taxes and so forth (Native Councils Act of 1937). These were not easily accepted by the black natives of Rhodesia. Several chieftainships resisted these taxes but were subdued by the colonial government. The Budya people, who were living in the present day Mtoko district, resisted paying the taxes and were punished severely through the burning of their villages and crops, and taxes had to be paid with seized cattle and goats. The chief of this area, Chief Gurupira, was also fined additional cattle, and forced to supply 500 men to work in the mines (Phimister 1988).

The taxes levied on blacks served two purposes; firstly, to fund the colonial administration (mainly serving the interests of the whites); and secondly, to compel blacks to seek employment in mines, farms and industries controlled by the colonial masters; hence solving the problem of labour, as blacks were otherwise not willing to work for whites (Arrighi and Saul 1973: 184). The fact that it was the able-bodied males who temporarily migrated to seek employment meant that the influence of traditional leaders (chiefs and headmen) was reduced; leaving them to preside over mainly women and children[17]. This diminished their role as traditional leaders in resisting the colonial masters. The system was destructive to African family life and traditions (Bourne 2011). The migration of black males into urban areas encouraged a social change amongst Africans which threatened the authority of traditional leadership in Rhodesia.

Another important issue was the introduction of Christianity through the early missionaries who were against the native traditional beliefs. The missionaries regarded the traditional African customs and practices as paganism. According to Auret (1990), the Shona were more amenable to being converted to Christianity; thus eroding traditional leadership in colonial Zimbabwe. The status of traditional leadership was also reduced by the colonial administrators who forced the traditional leaders to represent the interests of the colonial

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[17] Culturally the Shona and the Ndebele are patriarchal, e.g. men are expected to lead in public in issues to do with religion, governance and household / homestead decisions although these issues are normally discussed with everyone in the household.

masters. Traditional leaders who refused were deposed and compliant leaders were installed instead (Chatiza 2010). While there are various cases/examples of the resistance by traditional leaders to colonial rule, they were not successful as they were not united and lived geographically far away from each other (Nyangoni 1978). It is important to note that the Shona and the Ndebele did not have a cordial relationship because of the periodic raids which were carried by the Ndebele among the Shona chiefs.

The first large-scale resistance war was ignited by a Shona chief who refused to pay tribute to King Lobengula citing that he was no longer his vassal since he was now under the laws and rules set by the colonial settlers (Knight-Bruce 1892). In return, King Lobengula sent his army to punish the chief; causing disruption on settlers mining and other economic activities. The Shona chief protested to the colonial government who responded by ordering the Ndebele warriors to leave, but they refused and clashes ensued, resulting in Lobengula suffering casualties (Nyangoni 1978). The impact of this was that during the Ndebele rebellion in 1896, all the colonial settlers were driven out of Matebeleland. However, this did not happen in the areas occupied by the Shona. The Shona chiefs, who were victims of Ndebele raids, were reluctant to join as the dominance of the Ndebele threatened a repeat of raids and brutality of the Ndebele warriors (Phimister 1988).

It is also important to note that the Chiefs controlling the southern parts of the present day Zimbabwe were frequently raided, hence their relationship with the colonial settlers was better than with the Ndebele (Beach 1986). Because of this history, the Shona chiefs responded individually; making it easier for the colonial settlers to crush the resistance. It is important to note, that across the Shona chiefdoms the resistance was being spearheaded by religious leaders known as spirit mediums. Shona resistance ended when the spiritual leaders were executed. The whole process ultimately alienated the traditional leaders from their subjects (Pasteur 1999: 32). It can be argued that the traditional leadership lost its place in leading the resistance against colonial masters, and became pawns of the colonisers to further their interests.

Colonial economic disenfranchisement and racial and land segregation led to a new resistance which was now centred on the urban blacks who were feeling the impact of colonial, racial, and other discriminatory laws. They then mobilised themselves into an armed struggle which lasted from 1966 to 1980 (Nyangoni 1978). While the struggle was not being spearheaded by traditional leaders, they did, however, play a critical role in the guerrilla warfare waged by

the natives against the colonial administration (Auret 1990). The main objectives of the armed struggle were to reclaim land from white commercial farmers, end racial discrimination; thereby opening up not only the political space, but also access to opportunities for the natives in Zimbabwe. The struggle was backed by communist China, the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), and eastern European countries; thus carrying a Marxist-Leninist and Maoist ideology. The expectation was that the new government was going to remodel its state around Marxist-Leninist Socialism (Davies 1988). The struggle for independence also saw a split in ZANU which started when disagreements on strategy emerged, and ending up being fashioned along tribal lines. While ZANU PF emerged from the split as the party which was more easily identified with the Shona, ZAPU emerged as more aligned to the Ndebele. During negotiations for independence, these political parties participated individually.

The armed struggle led to a negotiated settlement and elections in 1980. The ZANU PF won, with Robert Mugabe as the leader. The fact that independence came as a result of negotiated settlement, meant that the new Zimbabwe adopted a negotiated constitution. The negotiated constitution resulted in the new Mugabe government inheriting the colonial system of government with minimal changes. Of note was the issue of property rights which were left intact; thereby limiting land reform (Bourne 2011). The implication was that the government infused the capitalist economic policies of the colonial government with a few socialist interventions. This rendered the Mugabe government as reformist instead of socialist (Davies 1988).

4.3.1 Colonial local government system

The colonial era in Zimbabwe contributed in one way or the other to the development of the current local government system. As discussed earlier, Zimbabwe was under British colonial and settler rule from 1890 to 1980. There are events which happened during the colonial and post-colonial period which were critical in formulating the current local government institutional framework. The aim of presenting the historical background is to explain the major events which influenced the current dispensation of local government in Zimbabwe. The focus is only on those historical events that influenced the current system of local government. I argue that it is important to historically contextualise local government in Zimbabwe for an understanding of the mechanisms driving local government.

The colonial history of Zimbabwe shows that the first urban council was set up in 1891. This was the Salisbury Sanitary Board (Makumbe 1998). Salisbury is now known as Harare and is the capital of Zimbabwe. The Town Management Ordinance of 1894 saw the establishment of more sanitary boards such as the Bulawayo and Victoria[18] Sanitary Board. These Sanitary Boards were being set up in those urban areas where the Settler Pioneer Column made stopovers when they arrived in Zimbabwe during colonisation. During the setting up of urban areas, the colonial government, through the Municipal Ordinance of 1897, defined urban areas as areas inhabited by at least 25 non-Africans[19], of which half are supposed to be male employed in industries; not in agriculture (Wekwete 1987: 4). This definition disregarded precolonial cities which were already there before the arrival of the white settlers. The colonial urban and rural councils (Sanitary Boards) were mainly governed by applying racial segregation policies which treated the blacks as second class citizens with no apparent rights to chart their own developmental agenda. The colonial government created two systems of government, with the whites having a self-governing system, and the native population having a different system (Mutizwa-Mangiza 1991). The colonisers designed a self-governing system of local government for themselves and a separate system for the native black population. While blacks in Zimbabwe suffered social and political exclusion in local government, whites enjoyed self-governance (Chatiza 2010: 3). The existence of local government in black areas in colonial Zimbabwe, as deduced from the Native Councils Act of 1937, was mainly as a result of the need by the colonial government to ensure that black areas continued to be subservient to the white colonial government. The main objective of the local government in black areas was to facilitate the extraction of resources which in turn, benefited the colonial government. There was no intention of initiating real development in the black inhabited areas (Matumbike 2009: 5). The system ensured that both in urban and rural areas, black residential areas were set up with a view to supplying labour to white areas. The main objective of the colonial powers was to control and subjugate the natives through a perverted system of local government. There was unwillingness to let local authorities become spaces which local communities could use to gain power and independence (Prud'homme 2003: 18)

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[18] Present-day City of Masvingo.

[19] Non Africans referred in this case were whites.

4.3.1.1 Colonial rural local government

Local government in rural areas started in 1923 with the establishment of Native Councils which were responsible for the political administrative function of black areas (Mutizwa-Mangiza 1991). This was in response to the BSAC relinquishing its administrative powers. The Native Councils Act of 1937 gave birth to Native councils which were composed of traditional leaders, chiefs, headmen and black nominees nominated by the traditional leaders. As discussed earlier, traditional leaders were expected to be compliant to the demands of colonial administration. Non-compliance was punishable by removal from traditional leadership position or fines. It has to be noted that the traditional leaders did not have absolute power over the areas that they presided over, but were mere proxies of white administrators. Hence decision making was not within their reach but a preserve of the white administrators. Besides the native councils, white rural areas were governed through a Road Committee, which was responsible for facilitating the development of roads and other related infrastructure in the white rural areas (Matumbike 2009). The impact of Road Committees was that white rural areas were developed with better roads and infrastructure compared to black rural areas. This resulted in uneven development, thereby entrenching inequality. Until 1966, white rural areas were still being governed through Road Committees. The Rural Councils Act of 1966 resulted in the formation of councils which were specifically for white commercial farmers (Matumbike 2009: 9).

In rural areas, the local government was divided into two institutions according to racial lines. Various land segregation acts enacted during the colonial period namely, Land Apportionment Act of 1930, Land Tenure Act of 1969 and Land Husbandry Act of 1951, meant that whites and blacks lived in different areas. While the whites mainly occupied prime land which was used for commercial farming and mining, blacks were compelled to live in areas which were reserves and made up of marginal land not suitable for agriculture. While, on the one hand more than one million Africans were allocated only 28 million acres of land, on the other 48 million acres of prime land was allocated to 50 000 white settlers in Rhodesia (Bourne 2011). This created inequality between white areas and black areas. The approach of the colonial government to white areas was that of facilitating development and optimising their economic activities (Nyangoni 1978). Infrastructure in black areas was barely available, and where it existed it was for facilitating the extraction of natural and human resources for the benefit of the colonial government (Feremenga 2005: 341). In black

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areas, the approach was one of conquest and subjugation. The introduction of various pieces of legislation such as Land Apportionment Act of 1930 (barred blacks from owning land in urban areas), Land Tenure Act of 1969 and Land Husbandry Act of 1951 (unpopular land management legislation), were not designed to ensure development but to ensure that black areas supplied labour to white areas and cities. Since blacks were allocated unproductive land in rural areas they were forced to supplement their agricultural production through selling their labour in white areas. The levying of various taxes in black areas further exacerbated the situation. It can be argued that the colonial period saw the emergence of local government as a form of deconcentrated governance system; tailored in such a way so that the institutions which it created resembled the white supremacist nature of the white colonial government (De Valk and Wekwete 1990: 88). The emerging system of local government was there to consolidate colonial central state power.

What is important to note is that both in rural and urban areas, the white areas and black areas were governed separately; with the black rural areas being governed through African Councils under the Ministry of Native Affairs. These Councils did not have any power to influence social and economic development issues in their areas; rather they were blunt instruments aimed at colonial political administration (De Valk and Wekwete 1990). The overall authority and power in the rural areas were in the hands of the District Commissioner who was appointed by the central government. In order to further colonial white interest the district commissioners were always white during the colonial period (Matumbike 2009). The government's magistrates and police also worked towards this end (Beach 1986). This system was different from other British colonies elsewhere in Africa where a system of indirect rule using traditional authorities to govern, was applied (Bourne 2011).

Traditional leaders also played a critical role in propping up the colonial government by acting as proxies of the colonial government. In colonial Rhodesia, traditional leaders were assigned small judicial and tax collection duties. Traditional leaders were 'perverted' to serve the needs of the colonial government (De Valk and Wekwete 1990: 88). Those who did not conform to the dictates of the colonial government were dethroned and replaced by docile compliant leaders. As discussed earlier, traditional leaders initially offered resistance, but because there was no coordinated resistance those who resisted were deposed, assassinated or fined heavily. Chief Makoni was deposed, defeated and executed when he launched resistance against the colonial government (Phimister 1988). As discussed earlier, the impact

of missionary education also eroded the power of the traditional leaders as they lost some of their religious reverence because of the spread of Christianity. An analysis by De Valk and Wekwete (1990) shows that by 1977, three years before the end of colonial era, about 50% of all councillors who were part of the African councils were appointed on the basis of being nominated by traditional leaders. It can be assumed that docile traditional leaders will always recommend docile blacks to be councillors of the African Councils. However, while, they exuded docility in their dealings with the colonial administration, they harboured resentment of the colonial system; resulting in the majority of traditional leaders supporting the guerrillas/freedom fighters morally and materially during the armed struggle (Nyangoni 1978).

During the colonial period, there was no platform for blacks in rural areas to engage with the government in a meaningful way, because the relationship was that of the oppressor and the oppressed. Furthermore, the district commissioner represented the oppressor and the black rural dwellers represented the oppressed; the interaction was that of master and servants. Blacks were expected to be thankful even though they were fed crumbs from the colonial government table. According to Chatiza (2010), this type of relationship resulted in widespread resentment of the whole system of local government; thereby spurring black nationalists to use the discriminatory system of local government as a rallying point during the liberation struggle. The African Councils, and what they represented, became the target of attack during the liberation war by the nationalists. "By contradicting and destabilising African Councils the liberation struggle (essentially ZANU PF as de facto appropriator of a national process) installed structures around which early independence local government reforms were built. This sowed the seeds of party political appropriation of local government" (Chatiza 2010: 5).

As will be discussed later in this chapter, the appropriation of local government is even present today, where local government is being used as a political tool to further the interests of the person wielding it. The view of ZANU PF is that local government must be accountable and must be used to further the agenda of central government. The events in the colonial rural areas had a major influence on how the new post-colonial government shaped its local government policies. The approach in post-colonial Zimbabwe was to make local government subservient to the central government and to some extent the ruling party (evidence of this will be discussed in the later sections of this chapter). Ironically, the post-

colonial government was influenced by the approach taken by the previous colonial government since there were no intentions to make local government in the rural areas autonomous.

4.3.1.2. Colonial urban local government

During the colonial period, the same system of local government which was prevalent in the rural areas was at play in the urban areas. Therefore, urban areas resembled cities that were divided along racial lines; effected through the enactment of various pieces of legislation. The present day City of Harare was granted municipal status in 1897 through the Municipal Ordinance (Matumbike 2009: 11). Since Blacks were not considered permanent residents of urban areas, they were not afforded services that were on par with those provided for whites in the cities (Feremenga 2005: 344). Africans were also regarded as uneducated, backward, apathetic, and hence unable to make their own decisions. This led to the colonial government not providing Africans with the avenues to make decisions on their developmental aspirations.

The passing of the Urban Areas Act of 1947 brought changes to all the urban areas in Zimbabwe. The act denied housing to unemployed blacks, put the responsibility of black workers housing on the shoulders of their employers, and categorised all females as minors who in addition, were not allowed to access housing without marriage (Raftopoulos and Mlambo 2009: 94). The Land Apportionment Act, which was amended in 1961 to accommodate the growing black population in urban areas, led to the development of black townships which were located far away from white areas and the city centre (Patel 1988: 21). The employers provided free housing for their employees which they had to vacate upon termination of employment; further perpetuating inequality in terms of access to housing and introduced the issue that blacks were temporary residents of the city (Masvaure 2015).

In 1973, the Urban Councils Act brought about changes to how the cities were governed. The act further entrenched racial segregation in the cities through the creation of African Advisory Boards which were responsible for the affairs of the blacks. The board created to give advice to the council on issues affecting black areas. The cities were divided into two areas; one for whites, where they enjoyed self-governance, and the other, which was governed by the African Advisory Board, was for blacks. The city council's representatives were elected using two distinct voters' rolls, the white voters' roll and the Advisory Board

Voters Roll. The councils' white voters roll was made up of all white property owners, business owners and every white person who been resident in the city for at least three years. The Advisory Board Voters Roll was made up of blacks who either owned or rented accommodation and blacks who owned businesses in African areas (Chatiza 2010).

What was peculiar about the voting system in cities was that the whites voted for direct representatives who sat on the council and made decisions, whilst the blacks voted for a representative who sat on the African Advisory Board. The board's responsibility was to give advice, giving advice resulted in lack of accountability and acceptable decision making as advice can be accepted or rejected. The urban councils' finances were also divided into two, one for white areas and the other for black areas.

During the colonial period urban blacks did not have a direct say on how development was to be effected in their areas. In both urban and rural areas that were occupied by blacks, there was an increasingly centralised and authoritarian nature of local government. However in white Rural Councils and urban white areas there was a degree of autonomy in terms of how their areas were governed (Stewart, Klugman and Helmsing 1994: 5). In both rural and urban areas there was no active participation by blacks in the local government system. As discussed previously, the abuse of the local system in Zimbabwe by the colonial government created a deep resentment of the system of local government by liberation political parties and influenced how the post-colonial government dealt with local government reform. It is clear that the system of local government during colonial times created socio-economic and political inequality among different races. My personal observation shows that the inequality is still prevalent in all the urban areas in Zimbabwe. There was no effort to enforce good governance, democracy and advancement of blacks. Instead black people were expected to be passive recipients of services rather than initiators of the development process.

4.4 Post-colonial period

At the dawn of independence in 1980, one would expect the new Zimbabwe to become a fully socialist country with some traits of communism because of the support from eastern European countries and China. However, this did not happen. The land promised to the peasant farmers in the crowded rural areas was never redistributed with urgency. According to De Valk and Wekwete (1990), the struggle for an independent Zimbabwe was spearheaded by radical Marxist-Leninist and Maoist ideologies which were against the preservation of the

interests of a minority. Makumbe (1998) argued that independence ushered in new governors who did not dismantle the colonial governance system. As a result, power was not restored entirely to the traditional leaders, but remained in the hands of the highly centralised state. At the present moment, Zimbabwe has around 250 traditional chiefs who are spread across the various rural districts and still regarded as the custodians of the customary law and practises (Makumbe 2010: 88). At independence, traditional leadership was stripped of the small judicial and tax collection duties which were then assigned to community courts and Rural District Councils respectively (Makumbe 2010). It is important to note that pre-colonial traditional leadership represented an independent form of authority; based on its own form of legitimation informed by customs and religion (De Valk and Wekwete 1990: 12) Traditional leadership, even in postcolonial Zimbabwe, is still appointed/ approved by the ministry responsible for local government. Traditional leaders also receive salaries from the central government (Alexander 2004). This means that traditional leaders are likely to support the government of the day. The approval and remuneration of traditional leadership by the state negatively affects the legitimation of the office of the traditional leaders. This argument is supported by Makumbe (2010: 92) who stated that the main reason why ZANU PF roped in traditional leaders in post independent Zimbabwe was that it felt it was losing power; hence the need to use the general acceptance of the traditional leader by the Zimbabwean population to its advantage.

As will be discussed later in this chapter, the first decade of independence was mainly focused on addressing the inequalities created during the colonial period. There was social and infrastructural investment in rural and urban areas (Wekwete 1990). Since independence and after the new constitution was negotiated, the ZANU PF government was reluctant to make wholesale changes. Therefore, only a few reforms that aimed to address inequality were implemented, such as the use of government subsidies on basic services and goods. It was a period of political consolidation by the new government (Feremenga 1990). The second decade of independence resulted in the government shifting focus from addressing inequality to growing the economy and adopting policies that were aimed at transforming the state into a free market economy. The government found itself adopting Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) tailored by international financiers IMF and WB (Mlambo 1997) to fund its national budget. While the pre-independence economy was tailored to support a small portion of the population (mainly whites), after independence, there was a need to find more resources to cater for the majority of the previously disadvantaged population. The Zimbabwean economy

couldn't generate these resources, hence the adoption of SAPs. The adoption of SAPs resulted in the removal of subsidies as SAPs dictated that government reduce its expenditure. During the initial years of adopting SAPs, favourable economic growth was achieved but it was at the huge cost of increasing poverty. Discontent and protests started in urban areas and culminated in the formation of a stronger opposition party, the MDC, in 1999 (Bond and Manyanya 2003).

The formation of a stronger opposition resulted in ZANU PF being challenged politically at the national level and also at the local government level. Nationally ZANU PF won 62 of the 120 contested parliamentary seats in the general elections in 2000, while the MDC won 58 seats. This was unprecedented in the sense that up until then ZANU PF had enjoyed a more than 90% majority in parliament. ZANU PF's seats in parliament were boosted to 92 seats by a constitutional requirement which mandated the president to appoint extra 20 members of parliament; and an additional 10 seats were reserved for provincial governors. At the local level, ZANU PF lost all the major urban areas in Zimbabwe; resulting in the ruling party mainly controlling on the rural local authorities. In response to the strong opposition ZANU PF increased its grip on the central state and branded the MDC as a project of the imperialists with the objective of destabilising the state. The ruling party used this as a justification to use state institutions to fight the opposition political party (Bond and Manyanya 2003). This sets the scene for this study where the ruling party was using the state institutions to fight a powerful opposition in local government institutions.

4.4.1   *Post-colonial local government system*

In order to understand the post-colonial government in Zimbabwe, it is important to divide the post-colonial period into two eras, the first decade of independence (from 1980-1990) and the post-1990 era. The first decade of independence marked several reforms which were aimed at addressing the dual system of local government which was installed by the colonial government. It was also a period of consolidating political power by the new post-colonial government. The post-1990 era of Zimbabwe saw the influence of global players in local government in Zimbabwe which shaped the current local government institutional framework.

4.4.1.1. The first decade of independence

The end of the colonial period in 1980 saw the central government focusing on local government as a sphere for promoting socio-economic development and addressing social inequality created during the colonial era. The approach of the new post-colonial government was to focus on national issues first and then address the issue of urban and rural councils (Kamete 2003: 193). According to Wekwete (1994: 43) the long-term goal of the new government at independence was that of transforming a capitalist economy to a socialist one. Various pieces of legislation and policy directives were designed to address the rural and urban colonial imbalances of local government. The post-colonial government treated the rural and urban local government differently. In order to analyse the post-colonial local government effectively, it is prudent to separate the rural local government system from the urban one.

4.4.1.2. Post-colonial rural local government

Immediately after taking over power the ruling party ZANU PF government made changes to the local government structure in rural areas. The changes were tailored towards a representative democracy which was implemented nationally at independence. The first action was the passing of the District Councils Act (1980), which enabled the amalgamation of the 220 African Councils into fifty-five district councils (Mutizwa-Mangiza 1990). This process was aided by the introduction of adult suffrage in voting for council representatives (ward based councillors). Voters were able to directly elect councillors to a district council. Traditional leaders were no longer nominating representatives of the council but were now ex officio members of the district councils (Mutizwa-Mangiza 1991). The removal of the traditional leaders' powers was in response to their previous docile relationship with the colonial government. In rural areas, it was a first attempt to introduce participation of the voters into how their areas were governed. Even though rural residents were now participating in local government through the election of decision-makers, *active* participation was not necessarily achieved, since real participation is a function of many other factors and not simply the election of decision makers (to be discussed in subsequent chapters).

In terms of rural governance, post-1980 local government was initially coordinated by the ruling party local committees and cells; thereby playing the function of the state in the rural

areas. This was mainly because of the lack of trust between the new government and the bureaucratic officials who were installed by the colonial government (Alexander 2004: 196). The party committees shouldered the responsibility of distributing aid, reconstruction and communication with the central government; thereby bypassing the traditional leadership (Makumbe 1998). This type of involvement of the party committees can be used to interpret the political thinking of the new ZANU PF government. The socialist ideology of the post-colonial government emphasised state control in all spheres of government; indicating an agenda of crafting a highly powerful centralised government. Although the government was under a parliamentary democracy, the actions of the central government (funding model, decision-making model, and direct control of local government by the central state) were aimed at creating a one party state with very little separation of responsibilities between the government and the ruling party (Compagnon 2011: 8). Ultimately, this approach had a greater bearing on the form and outcome of decentralisation in Zimbabwe.

A very interesting fact is that it was only in 1988 that the new government, during the passing/enactment of the District Councils Act of 1980, incorporated the Rural Councils (councils responsible for rural white areas) into district councils. The practical implementation of the Rural District Act of 1988 only occurred in 1993, because of a conflict on how the resources and boundaries of the new system were to be aligned (Alexander 2004: 196). The same system of local government which was used by the colonial government remained intact in white rural areas for thirteen years after the colonial era ended. The implication of not amalgamating the white area councils into district councils was that the black farm and mine workers remained disenfranchised, with no right to vote; despite the fact that they were the majority in these areas. This served to further perpetuate the colonial legacy in the new 'independent' Zimbabwe. The white Rural Councils, comprising mainly of commercial farming and mining areas, had a direct and important contribution to the national economy. These councils, unlike the black District Councils, retained their autonomy and independence. They were not dependent on central government resources. According to Stewart, Klugman and Helmsing (1994), the District Councils only managed to raise 15% of their revenue, while the rest was supplemented by the central state through sector ministries and government grants. This resulted in a parent-child relationship between the central state and District Councils (Matumbike 2009: 19).

In 1988, through the passing of the Rural District Council Act of 1988, the post-colonial government amalgamated the District Councils and the Rural Councils; forming the Rural District Councils (Stewart, Klugman and Helmsing 1994) which resulted in well serviced and resourced white areas being joined with poorly serviced and resourced black areas. The disenfranchised farm and mine workers gained voting rights which changed the governance composition of former white Rural Councils as blacks were now in majority. They now had the opportunity of electing leadership resembling/representing their demographics. According to De Valk and Wekwete (1994), full amalgamation was only completed in 1993.

During the first decade of independence in Zimbabwe, local government reform in rural areas was not a priority. As the new government was ushered in, its main objective was to consolidate political power first. Despite the piecemeal pieces of legislation to promote the end of racial discrimination in rural areas, the government did not commit to affording rural areas autonomy in local government. The central state retained the power to determine the development path which the rural areas were to take. This resulted in local government in rural areas in the post-colonial era largely addressing bureaucratic directives from central government (Makumbe 1998: 39). Makumbe (1998) also noted that appointed officials at district councils were exercising more authority than elected representatives, because they were linked to the central government and were knowledgeable about the available resources.

The central state failed to provide effective avenues for communities to be involved in decision making by not empowering the District Councils with resources. The various sectors had no ability to make decisions with financial implications at district level without consulting the parent ministry (Matumbike 2009). Thus the district council became just a talk shop, without any power and resources to implement its own decisions. It is evident that local government in rural areas remained centralised.

4.4.1.3. Post-Colonial urban local government

The initial step in the urban areas in Zimbabwe was the amendment made to the Urban Councils Act to address racial segregation in cities. The government approach was that of "growth with equity" as stipulated in the government's 1981 economic policy *Growth with equity: an economic policy statement* published by the Government of Zimbabwe. The post-colonial state pursued economic growth, coupled with policies which were meant to address inequalities created by the colonial capitalist system. However, several scholars agree that the

ideological and political rhetoric of growth with equity was not transformed into practical turnabout of the political economy of the country (for example, Wekwete 1994; Makumbe 1998; Raftopoulos and Mlambo 2009).

In urban areas, the voting rights were amalgamated under a single adult suffrage (Matumbike 2009). This means that for one to vote in the urban local government elections one needed to have attained 18 years of age and be resident in the concerned urban local authority area. The amalgamation resulted in the creation of one voters' roll for each and every urban council; thereby discarding the colonial practise of dual voters' roll and Advisory boards. According to Kamete (2003: 201), the reason that ZANU PF granted the universal suffrage in urban areas was because they wanted to stamp their political authority in divided urban areas; resulting in composition of the city council changing with the majority of the representatives now coming from formerly black areas. This meant that they had more power to decide on the decisions regarding development and revenue accrued in the City of Harare (Matumbike 2009). The post-colonial era also saw affluent blacks moving from townships to the affluent formerly white suburbs.

The structure of urban councils from 1980 to 1990 was set in such a way that councillors were elected per ward and their term of office was for two years (Urban Councils Act 1980). All the urban councils were headed by a ceremonial mayor who was elected by the councillors during their first council meeting. According to the Urban Councils Act of 1980, the management of the urban councils was left to the Town clerk, whose position was equivalent to that of a chief executive officer in a private company. An interesting development in centre-local relations occurred in the City of Gweru in 1985, where the ministry of local government dismissed the ceremonial mayor (who was from the ruling ZANU PF); citing insubordination. In response to the dismissals, the ward councillors resigned *en masse* in solidarity with their mayor (Kamete 2003). This shows that the dismissals did not only start with the ascendance of the opposition in local authorities.

With regard to the revenue of the urban areas, during colonial era, black areas in towns and cities were paying service levies instead of rates (Urban Councils Act 1973). This meant that the revenue emanating from the black areas were less, and not designed to cover the cost of proper service delivery (Coutinho 2010). At independence, the new government removed the financial divisions according to race in cities, thereby consolidating the revenue base for the whole urban area. However, black areas continued paying service levies instead of rates; thus

reducing the financial capacity of the urban areas and resulting in inadequate revenue for a proper service delivery (Matumbike 2009). This was further compounded by the socialist ideology of the government of not allowing urban councils to charge cost recovery rates for service delivery (Coutinho 2010). Consequently, the ability of the urban councils to maintain their infrastructure and provide better services was severely compromised.

During the first decade of independence the relationship between the decentralised urban local authorities and the minister of local government can be regarded as cordial, However, the central government retained the colonial authority of approving levies and all the rates charged to the residents by these councils, as well as the approval of the cities' annual budgets. The central ministry introduced a precondition that residents' views on the budget should be elicited, before the annual budget is presented (Kamete 2003). However, there were no clear mechanisms to check if the consultation process was effective or mere tokenism. Centralisation of the decision-making process was also compounded by the amendment of the Urban Councils Act in 1995, which was   aimed at curbing abuses of council finances by the councillors and ensuring that certain decisions regarding council finances be approved by the local government ministry before implementation (Wekwete 1990). This could be seen as the continuation of centralisation of local government in Zimbabwe; leaving urban local authorities as mere deconcentrated structures or a field office of the ministry of local government.

During the first decade of independence, local government was not effective. This was because the central state was too centralised to the extent that no substantive power was shared with local authorities. Rural local authorities depended on the central state for leadership and resources. Too much power was bestowed on the Minister of Local Government, to the extent that she/he could change the whole system at her/his will. The fact that communities/residents were not given the opportunity to participate actively in local government, resulted in local government institutions implementing the developmental aspirations of the central state, and not those of the people.

4.4.2   *Post-colonial provincial local government in Zimbabwe*

Significant developments in decentralisation were introduced in 1984 through a government policy document; termed the Prime Minister's directive and authored by the then Prime Minister, Mr Robert Mugabe (Wekwete and Mlalazi 1990). This directive introduced two

new components to how the state was to be governed. While the first change was the introduction of provinces in Zimbabwe, the second introduced the notion of public participation in development planning.

The directive further served to divide the country into eight provinces and in the process created an office of a provincial governor who was not only a political appointee of the central state, but also the delegated head of government at the provincial level; reporting directly to the president (Government of Zimbabwe 1984). The office of the governor was equivalent to the office of a cabinet minister. The directive also created provincial councils which were legislated by the enactment of the Provincial Councils and Administration Act in 1985. The provincial councils were mainly made up of appointed officials from various ministries and district councils. The main duty of the provincial council was to coordinate development planning in the relevant province (Wekwete 1994).

The component of participatory planning was structured in such a way that it created a hierarchy of command from the village level to the national government level, with lowest structure of participatory planning being the Village Development Committee (VIDCO), followed by the Ward Development Committee (WADCO), and the District Development Council (DDC). The VIDCOs and WADCOs were formed by elected representatives in villages and wards respectively, with the expectation that the elected representatives were expected to prioritise issues in their committees. The expectation was that these structures would meet bimonthly and deliberate on developmental issues. The DDCs would consolidate the views from the lower structures and produce a district development plan which was then forwarded to the provincial council. It is important to note that the DDCs were made up of councillors. The majority of the members came from central government line ministries (Stewart, Klugman and Helmsing 1994) and who served in the council as deconcentrated authority with no binding decision-making authority.

The major problem with the provincial setting was that it was more of a deconcentrated structure which depended heavily on central government funding for its programmes. This funding was not even structured in the form of grants, but rather was channelled through central government line ministry programmes; resulting in decision making for development being dictated centrally, instead of by the provincial and lower structures. The second problem was that the ideology of the ruling party envisaged a powerful central state; which resulted in the ruling party capturing these newly created structures for their own political

ends (Chatiza 2010, De Valk and Wekwete 1994). As alluded to earlier this was exacerbated by the channelling of government communication and programmes through the ruling party structures during the earlier years of independence. Therefore, the provincial council cannot be regarded as a structure which exuded the principles of democratic decentralisation because it was under the direct control of the central state through the provincial governor and the central government line ministries.

4.4.3   Post 1990 local government in Zimbabwe

In the early 1990s, Zimbabwe found itself implementing a raft of economic policies prescribed by the international financiers IMF and the WB, in the form of SAPs. This policy package was called the Economic Structural Adjust Policy (ESAP). The major justification for their adoption was that because the state was not raising enough revenue to finance its socialist developmental approach, it had to approach international lenders such as the IMF and WB. This change in economic policy had an impact on decentralisation in several ways, namely; ESAP prescribing that government reduce its expenditure through various reforms like cutting the civil service staff, removing subsidies on transport, health, basic foodstuffs, education and so forth, and privatising state parastatals, removing protectionist market policies, and decentralising local government.

The impact of the multilateral funding and presence of aid organisations was that they enforced decentralisation by funding decentralised institutions directly, as compared to channelling their funds through the central state (Conyers 2003). A good example of this is when the WB funded a housing programme called Urban I and Urban II directly. The reason for direct funding was their perception that the central government was inefficient and would not use the funds effectively. The state was compelled to grudgingly decentralise, even though local government institutions were not given autonomy; and avenues for future control of decentralised institutions were left open for the central government through the ministry responsible for the local government, to intervene in local government affairs (Kamete 2003).

During the post-1990 period, the objectives of decentralisation changed from addressing inequalities to focusing on two major areas: Firstly, to reduce the role of government/state in the economy (Makumbe 1998) and prime local government to produce institutions that created the necessary environment for the private sector businesses to thrive; and secondly,

to reduce government expenditure, especially of the central government in the provision of services. While this resulted in greater responsibility falling on local government to provide service delivery in the City of Harare, there was no increase in financial resources; resulting in a decline in services being provided and poor maintenance of infrastructure (Coutinho 2010). The objective of SAPs was to roll back the state, create an enabling environment for private business to thrive and transfer its service delivery duties to the private sector; mainly because the perception was that the state was corrupt and inefficient, and therefore not a suitable vehicle for effective service delivery (Mlambo 1997). Ironically, the adoption of SAPs transferred some form of power and responsibility to the urban local authorities, which in turn led to the creation of semi-autonomous institutions of local government in urban areas.

In 1995, in response to the principles of SAPs, the central state amended the Urban Councils Act to change the position of mayor from being a ceremonial to an executive position, and elected directly by the voters. A closer analysis of the amendment shows that this was not reciprocated by the reduction/realigning of the powers of the town clerk, therefore creating two centres of power in one local government institution. To reiterate, the town clerk position is a meritocracy and professional position. According to the Urban Councils Act, the town clerk is the head of administration/bureaucracy at urban local authority level. In principle, the mayor was supposed to be the political leader of the local authority and provide policy direction for the local authority. The executive mayoral model empowered the mayor with policy making and implementation powers; thereby marking the beginning of an antagonistic relationship between the three stakeholders, the mayor, the town clerk and the central government in the event of the executive mayor coming from the opposition political parties. Interference from the Minister of Local Government resulted in the first executive mayor in Harare only being elected in 2002; long after the election of mayors in other cities such as Chegutu and Masvingo (Munzwa and Wellington 2010). This interference will be discussed in detail in subsequent sections of this thesis.

The first executive mayor of the City of Harare and a number of elected councillors were dismissed and replaced by government-appointed commissioners (Chatiza 2010). These dismissals were effected with no evidence of proper consultation with residents; but done

under the guise of protecting residents' interests[20]. What can be deduced from these actions is that since the council was dominated by the opposition, the dismissals served as constant attempts by the central state to recapture the city. These actions further indicate that in reality, little effective power was actually decentralised to the institutions created in urban local authorities. The major challenge to decentralisation was that the Urban Councils Act bestowed too much power on the central government appointed minister; instead of the decentralised institutions (Makumbe 1998). The act bestowed upon the minister powers to re-assign responsibilities of local authorities without consulting the local authorities and the residents, who feel the brunt of the impact of these decisions.

It is important to note that for over two decades, from 1980 to 2000, the ZANU PF government never faced any strong opposition and was in total control of all the urban and rural local government authorities (Raftopoulos 2000). Nationally it was also dominant, with above 95% majority in parliament. When the Urban Council Act was amended in 1995, there was a belief that the status quo would continue in perpetuity. Strong opposition in post-colonial Zimbabwe only started in 1999 with the formation of the MDC. In the year 2000, the opposition's strength was felt, when it mobilised the national electorate to vote "No" in the constitutional referendum. The "No" votes won the referendum and in the same year the opposition won 58 parliamentary seats out of the 120 contested seats (Raftopoulos 2002: 414). It is significant to note that most of the opposition seats were in the urban areas. Most scholars (Matumbike 2009, Compagnon 2011, Bond and Manyanya 2003 agree that the reason why the opposition won in urban areas was because of ESAP and bad economic management which increased the cost of living, retrenchment, and unemployment. The responsibility was placed squarely on the shoulders of the ZANU PF government for this (Kamete 2003).

In 1996, the first executive mayor of the City of Harare, from ZANU PF, was elected to serve a five-year term from 1996 to 2001. In 1999, because of corruption and poor service delivery in Harare, the council led by the mayor was suspended and dismissed by the Minister responsible for local government (Thomson Commission Report 1999). He became the second mayor to be dismissed before the opposition took control of urban areas in Zimbabwe.

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[20] This is my personal opinion formulated whilst I was still a resident of Harare at the time when the mayor and councillors were dismissed.

The elected councillors were then replaced by a Commission; appointed by the Minister of Local Government to run the affairs of Harare. The head of the commission was in fact the deputy of the dismissed mayor and previously from the MDC, but had defected to ZANU PF when appointed to be the chairperson of the commission[21].

According to the Urban Councils Act, the Commission was supposed to be only a caretaker council for six months to allow new councillors to be elected. However, the Commission ended up running the affairs of the city of Harare until 2002. The ZANU PF, by virtue of its control over the Ministry of Local Government, was pushing its agenda by illegally extending the mandate of the commission.

The legality of the Commission was challenged in court and a high court judgement in 2001 was passed instructing the Registrar General[22] and the President to pronounce election dates for the Harare City Council. This judgement was disregarded and not adhered by the ZANU PF until 2002, when local government elections were finally held in Harare. The opposition (MDC) swept all wards and the executive mayorship. By the end of 2002, the MDC was controlling all the major cities and urban areas in Zimbabwe, with the ZANU PF being relegated to rural local authorities. What was significant was that during the post-2002 period, the opposition was controlling the seat of local government in Harare. The ensuing frosty relationship between the opposition and the ruling party led to dismissals of several executive mayors and councillors by the Minister responsible for local government (Kamete 2003).

An assumption can be made that, since executive mayors were bestowed with executive powers over the local government authorities, this situation resulted in ZANU PF (ruling party) facing challenges in exerting their central authority on local government authorities; especially those urban authorities controlled by the opposition. An analysis of revenue

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[21] This information is common knowledge to people who were residing in Harare during that period.

[22] The Registrar General (a public office under Ministry of Home Affairs) was responsible for running elections in Zimbabwe and was a custodian of the voters roll before the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission was established in 2004. The Registrar General is a civil servant with birth and death registration as the main duties. In terms of running elections and preparing the voters roll; the Registrar general was supervised by the Electoral Supervisory Commission. The Registrar is appointed to this post by the President of Zimbabwe. Thus, during the period that they were responsible for the voters' roll and elections (up until 2004), one can see that a situation of conflict was possible if their election related decisions went against the central state.

sources reveals that urban local authorities have a better revenue base than rural authorities; thus making them lucrative for central state control if it is driven by patronage.

Various amendments to the Urban Councils Act of 2008 resulted in loopholes through which the central government could change the system of local government. For example, the Act gave the Minister of Local Government power to decide whether a specific urban local authority should have a ceremonial or executive mayor. The Minister was able to replace executive mayorship with ceremonial mayorship which was part time and had reduced powers and functions. Perks, such as salary, mayoral accommodation, and assistants were removed along with the day-to-day monitoring of council business. The argument I am putting forward here is that the reversion to the ceremonial mayorship was a way of dealing with opposition-dominated urban local authorities and their powerful executive mayors. The result was that the town clerk was now the sole holder of executive powers and he/she reported directly to the Ministry of Local Government. All these changes were implemented by the central state without any consultation with the residents, political parties, civil society, and urban councillors (McGregor 2013: 788). Furthermore, they were designed and implemented by a ministerial appointee who was not elected by the urban people who would be feeling the impact of these changes.

Another example is that the Minister could use his/her power to control/intervene in local authorities. The Minister had the power to decide whether to appoint special interest councillors for local government authorities after every election (Urban Councils Act Section 4 A). The Act mandated the Minister to appoint 25% of councillors for each local authority as special interest councillors. These amendments had the effect of diluting the powers of the opposition in local authorities by boosting the numbers of the ruling party councillors. These appointments did not conform to representative democratic principles, since it was the Minister who had the sole responsibility of appointing these special interest councillors'.

The 2008 harmonised[23] elections were inconclusive and negotiations through the Southern African Development Community (SADC) resulted in a coalition government; with ZANU PF controlling the executive presidency (McGregor 2013). This created a state made up of two competing political centres of power and a disjointed state. The distrust between central

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[23] Harmonised elections included Local government, parliamentary and presidential elections all at once.

state political players was evident in some of the ministries. A good example is the Ministry of Home Affairs which had two co-ministers simultaneously- one from the MDC and the other from ZANU PF. The local government ministry remained under the control of ZANU PF. It is important to note that in democratic developed countries like the United Kingdom, strong political parties result in the improvement of the efficiency of decentralisation (Enikolopov and Zhuravskaya 2007).

The 2008 local government elections results were interesting, because the opposition not only won the majority of urban local authorities, but also managed to gain entrance into rural local authorities by gaining seats in rural local authorities. The table below shows the proportion of local government authorities in 2008.

Table 3: 2008 local government election results

Local authorities	MDC- Tsvangirai[24]	MDC-Ncube[25]	ZANU (pf)	Total
Urban	27	2	1	30
Rural	15	2	43	60
TOTAL	42	4	44	90

Source: Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (2008)

It is clear that even though the central government was a coalition, the opposition parties to ZANU PF controlled the majority of the local authorities by a slight margin. One would have imagined that, since there was a shared responsibility centrally, the centre-local relationships would have improved. This did not occur as more councillors and mayors were being suspended and fired on various allegations. The animosity between the ZANU PF controlled Ministry of Local Government and opposition controlled local authorities did not abate (Jonga and Chirisa 2010). This defined a long period of unshared vision and frosty centre-local relations. The coalition government ended in 2013, when ZANU PF won both the presidential and parliamentary elections with more than two-thirds majority. In urban local authorities , the opposition MDC still dominated all major cities and towns, but failed to gain ground in the rural areas.

The government of national unity ushered in a significant change to decentralisation, in the form of a new Constitution which was adopted in May 2013. Chapter 14 of the new Constitution deals specifically with decentralisation. In the course of this research the Urban

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[24] Mainstream opposition party after 2005 split headed by Tsvangirai

[25] Smaller splinter opposition from the mainstream MDC headed by W Ncube

Councils Act, Rural District Act and all the other acts responsible for local government were not yet aligned/repealed in accordance with the new Constitution. In essence, there is a very little change in centre-local relationships since the enactment of the new Constitution. The purpose of this section was to give a glimpse of the events which gave rise to the current institutional framework. A detailed analysis of centre-local relationship in Harare since 2002 to the present moment will be presented in detail in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5 : DECENTRALISATION INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK IN ZIMBABWE

"Local democracy implies that local government, like governments at upper levels, has a process of collective self-determination as its normative core". (Haus and Sweeting 2006: 267).

5.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to examine the institutional framework of local government in the context of the Zimbabwe's constitutional and policy framework. By institutional framework, I mean the state institutions and process which guide and control local government in Zimbabwe. This chapter will closely examine questions related to which acts of parliament or constitutional provision are available for local government in Zimbabwe, what institutions are responsible for various tasks and activities of local government and, the relationship between the political set up and local government in Zimbabwe.

As stated in Chapter 1, this research was conducted during a transitional constitutional period in Zimbabwe. The new Constitution, adopted in May 2013, incorporates decentralisation as a fundamental tenet, and not merely an Act of Parliament, as was previously the case. However, it is obvious that local government in Zimbabwe is still being administered under the previous Acts of Parliament which are yet to be repealed/aligned in accordance with the new Constitution. In reality, the impact of the new Constitution is still to be felt in local government in Zimbabwe. The constitutional transitional period does not lessen or affect the impact and contribution of this study to decentralisation. It is very fundamental to present the current institutional framework as it is, and then use the results to highlight areas where in reality/practically the local government system is lacking. However, a full evaluation of the legal implications of the new constitutional dispensation falls outside the scope of this study. Hence, this chapter examines the institutional framework of local government that is based on the old local government system; and which was in place when this study was embarked upon.

5.2 State arrangement of local government in Zimbabwe

There are various stakeholders which make up the local government system in Zimbabwe. These stakeholders are: the president of the country, the Ministry of Local Government, the parliamentary portfolio committee on local government, elected ward councillors (Councils), local authority's administrators, provincial councils, political parties and the citizens and civil society. The interaction of these stakeholders is complicated and at times there is a duplication of roles.

Local government in Zimbabwe derives its mandate from Chapter 14 of the new Constitution which sets out the main objectives of local government as follows:

- Local government is aimed at the preservation of national unity in Zimbabwe and the prevention of all forms of disunity and secessionism;

- Encourage the democratic participation in government by all citizens and communities of Zimbabwe; and

- Ensure the equitable allocation of central resources and the participation of local communities in the determination of the development priorities within their areas.

  (Constitution of Zimbabwe 2013)

In order to achieve the abovementioned objectives, the Constitution further states that there must be devolution of power and responsibilities to lower tiers of government. It is important to reiterate that pre-2013, local government / decentralisation was not enshrined in the Constitution. For thirty three years after colonial rule it was being administered by an act of parliament which was at the mercy of being amended by the majority party in parliament. The current Constitution advocates for three tiers of local government in Zimbabwe which include, provincial councils, urban local authorities (of which the City of Harare is one) and rural local authorities. These tiers as well as the layers of governance are depicted in Figure 3 below. After careful examination of the institutions in the light of various policies and Acts as well as the constitution, I have sought to depict the layers of governance as in Figure 3. This serves to take stock of structures as they emerge from the current state of affairs yielded by current Acts and the Constitution.

Figure 3: The system of local government in Zimbabwe
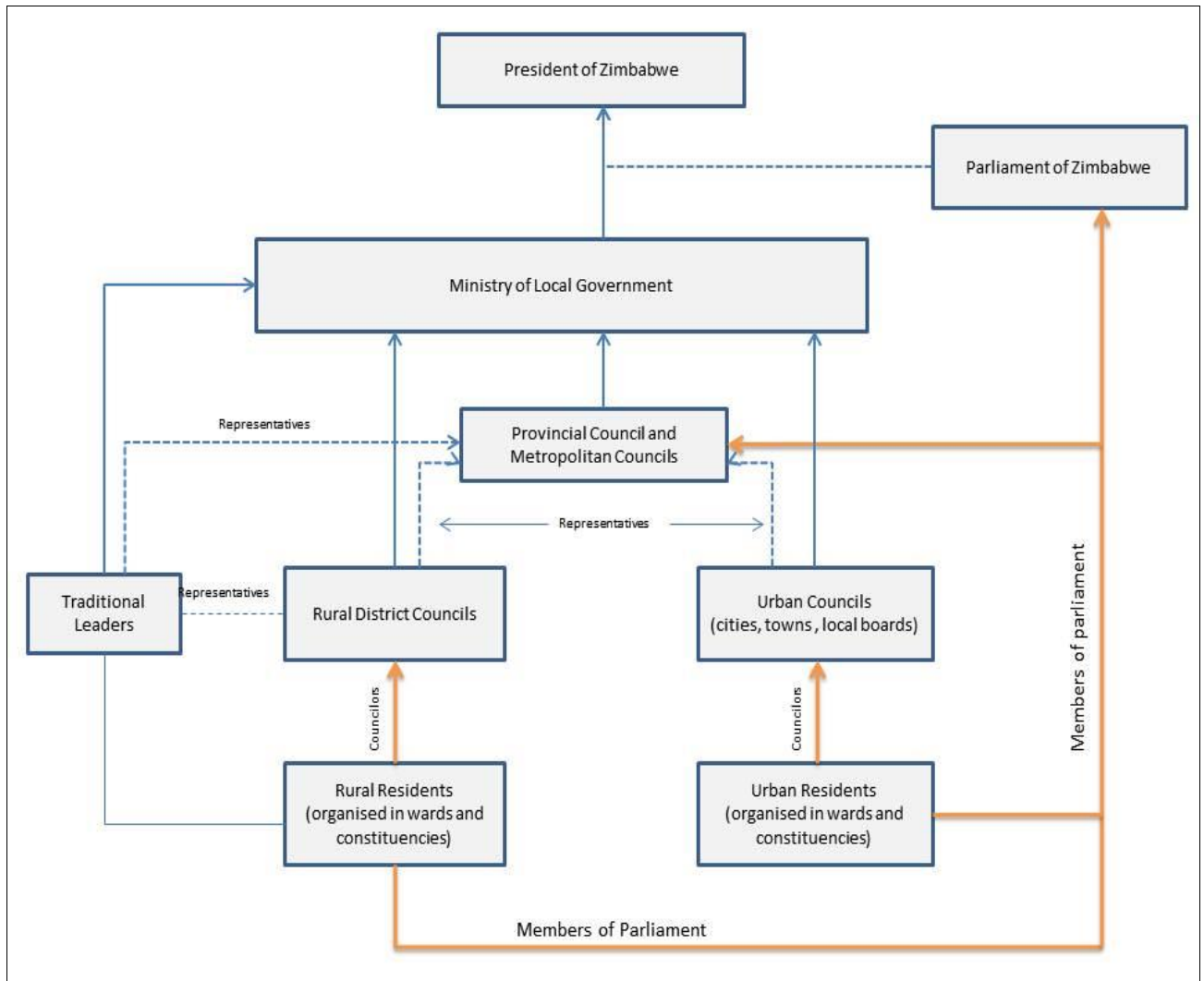
5.2.1 *Provincial and metropolitan councils*

The Constitution stipulates that governance systems are devolved into various tiers of local government; these are provincial councils, metropolitan councils, urban and rural councils. While provincial and metropolitan councils play the same role, provincial councils govern over vast areas that include rural and urban areas. There are ten provinces; two of which are urban metropolitan provinces which are Harare and Bulawayo metropolitan provinces. The composition of a provincial is as follows:

- All the members of National parliament whose constituencies fall within the geographical area of the province;

- The mayors and chairpersons of urban or rural local authorities found in that province;

- The senators elected from that province;

- Ten persons elected by a system of proportional representation after national general elections;

- Two senator chiefs elected from the province;

- The president and deputy president of the National council of chiefs if their traditional areas fall within the province concerned; and

- All the women members of National Assembly elected in that province

The chairperson of the provincial council is elected at the first sitting of the provincial council from a list of two people supplied by the political party which gained the most National Assembly seats or votes.

The composition of metropolitan councils is slightly different. The mayor of the largest and the second largest metropolitan city are automatic members of the council and occupy the position of the chairperson and vice chairperson, respectively. Since metropolitan areas are not under traditional leadership, the president and deputy president of the National Council of Chiefs are not part of the metropolitan councils. The provincial and metropolitan councils are accountable to the residents of their province and central government through the Ministry of Local Government. Informally it is expected that members of the provincial or metropolitan councils are also accountable to their political parties. The Harare metropolitan province is made up of two major municipalities; which are City of Harare and City of Chitungwiza. It is important to note that the provincial and metropolitan councils are not yet operational as of March 2016.

In terms of the Constitution, the function of the provincial and metropolitan councils is mainly to drive social and economic development in their provinces. Therefore, development planning and implementation of government programmes are part of the overall responsibility of provincial councils. Other functions include:
- Planning and implementing social and economic development activities in its province;
- Co-ordinating and implementing governmental programmes in its province;

- Planning and implementing measures for the conservation, improvement and management of natural resources in its province;

- Promoting tourism in its province, and developing facilities for that purpose;

- Monitoring and evaluating the use of resources in its province; and

- Exercising any other functions, including legislative functions that may be conferred or imposed on it by or under an Act of Parliament.

(Constitution of Zimbabwe 2013)

It is important to note that three years after the enactment of the Constitution in 2013, neither of these councils are operational or functional; mainly because of the absence of an Act of Parliament that would have the effect of implementing this constitutional provision. What is interesting is that after the 2013 elections, the President of Zimbabwe appointed Ministers of State (political heads) for each of the ten provinces. If the councils were operational this would have resulted in a duplication of roles as the Chairpersons of the councils are also supposed to act as political heads of the province. It is possible that these appointments may be an attempt to dilute the powers of provincial and metropolitan councils; controlled by the opposition political parties. It may also be a way of bringing back the office of the provincial governor which was abolished when the new Constitution was adopted. Prior to 2013, the provincial governors were appointed by the president and enjoyed cabinet authority.

The setup of provincial councils indicates an attempt by the new Constitution to create a devolved federal state. In this case, the Constitution does not advocate for full devolution of power, as the central state still has considerable power to change the agenda of the provincial councils. This argument is supported by the fact that at the present moment the provincial councils' budget comes from the central state. Even if the provincial councils can come up with viable socio-economic development programmes, they will have to convince the central state to agree; since it controls the funds to implement projects. It seems the provincial councils are only expected to ensure that central state programmes are implemented in their provinces. One can therefore foresee that without proper decision-making powers, provincial councils will be characterised as a deconcentrated form of central government.

5.2.2 *The role of Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing*

The Ministry responsible for Local Government is in fact the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing (MLGPWNH)[26]. It is the Ministry responsible for leading the development and management of the local government sector, and for representing the sector's interests at national and sub-national levels, in relation to other arms of government. It uses five acts of parliament which are the Urban Councils Act (Chapter 29: 15), Rural District Councils Act (Chapter 29: 13) Provincial Councils and Administration Act (Chapter 29: 11), Traditional Leaders Act (Chapter 29: 11), and the Regional and Town Planning Act (Chapter 29: 12). However, these Acts are not yet aligned to the new 2013 Constitution hence, some sections of these Acts are not compliant with the new constitution.

The Ministry is headed by a cabinet minister[27] who is a political appointee from the ruling party. The administrative arm of the Ministry is headed by a Permanent Secretary who is a civil servant with the responsibility of implementing government policy and heading the ministry's bureaucrats and appointed by the President. Beneath the MLGPWNH permanent secretary, there are directors who are responsible for urban local authorities, rural local authorities, and traditional authorities[28]. They deal directly with urban and rural local authorities, provincial councils and traditional leaders and perform supervisory functions over local authorities.

One would expect policies or guidelines which would define how centre-local relationships are regulated. Ministry of Local Government officials interviewed during fieldwork admitted that the Ministry has never had a policy or guidelines manual on local government post-1980. Directives and Parliamentary Acts which are deemed binding and meant to be complied with, are used as substitutes for policy in situations where the Ministry has to intervene in local authorities (Machingauta 2010: 144). The officials admitted in interviews, that at times they had to resort to amending the Acts in order to clarify or deal with certain issues, raised by local authorities. As will be discussed later, the absence of clear policy frameworks on local

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[26] Referred to as the Ministry of Local Government or Ministry in this thesis.

[27] From 2002 to August 2015 the Minister of Local Government was Ignatius Chombo.

[28] Since the cabinet reshuffle in September 2015, Traditional Authorities now fall under the Ministry of Rural Development.

government has led to several challenges and poor development of decentralisation in Zimbabwe. It has resulted in a 'planning on the go' approach; where ad hoc, piecemeal policy references and solutions are created to troubleshoot issues related to decentralisation.

The Minister of Local Government has powers over the all the local government institutions; for example, the powers to dismiss elected councillors and mayors. As discussed earlier there is evidence to show that the Minister has in the past exercised these powers, and dismissed several mayors and councillors; without any attempt to canvas the views of the residents who actually voted for the councillors. This presents a situation whereby the Minister, a political appointee, dismisses elected councillors; contradicting the principles of democratic representation. It is clear that the Minister's wide ranging powers can be used as a tool to enforce the policy directives of the central government by dismissing councillors who do not conform to central government's directives. This situation further complicates centre-local relations. The various interventions by the Minister of Local Government in the City of Harare will be discussed in the next chapter.

5.2.3 The local government board

The local government board is an institution created by the Urban Councils Act (2008) whose main function is approving the appointment or discharge of councils' senior employees. The functions of a Local Government Board are as follows:

- To provide guidance for the general organization and control of employees in the service of councils;

- To ensure the general well-being and good administration of council's staff and the maintenance thereof in a high state of efficiency;

- To make model conditions of service for the purposes stated in paragraphs (*a*) and (*b*) for adoption by councils;

- To make model regulations stipulating the qualifications and appointment procedures for senior officials of councils;

- To approve the appointment and discharge of senior officials;

- To conduct inquiries into the affairs and procedure of councils; and

- To exercise any other functions that may be imposed or conferred upon the Board in terms of this Act or any other enactment.

(Urban Councils Act of 2008)

Although the intention of the board is plausible, its set up is problematic. The Minister of Local Government has powers to dismiss members of the board, which compromises its independence. The powers bestowed upon the board for approval of appointment and discharge of senior council employees is problematic in the sense that the council as the employer has no final say in the affairs of its senior employees who are decision makers. In proper democratic decentralisation, the local authorities must have the power over their senior administrative staff. The fact that the appointment or dismissal of senior staff has to be approved by the Local Government Board means that local authority employees feel that they are more accountable to the Ministry of Local Government since it appoints the Local Government Board than to the local elected representatives. In some previous situations the City of Harare's elected councillors recommended the dismissal of the Town Clerk but the board did not approve of the dismissal. In such situations an appointed authority is exercising authority over an elected authority, which is not ideal for democratic decentralisation (this case will be discussed further in the next chapter). One can argue that the board can be used as an instrument by the Minister of Local Government to have control over who gets appointed to urban local authorities. The local Government Board does not have jurisdiction over rural local authorities as the chairpersons / chief executive officers are appointed directly by the Ministry of Local Government.

5.2.4 Urban local authorities

Zimbabwe has different types of urban councils. They are classified hierarchically from the largest to the smallest, namely; cities, municipalities, town councils, and local boards. There are thirty two urban councils in Zimbabwe. An urban local authority is made up of two types of officials; the administrative officials and elected representatives (councillors). The administrative component of the urban councils is headed by the Town Clerk and the elected representative component is headed by the ceremonial mayor. The elected representatives are elected from the electoral wards which are in the urban area concerned. All voters in wards are eligible to participate in the election of their ward representative who is called a

councillor. The councillors serve a term of five years. Since ward councillorship is regarded as a part-time occupation, there is no salary. Councillors only receive allowances to compensate them for the time they spend on council business. The ceremonial mayor is also regarded as a part-time employee who is remunerated for his time.

Councillors are responsible not only for policy formulation and political direction of the local authority, but also have executive powers[29] to implement their decisions. The role of the administrators of the local authority is to implement policies and bylaws formulated by the council. In order to execute their duties effectively, committees made up of councillors are formed. The City of Harare has the following eight committees:

- Finance and Development Committee;

- Human Resources and General Purposes Committee;

- Audit Committee;

- Procurement Board Committee;

- Environmental Management Committee;

- Education, Health, Housing, Community Services and Licencing Committee;

- Business Committee; and

- Information and Publicity Committee.

Each urban local authority can decide on how many committees they wish to form. The committees usually perform oversight roles in the local authority's several departments.

Urban local authorities are expected to raise most of their revenue from rates, levies, and taxes. The bulk of the urban authorities' income comes from selling water and property rates levied on residents and businesses. Prior to 2002 and the onset of the many economic challenges in Zimbabwe, urban local authorities received yearly grants from the central state. These grants eventually ceased. As a result, they are now expected to raise the majority of their revenue on their own. Urban local authorities are also allowed to borrow from the open financial market. This is only possible with the approval of the central government. Borrowing from international and local finance providers has been used as a way to finance

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[29] These powers are always a source of contestation between local authorities and the central state.

capital (infrastructure) projects in most urban local authorities (Matumbike 2009). The economic decay has affected most urban local authorities' credit worthiness. Hence, they are no longer able to borrow at favourable interest rates (City of Harare 2014a, Budget statement). Without access to central government grants and cheap international finance, most of the infrastructure in urban local authorities have decayed, and construction of new infrastructure has been stunted (Chatiza 2010). A scrutiny of most urban local authorities' budgets shows that the central government is not contributing towards their budgets, because central government expects local government to be self -sufficient in financing its programmes.

Accountability in urban councils is achieved in two ways: Firstly, urban councils are directly accountable to the central government through the Ministry of Local Government. The Urban Councils Act makes provision for direct Presidential intervention in the affairs of the urban councils. Secondly, the local authorities are accountable to the residents of the geographical area covered by the local authority. This form of accountability is mainly directed at the elected councillors. The representative democracy in Zimbabwe stipulates that the voters elect the councillors and the councillors act on behalf of the voters. What is not stipulated is whether the councillors have to consult on each and every decision the council takes, and whether they can apply their own discretion to make decisions on council matters. The role of voters after elections is also not clear. Historical evidence shows that in Zimbabwe the ballot box is the only effective tool which voters can use to express their views. They then have the opportunity to vote out councillors that are not performing to their expectations.

In addition to the above, elected councillors are also accountable to the political parties they represent. This creates a difficult conundrum regarding the accountability of the local authority to the Ministry of Local Government if the local authority is controlled by a different political party. Political parties by nature need to enforce their policy and ideological influence on institutions they control. The system of accountability in local government is open to clashes between the ruling party and political parties controlling local authorities, in the event of differences in political ideology and vision. One example of accountability is the participatory budgeting process which will be discussed in detail in subsequent chapters. The participatory budgeting process is as a result of a ministerial directive to all the local authorities in Ministry of Local Government Circular 3 of 2012. In accordance with this directive local authorities are accountable to local communities through

consultation during the budget formulation process. Local authorities are also accountable to the Ministry of Local Government which is responsible for approving the final budget.

The administrative component of the local authorities is accountable legally to two stakeholders. Internally, they are accountable to the elected councillors who provide oversight, policy and political leadership. The assumption is that this relationship should not raise any challenges as the roles of both the councillors and administrators are clearly stipulated in the various acts which provide for urban and rural local authorities. However, the findings of this study indicate that the relationship between the councillors and the administrators is not cordial, but frictional. The administrators are also accountable to the central government through the bureaucratic arm of the Local Government Ministry. This form of accountability is a major cause of policy discordance in situations where the ruling party is different from the political party controlling the local authority. A study by Mohmand and Cheema (2007) in Pakistan showed that accountability in decentralisation needs to be re-examined as downward accountability is more favourable than upward accountability.

5.2.5   Rural local authorities

The Rural District Councils Act of 2002 provides for the administration of rural local authorities. In terms of this Act these local authorities do not have a mayor as the political head, but rather a chairperson selected by the elected ward councillors, who are elected from the common ward voters roll. Sectoral district heads of various national ministries, the private sector, civil organisations and traditional leaders also form part of the rural local authorities. The administrative side of the Rural District Council is headed by the Chief Executive Officer who is appointed by the councillors, with the approval of the Minister of Local Government. The central government through the Ministry of Local Government is also represented by the District Administrator, who performs the role of chief advisor, implementer, and regulator of the council. From 1980 to 1993 the district administrator also performed the role of the Chief Executive Officer of the Rural District Council. Unlike urban councils, rural district councils can only borrow money from central government. It can be argued that rural local authorities are a deconcentrated structure of the central government. However, they also enjoy less autonomy as compared to urban councils.

The budget of rural local authorities is funded by the central government through various sector ministries. Rural local authorities, unlike urban local authorities, lack the revenue base

as they have very few rateable properties. In addition, very few of their residents can actually access levied water, which contributes large chunks of revenue in urban areas. The revenue which rural local authorities earn is not sufficient for the local authority to carry out its programmes; hence the bulk of their revenue comes from central government. Matumbike (2009) suggests that rural local authorities raise only about 15% of their overall budget. They depend financially and politically on the central government which in turn impacts on their actual the level of decentralisation. Therefore, where funding comes from the sectoral ministry, it is utilised specifically for certain projects, which are usually determined by the central government. It is clear therefore that local authorities have no control on what projects should be funded; leaving them subservient to the central government in all aspects.

5.2.6   The Role of councillors

It is important to explore the role or functions of councillors in local government in Zimbabwe. It is very interesting to note that despite legislation on local government, there is still no clarity on the functions of councillors. The closest document which stipulates the functions of councillors is the Handbook for Councillors (2013); which is a document with no legal standing. The Handbook is used for the induction of new councillors. The role and functions of the Mayors and Deputy Mayors are clearly stipulated in the Urban Councils Act. It seems that councillors also derive their roles from the broad functions of local authorities[30] and the legally stipulated roles of the various committees in which they serve. The absence of clearly defined roles of councillors in legislation may result in councillors performing duties that are not assigned to them. According to the Handbook for Councillors (2013: 21) the duties of councillors are as follows:

- They represent the residents in their ward during council meetings. They must source opinions from the residents and also provide feedback from the council meetings.

- They are mandated to attend council committee meetings and debate issues on the agenda. The debate must benefit the whole council not their wards only.

- Councillors are also expected to attend full council meetings and debate issues on the agenda.

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[30] Section 198 of the Urban Councils Act of 2008 and the Second Schedule.

This lack of clarity and absence of clearly defined roles has been the cause of contestation between councillors and administrators; which will continue if not dealt with. The consequences of this situation will be elaborated upon in the following chapter.

5.3 Autonomy in Local government in Zimbabwe

The notion of autonomy, in this study, is conceptualised as freedom from higher powers; having the capacity for developing or expressing local identity in local authorities (Pratchett 2004: 359). To achieve autonomy there is a need for local government to be given a legal standing which allocates specific powers that are distinct from the central state powers. These powers must enable the local authorities to formulate and execute their own policies. Local government must be able to operate independently of the central state, and must have the ability to make its own laws, rules and regulations. In order to capacitate local government to achieve its autonomy, there is a need for local authorities to have the ability to hire, promote and discipline its own staff, without central government interference (Berman 2015). Autonomy in local government can be achieved through pursuing devolution as a form of decentralisation.

It is important to emphasise that local autonomy must not be confused with local democracy. According to Haus and Sweeting (2006: 267), "local democracy implies that local government, like governments at upper levels, has a process of collective self-determination as its normative core". What this implies, is that it is possible to have local democracy without autonomy. Taking cognisance of the various African examples discussed in the literature review, it can be argued that the majority of African countries decentralised to achieve local democracy, not local autonomy. When citizens are voting, they are exercising local democracy through the election of their representatives. While, the voting process in local government gives some semblance of autonomy, it is important to note that voting in itself does not mean there is autonomy or local democracy.

5.3.1 Autonomy pre-2013

It is important to examine autonomy in local authorities before and after the enactment of the new Constitution in 2013. Prior to 2013, local authorities did not enjoy constitutional legal standing. They derived their legal standing from Acts of Parliament which the ruling party was able to change with a simple majority. While local authorities had specific powers and

functions that were distinct from the state, these powers and functions were controlled by the Minister of Local Government, who had the power to add or withdraw some of these powers. Therefore, local authorities were not operating independently of the central state.

Local authorities also had 'limited' ability and powers to make their own laws, rules and regulations, formulate policies, and implement their own policies. Exercising of these powers was mainly at the pleasure of the central government which had the final say in all decisions taken by the local authorities. Local authorities also did not have full control in the appointment and dismissal of their senior staff. This could only be effected with the approval of the Local Government Board and the Ministry of Local Government. Even though local authorities had the powers to discipline their staff, they had to get approval from the Local Government Board and the Ministry of Local Government to implement the outcomes of the disciplinary process. This worked against the autonomy of local authorities. With regard to fiscal autonomy, urban local authorities enjoyed only semi autonomy, as their budget and sourcing of finances required final approval from the central government. As discussed earlier, rural local authorities depended on central government; leaving them with even less autonomy as compared to urban local authorities.

My argument in this case is that local government in Zimbabwe, before the enactment of the new Constitution in 2013, enjoyed semi-autonomy which was characterised as delegated authority. In order to exercise the delegated authority, the approval of the central state was required. It is clear also that urban local authorities enjoyed more autonomy than their rural counterparts.

5.3.2   Autonomy post- 2013

As has been stated previously, the new Constitution has not yet been fully implemented. Various Acts of parliament, such as the Urban Councils Act of 2008 and the Rural District Councils Act (2002) have not yet been aligned to the new Constitution. However, the new Constitution, by advocating for devolution of power to the lower tiers of government, does give legal status to local government in Zimbabwe. The new Constitution Section (264: Devolution of governmental powers and responsibilities) states the following:

1) Whenever appropriate, governmental powers and responsibilities must be devolved to provincial and metropolitan councils and local authorities which are competent to carry out those responsibilities efficiently and effectively.

2) The objects of the devolution of governmental powers and responsibilities to provincial and metropolitan councils and local authorities are—

   a) to give powers of local governance to the people and enhance their participation in the exercise of the powers of the State and in making decisions affecting them;

   b) to promote democratic, effective, transparent, accountable and coherent government of Zimbabwe as a whole;

   c) to preserve and foster the peace, national unity and indivisibility of Zimbabwe;

   d) to recognise the right of communities to manage their own affairs and to further their development;

   e) to ensure the equitable sharing of local and national resources; and

   f) to transfer responsibilities and resources from the national government in order to establish a sound financial base for each provincial and metropolitan council and local authority.

Compared to the previous system, the new Constitution allows for local government to have greater autonomy. However, autonomy as envisaged by the new Constitution will only be possible once the relevant Acts of parliament which operationalises local government have been amended, aligned to the constitution, or repealed.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the institutional framework for local government in Zimbabwe. While the new Constitution has not yet been implemented, it is important to note that the institutional framework will provide some form of challenges in the event that there is disjuncture in the state i.e. when the ruling party is different from the political party controlling local government. The centre-local relationship did not manifest as a result of the new Constitution but as a result of the old parliamentary Acts controlling decentralisation in

Zimbabwe. The next chapter will show that although the institutional framework plays a critical role. Actors/stakeholders in decentralisation can influence the outcomes and outputs of decentralisation. In some cases, the actors act outside the legal parameters to further their agenda, hence the argument that if the new system as provided for by the new Constitution still has the same actors then very little change is expected. The next chapter provides an in depth discussion of this disjuncture.

CHAPTER 6 : CONTESTING 'UNSHARED VISION' IN THE CITY OF HARARE

"Why should the African political elites dismantle a political system which serves them so well?" (Chabal and Daloz 1999: 14)

6.1   Introduction

In the previous chapters the thesis looked at mainly the context and institutional environment in Zimbabwe. This chapter and subsequent chapters, aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the pragmatic challenges that the interface between politics and development presents. The point of departure is the current social actors' understanding of their role and issues. The timeframe is the period before the election or appointment of office bearers to their positions and their experiences currently. In this regard, 2013 is a significant year because it marks the beginning of the formal time frame for the current political role players. However, the discussion will refer to political issues and manoeuvres long before 2013.

This chapter presents three broad sections which deal with various levels of contestation. The first contestation is the centre-local contestation between the City of Harare and the Zimbabwean central state. The second contestation is the intra-local contestation, which is between the administrative (bureaucrats) and councillors within the City of Harare. The third contestation is of 'substance' and refers to the contestation between political parties in power and local governments' policies; especially between ZANU PF and MDC. I define the term 'contestation' broadly as differences not only in ideology and policy but also in approaches to implementing government programmes. Contestation also covers differences in personal and political preferences within institutions which influences the outcomes of decentralisation.

6.1.1   Current composition of the City of Harare council

The elections for the current council were held following the expiration of the Government of National Unity (GNU) in 2013. A government of national unity, which was made up of main MDC[31], a splinter of the MDC, and ZANU PF at the national level, was in place from 2009 to

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[31] I am referring to it as the main MDC because it has a higher number of Members of Parliament as compared to the other MDC.

2013, the council of the City of Harare has been controlled by the opposition MDC[32] since 2002. The opposition's electoral grip on the City of Harare has been uninterrupted since 2002. The only interruptions occurred in 2004, when mayors and councillors were dismissed and replaced by a commission by the Minister of Local Government. Figure 4 depicts the dominance of the opposition in the City of Harare council.

Figure 4: Composition of the City of Harare Council

	MDC	ZANU (pf)	Special interest councillors	total
2002	42	1	0	43
2008	45	1	11	57
2013	40	6	0	46
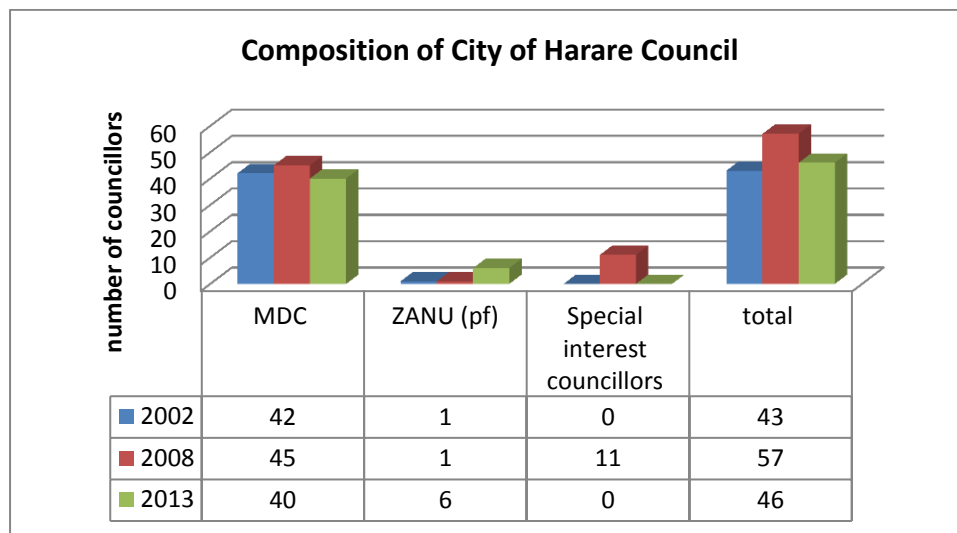
Source: Zimbabwe Electoral Commission

6.1.1.1 Special interest councillors

The figure above shows that special interest councillors were only appointed after the 2008 elections. As stated earlier, a clause in the Urban Councils Act of 2008 section 20 provides for the appointment of special interest councillors. The Act enables the Minister of Local Government to appoint not more than 25% of councillors as special interest councillors. These councillors do not having voting powers in full council meetings, but participate fully in council committees. My observation in the City of Harare is that the majority of council business is conducted during council committee meetings and full council meetings are mainly used to ratify the decisions taken by these committees. The rationale is behind the appointment of these councillors is to augment the skills of the council by appointment of individuals who has skills needed to run the affairs of the council. However, these

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[32] The MDC is referred to in this thesis as the opposition because of its status at the national level. Nationally there are two major political parties the ruling ZANU PF and the official opposition the MDC. They are other smaller parties but only one of these other parties are represented in parliament (MDC-N) and it is a splinter from the MDC.

appointments have been viewed with suspicion, as most of the special interest councillors are known to be activists in the ruling ZANU PF political party. In 2009, the City of Bulawayo resisted the appointment of these councillors by lodging a court case against the Minister of Local Government and the city won the case.

The appointment of special interest councillors is problematic in the sense that it is the preserve of the Minister of Local Government which can create a situation where special interest councillors can potentially pay their allegiance to the minister who appointed them. In situations where the minister comes from a different political party than the one controlling the council then there is a chance that the special interest councillors can be used as a tool to represent the policies and aspirations of central government. My argument is based on the fact that councillorship is Zimbabwe is a political office. In Harare, the special interest councillors were regarded as central government spies who were behind several suspensions of elected councillors (Munzwa and Wellington 2010).

Secondly, they can be used to boost numbers of the central government ruling party. In some local authorities, the opposition has a slight majority over the ruling party. However, through the appointment of these councillors, this majority was whittled down; hence subverting the wishes of the electorate who gave the opposition a mandate to govern the local authority. In 2008, in the City of Harare, the ruling party won only 2% of the total wards in the City which in real terms translates to only one ward out of forty six wards. However, with the appointment of the special interest councillors, the composition changed to 21% of the councillors representing the interests of ZANU PF. Eight of the eleven councillors were former ZANU PF councillors. In other urban areas, the appointed councillors were actually ZANU PF candidates who had lost in elections. A common perception is that since these councillors serve at the pleasure of the Minister of Local Government, this propagates the interests of the central government.

While there might be nothing wrong with the appointment of special interest councillors, it is the mechanisms and processes of appointing them that must change, so that their appointment does not subvert the electoral wishes of the residents. One way of doing that is by assigning the responsibility of appointment/nomination of the special interest councillors to the elected councillors. This is based on the assumption that the elected councillors themselves are in the best position to know the skills that are lacking hence they can nominate suitable candidates to fill the positions of special interest councillors. The nominated councillors can then be

ratified/approved by a parliamentary portfolio committee, provincial Council or Local Government Board. Issues arising from the dismissal of special interest councillors should be dealt with by the elected ward councillors. In this way the democratic aspirations of residents of a particular local authority can still be maintained.

6.2 Centre-local relationships

The term centre-local relationship describes the nature of the relationship between the City of Harare councillors and the central state. As stated earlier, the central state is represented by the Ministry responsible for Local government. The perceptions of centre-local relationships were sourced through documentary research and interviews conducted with residents, civil society organisations such as HRT and CHRA, City of Harare senior administrators and councillors, and Ministry of Local Government officials. The findings indicate that the relationship between the centre and local authorities shows that there is polarity especially between the elected councillors and the central state. It is very interesting to note that of the thirty six councillors interviewed, only twenty one said that they have a cordial relationship with the Ministry of Local Government, whilst the remaining councillors said that their relationship is not good. The nature of the centre local relationship is depicted in Figure 5 below:

Figure 5: Centre-local relationship perceptions

	% of councillors
relationship is good	58
the relationship is not good	42
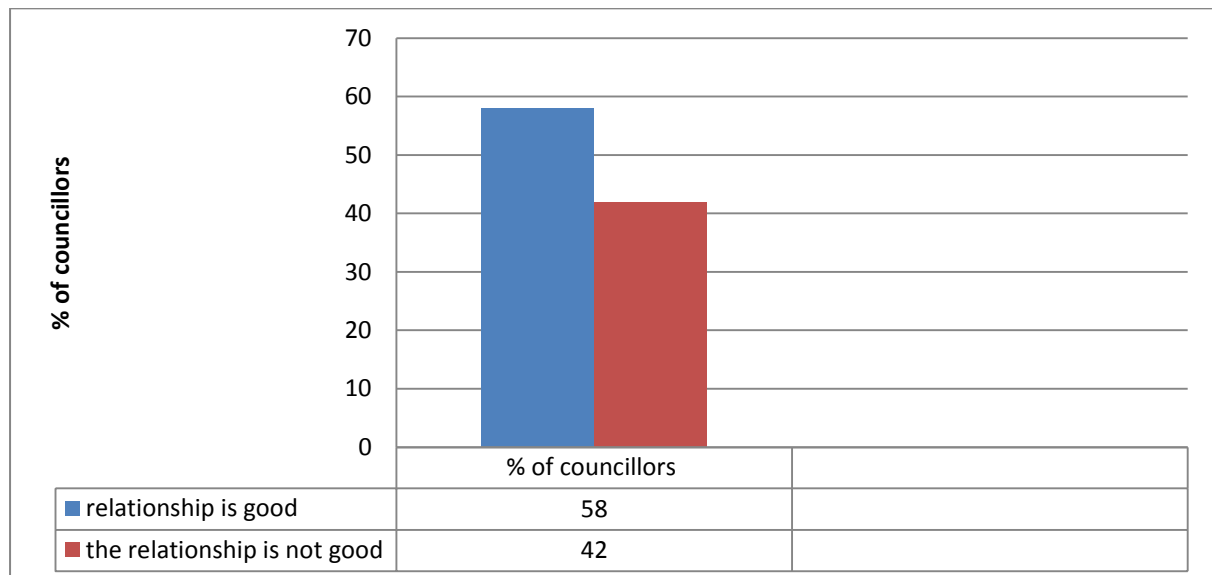
Even though the majority of councillors attested to a good relationship with the Ministry of Local Government, the majority of them (32 out of 36) said that the Ministry should not

intervene in local authorities' issues (Figure 6). Those who indicated that the Ministry should intervene are from ZANU PF. They felt that the Ministry's intervention is justified when the local authority deviates from the provisions in the Urban Councils Act. However, all the interventions by the Ministry of Local Government were based on this pretext. What the councillors are inferring may be that the majority of the interventions by the Ministry were not based on the Act but on political expediency.

Figure 6: Intervention by the Ministry of Local Government
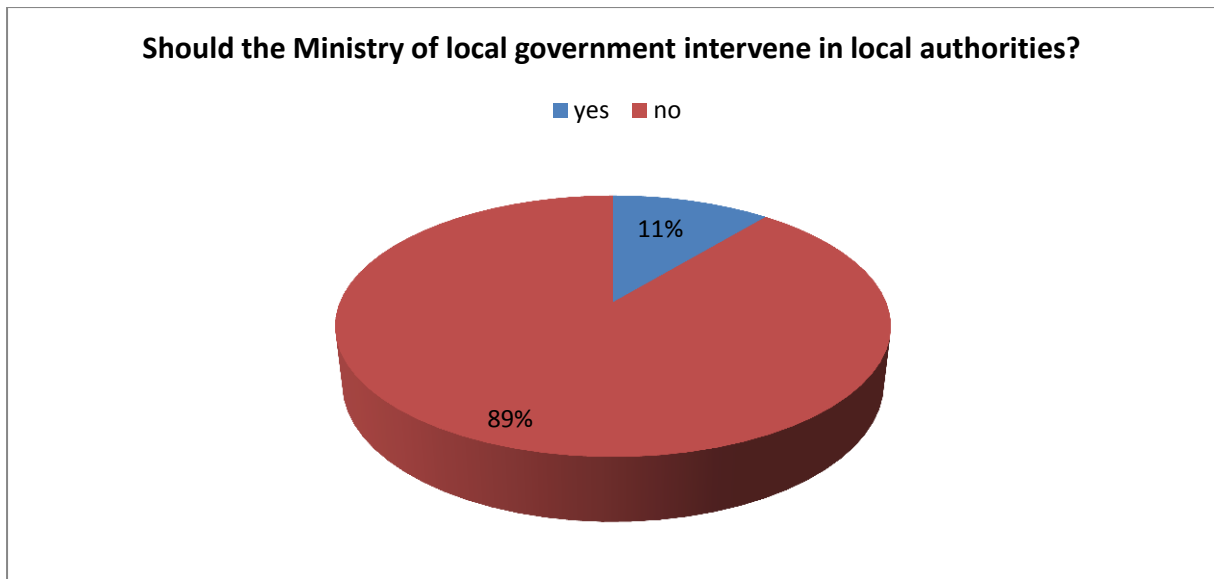
On the issue of the intervention by the Ministry in local authorities, all the community leaders interviewed said that the Ministry has no business intervening in the day to day running of the local authorities. Some community leaders felt very strongly that the meddling of the central state in the City of Harare has negatively affected the level of services delivered in Harare. The perception of the city councillors is that they believe that the Ministry is too powerful and it always follows through with heavy sanctions if its directives are not heeded. One councillor alluded to this point by saying:

> *"A few years back some councillors were bent on investigating alleged corrupt land deals which were done when the council was still under ZANU PF but the ministry instead stifled the investigation and suspended the councillors ... now all the councillors understand that if you go against the Minister of Local Government you will either be fired or suspended."*

One residents' association official concurred with this view by saying:

"Whatever relationship you see now has been shaped by a previous show of power by the Ministry of Local Government. The relationship is now of master and servant, any deviation from the servant results in heavy sanctions."

While the councillors alluded to a good relationship with the central state, the underlying issue is the relationship which has been shaped by past confrontations with the Ministry. It seems that the councillors have resigned themselves to the fact that the central state determines the vision and developmental direction of the city. In this case, the ministerial intervention through directives has resulted in the decision-making powers of the legally elected representatives being usurped. This shows that the central state is too powerful for meaningful decentralisation because the elected councillors who are responsible for policy formulation and political direction of the city are subjugated by the central state. In essence, it can be concluded that the city is allowed to implement its own vision but only when it conforms to the vision of the central state.

6.2.1 *Bureaucrats' perspectives of centre-local relationships*

It is important to examine what the central state and local authorities say about the centre-local relationship. The Ministry officials and city administrators did not indicate any issues with regards to their relationship with the Ministry of Local Government. The city administrative officials view Ministry officials as their seniors, since they report to them directly. Hence their relationship is a professional one.

All the administrative officials referred to the fact that power in local authorities' lies with the Ministry. One city administrative official emphasised this point by saying:

"When the councillors are elected they come in thinking they have the power to change everything. They think they have power, but power lies with the central government."

One official said that if councillors understand the situation from the beginning, it will improve the relationship between councillors and the Ministry. Also, the administrative officials admitted that at times the councillors do not understand their roles (as discussed in Chapter 5, these roles are not clear), and end up meddling in administrative issues; thereby opening up an avenue for the central state's intervention in the affairs of the city.

Other administrative officials said that the main cause of problems in centre-local relationships in Harare is that the councillors push their own agenda instead of the agenda of the central government.

> *"The opposition wants to champion their manifestos as compared to the development policies of the national government. This causes a lot of conflicts."*

This view brings to the fore the core issues with regards to the main research questions in this study. It reveals the complexities in the system of local government in Harare. The key issue being revealed here is that the central state has inculcated the belief that all spheres of government should get their developmental policy direction from the central government. The system in Zimbabwe cannot be fully characterised as a neoliberal democracy but a mixture of socialist and neoliberal democracy practicalities. While on one hand the Zimbabwean state supports the free market economy approach, on the other it is using it to provide subsidies to goods and services to those who can't afford it. The government provides subsidies for primary health care and primary education. Furthermore, the State had price controls on basic foodstuffs. This indicates that it is a neoliberal state infused with socialist aspects. With such a system, where there is no clear demarcation of powers, there is bound to be contestation of powers. Councillors are elected with the understanding that they will be responsible for policy formulation in local authorities. However, once elected they are required to seek approval from the central government on each and every policy they propose. Instead of devolving power to local authorities, as advocated for in the Constitution, the central state acts as if the local authorities are deconcentrated structures or field offices of the central state. The issue of developmental agenda of local authorities needs to be clarified so that it is clear whose agenda these institutions must follow.

On further probing, some of the officials argued that the councillors from the opposition political parties want to use their own system of local government, which does not conform to the legislative legal instruments used in Zimbabwe. In other words, the opposition was also accused of using their positions to further their political objectives. They emphasised that this creates battles and contestation with the central government which is reinforced by political muscle. Some of them emphasised that the battles which are being fought between the central state and opposition-controlled local authorities have very little to do with service delivery, but more to do with political ideologies and personal differences. One official suggested that opposition councillors and their political parties should approach local government in Zimbabwe with the sole objective of improving the services being delivered by the local

authorities – not to use local authorities for political grandstanding. This view was echoed in the statement below:

> "*The approach by opposition-controlled councils should not be about politics but improving service delivery. Prioritising politics leads to polarisation and hampers collaboration between central state and local state in areas of mutual interest ... have you ever seen a battle where the central government has denied local authorities the chance to buy equipment to deliver service? No. The battles are mainly to do with political ego and posturing at the expense of service delivery.*"

To support this perspective one of the respondents from the Ministry cited an example of the former executive mayor of the City of Masvingo[33]. The executive mayor was elected on the opposition ticket in 2001. What is peculiar to his situation is that his election was not synchronised with that of the ward councillor elections; resulting in him being elected as an executive mayor in a council dominated by ZANU PF councillors and no opposition councillors. This situation persisted for two years. He had a cordial relationship with the Ministry of Local Government. In fact, the Ministry regarded him as the best performer in terms of service delivery. He also had no confrontational issues with the central state; despite being from the opposition. The message from the central and local bureaucrats in the interviews conducted for this study was that the opposition should change their approach when dealing with the central state. One official said:

> "*If councillors and the Minister of Local Government adopt a confrontational approach then nothing is going to work out well. Their approach must be what can we do to improve service delivery through our institutions?*"

The issue of local authorities conforming to the policies of the central state raises some critical questions. If the central state controls the policy direction of the local authorities, what is the function of politically elected councillors? If local authorities are to follow the policies of the central state, then can the councillors be trusted to propagate the ideals of another political party at the expense of their own? Who should be accountable to the residents? These questions take this research back to the nature of state and the

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[33] The City of Masvingo is the oldest city created by the colonial administration. During colonial times it was named Fort Victoria.

decentralisation model in Zimbabwe. The nature of the state determines the success or failure of the opposition controlled councils in delivering services to the people.

In order to explore this further, one needs to examine the development policy making process in Zimbabwe. Economic development policies adopted by the state were mainly a conversion of ZANU PF election manifestos; hence they were not drafted through an inclusive, nationally agreed upon, democratic processes with all opposition parties also playing a role. Consequently, the majority of the policies adopted after independence in 1980, did not last beyond the next election period. The fact that the state is pursuing what the opposition regard as 'ZANU PF policies', means that those local authorities under the control of opposition political parties continue to be antagonistic towards the national development policies and reluctant to take ownership of these policies and/or implement them. The situation in Zimbabwe cannot be compared with countries such as South Africa, where there are long term development policies, such as the National Development Plan, which are drafted through a consultative inclusive process and which opposition political parties can identify with. In Zimbabwe, policy development is mainly the preserve of the ruling ZANU PF party. Therefore, one has to view the ZANU PF policy making process through the lens of their previous ideology, which was to convert Zimbabwe into a one party state. My argument is that, although Zimbabwe is not a one party state at the moment, the same actors who once advocated for a one party state are still in power. Therefore, one should not expect a significant shift from one party state ideology to a democratically aligned ideology. The various policies implemented since 1980 is highlighted in Table 4 below:

Table 4: Zimbabwe Economic Development Policies Since 1980

Zimbabwe Economic Development Policy	Year implemented
Growth With Equity	1981
Three Year National Development Plan	1982 - 85
First Five Year National Development Plan	1986 - 1990
ESAP	1990 - 1995
Zimbabwe Programme For Economic and Social Transformation – ZIMPREST	1996 - 2000
Millennium Economic Recovery Programme- MERP	2001 - 2002
National Economic Revival Programme – NERP	2003
Post-Election Economic Development Strategy and Economic Recovery Programme	2003
National Economic Development Priority Programme – NEDPP	2007
Short Term Emergency Recovery Programme – STERP	2009 - 2012
Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio – Economic Transformation – Zim Asset	2013 - 2018

The Table above shows that the ZANU PF state was vacillating between several policies and this affected the state bureaucracy as they were not able to perform long term planning as the

expectation was that the national policies would change after every election hence there is no point in planning ahead. The vacillation also resulted in the bureaucracy (state administrative officials) looking up to ZANU PF for policy direction instead of the central state. This led to the usurpation of state functions and duties by the ruling party hence the central state was now synonymous with ZANU PF. As stated earlier, within these policies there was very little reference to local government. This created a vacuum, as local authorities did not have a clear direction in terms of policies. This led to the opposition, which was in control of local authorities, exploiting the situation and implementing their policies; thus creating the disjuncture between the central state and the local authorities who did not share the same development vision.

In Zimbabwe it is clear that the system of decentralisation is an impediment to service delivery in the event of the opposition capturing local authorities. The local decentralised institutions are primed to get policy direction from the central government or ZANU PF hence the political challenges and tussles in the control of MDC dominated councils as they prefer to advance their local government agenda. This also has implications regarding the ability of the decentralised institutions performing their primary function of delivering basic services to the residents. The 1980 - 2013 local government system was enacted with the understanding that there would not be a disjuncture between the central state and the decentralised institutions hence the capture of the local state by the opposition presented various problems both structurally and politically[34].

It can therefore be argued, that elected councillors have limited powers to decide and steer the developmental agenda of the local authorities; which is contrary to democratic decentralisation and local democracy. According to Heller (2001), democratic decentralisation advocates for citizens to take charge of their development destiny. What this means is that the citizens themselves (through councillors) should decide the developmental agenda that the local authority should follow. The role of the central state is to create an enabling environment which ensures that the views of citizen are respected, considered and are decisions of the citizens are implemented and protected.

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[34] Refer to Chapter 5, section 5.3.

In order to circumvent this centre- local conundrum, some administrative officials within the City of Harare interviewed for this study suggested that the central state give autonomy to the local authorities so that they approach service delivery without too much interference from the central government. One administrator said:

> *"There is need for more autonomy on decision making, budgets, appointment of directors* [senor administration staff]*, borrowing powers, deciding levels of rates and so forth…"*

Another official said:

> *"The focus should not be on political differences but on what people want and adequately deliver services to the residents. The fight here is about putting money in councillors' pockets."*

In order to illustrate the relationship between the City of Harare and the central state since the opposition political party (the MDC) took control of the City of Harare in 2002, the case of the dismissal of the first executive mayor in Harare is presented below.

6.2.2.1. Dismissal of the first opposition executive mayor of the City of Harare

The first opposition executive mayor of City of Harare was elected in April 2002. His position was bolstered by the fact that the opposition MDC won forty two wards out of the total forty three wards in Harare at the time. This was the first time the MDC had control of a sphere of government. Before the issue of the suspension and subsequent dismissal of the mayor can be discussed it should be noted that the first opposition mayor of the City of Harare was not the first to be dismissed in post-colonial Zimbabwe. Before the discussion of the dismissal of the first opposition executive mayor in the City of Harare, it is necessary to discuss the dismissal of the ZANU PF mayor who preceded the opposition mayor.

Prior to the MDC taking over urban local authorities, the Minister of Local Government in a period spanning 22 years dismissed two mayors. The first dismissal of a mayor was that of Gweru[35] mayor who was dismissed in 1985 (Chatiza 2010). The reason put forward for his dismissal was that of insubordination. In response to his dismissal the councillors resigned in

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[35] Gweru is a city located in the Midlands province.

solidarity with the mayor. The second case of dismissal occurred in 1998 in Harare, when the whole council (councillors and mayor) were dismissed for poor performance, corruption and mismanagement of council funds (Thomson Commission 1999). It is important to note that the dismissed mayors and councillors were from the ruling party ZANU PF. Critics argued that prior to the opposition taking over urban local authorities the ministers used the Urban Councils Act and Rural Districts Councils Act to dismiss only truant councillors (Matumbike 2009, Kamete 2007).

Very scant information is available pertaining to the dismissal of the Gweru mayor in 1985 as compared to the dismissal of the Harare mayor in 1998. In Harare, the Minister of Local Government first suspended the ZANU PF mayor (Solomon Tavengwa) and councillors. The minister also appointed an investigation commission (Thomson Commission) to investigate the allegations against the mayor and the councillors. The investigative commission produced a comprehensive report referred as the Thomson Commission Report. The commission reported two important issues which had a bearing on the present composition of the City of Harare. The report indicated that there was no city centralised control of staff recruitment and there were competing interests between the executive mayor, the town clerk and the individual councillors (Thomson Commission 1999). This created confusion and uncertainty with regards to recruitment, as the mayor and councillors took it upon themselves to recruit the city's personnel. The report indicated that the mayor allocated council vacancies to councillors to fill them from their wards which resulted in politicisation of the administrative staff of the City of Harare as political patronage was used to appoint them. According to the report, in one instance the councillors allocated themselves eleven non-existent vacancies each; this resulted in the recruitment of staff which was not needed. The report also highlighted that employment procedures were abandoned in favour of discretionary practices that promoted cronyism, nepotism and tribalism (Thomson Commission 1999).

The Commission indicated that because of the systematic allocation of vacancies to councillors,   the City of Harare staff compliment ended up being bloated with non-essential staff. This had two major implications for the city; firstly, the city was spending more on wages compared to service delivery thereby depriving the residents of better service delivery. Secondly, it can be argued that workers appointed on the basis of political patronage, owed their allegiance to the councillors who had recruited them; instead of to the administrative supervisors in the City of Harare. It also created an unhealthy wedge between mayor,

councillors and administrative staff headed by the town clerk as the powers to recruit staff normally lies with the city's administrative head who in this case is the town clerk.

The other important finding by the Thomson Commission was that they were two centres of powers. Power was centred on the executive mayor and the town clerk leading to clashes and stepping on of toes during the exercising of these powers. It is obvious that the creation of two centres of power was caused by the introduction of the executive mayorship without realigning the powers of the town clerk. Prior to 1995 the local government system in Harare used the ceremonial mayoral system whereby the mayor was a part time employee of the city council. The administration of the city was the sole responsibility of the town clerk (Makumbe 1998). The introduction of the executive mayor was aimed at bestowing chief executive officer powers upon the elected mayor; this was only going to be achieved through making the town clerk subordinate to the mayor who was supposed to carry absolute political and administrative authority in the affairs of the city of Harare. I posit that there was no due diligence done to align the powers of the town clerk to the new executive mayoral system hence it created two centres of power which were detrimental to the capacity of the city to function and deliver services to the residents.

Despite the executive mayor being dismissed in 1999, the Minister and the Registrar General did not announce elections in Harare to replace the mayor and the councillors as per the Urban Councils Act of 1995, which stipulates that upon the dismissal of the mayor or councillor elections to replace must be held before the expiry of the 90 day period. The Minister instead of calling an election, appointed a commission to run the affairs of the City of Harare; thereby flouting the requirements of the Urban Councils Act of 1995. As stated earlier, elections were only held in 2002, after an application to the High Court by the Combined Harare Residents' Association to force the minister and the president to arrange elections, which was successful (Kamete 2002). It is important to note that this disregard of the law and dismissal of mayors and councillors was happening when ZANU PF was still dominant in urban areas and there was no substantial challenge to its power. Current literature on local government in the City of Harare paints a picture which assumes that the flouting of the law and dismissal of the councillors was as a result of the opposition political parties taking over urban local authorities. However, the evidence is clear that meddling by the Ministry of Local Government and disregarding the law did not start when the opposition took control of Harare. The meddling only intensified and came into the public domain after

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the takeover by the opposition. The intensification was as a result of disjuncture between central state and local authorities. My argument is that ZANU PF had set a patron-client form of state (evidenced by offering jobs on a patronage basis) so losing control of the local state resulted in the loss of largesse for patronage resulting in increased attempts to recapture the local state.

Before the 2002 local government elections in the City of Harare were held, the events surrounding the dismissal of the mayor (Tavengwa) and council presented two issues that would pose a challenge to the next elected mayor and councillors. The first issue was that the city's personnel was bloated; therefore there was a need lay off redundant staff. The second issue was that the personnel, because of the nature of their appointment, were politicised and were pro-ZANU PF, since the majority was appointed directly by ZANU PF councillors. These two issues primed the political battle which the incoming executive mayor of the opposition was going to experience.

6.2.2.2 The new opposition executive mayor

After the 2002 local government elections in the City of Harare the opposition MDC candidate for the mayorship Elias Mudzuri won. The new executive mayor was a qualified civil engineer and had vast experience working as an engineer both in government and the private sector. Politically he was a strong activist and a founding member of the MDC. In terms of wards the MDC won 42 out of 43 wards with ZANU PF only winning one ward. This was a complete revolution in the City of Harare as ZANU PF had had unfettered control of the city since 1980. The victory in the City of Harare was not replicated in the presidential elections held at the same time and the parliamentary elections held the previous two years where ZANU PF won. This presented a situation whereby the central state was controlled by ZANU PF whilst the local state was controlled by the opposition. In a democratic state this situation is not supposed to pose serious problems and political contestation.

What complicated the centre-local relationship was that the politics of the day was ruled by polarity and violence against members of the opposition (LeBas 2006). The ZANU PF viewed the MDC as a political project of the West created to cause regime change in Zimbabwe (Raftopoulos 2000). Because ZANU PF's grip on power had never been seriously challenged, it resorted to using the state machinery and its state bureaucratic patronage system to fight its political battles. Raftopoulos (2000) cites examples where the army, state

controlled media, police, the civil service (bureaucrats) and the judiciary were used to fight the opposition's grip on power. This created a daunting challenge to the MDC to effect meaningful change in the City of Harare as the ZANU PF's state was resisting its grip on power. An example is when the Minister of Local Government refused to officiate at the installation of MDC executive mayors of Bulawayo, Masvingo, Chitungwiza and Chegutu cities after they won elections fairly (Kamete 2003; Tamborinyoka 2002).

This was exacerbated by the fact that decentralisation in Zimbabwe was not constitutionalised, but was borne out of an act of parliament. The Minister of Local Government was responsible for administering this act of parliament. As stated by Olowu (2003) during the process of legalising decentralisation in the African context, windows were left for the central state to intervene in the affairs of the decentralised institutions. The MDC in the City of Harare also faced the problem of ZANU PF installed senior executives. As previously stated, the fact is that ZANU PF survived on patronage hence appointment to senior positions in central or local spheres was based on patronage not merit in most cases. The new executive mayor was faced with the challenge of not stepping on the toes of the already powerful town clerk who was directly reporting to the central ministry as the Urban Councils Act of 1995 dictates. In such situations even if the senior administrative officials of the decentralised institutions were not politicised, there would have been a problem as those officials were supposed to account to both the executive mayor and the central government. The problem was complicated by the fact that the executive mayor and the minister were from different political parties thereby presenting differences in their approaches to governance and ideology. The senior administrative officials were sandwiched between contesting political visions thereby spending considerable effort and time navigating political battles instead of executing their professional duties. It can be argued that the first executive mayor was preoccupied with fighting political battles rather than addressing service delivery.

In terms of the status of the City of Harare, when the opposition took over it had not had a substantive elected council for three years. The city had been run by a commission appointed by the central government. There were serious challenges in delivering services to the residents. The city's personnel was bloated and some of the council workers were political activists, an example being Joseph Chinotimba, the council's municipal chief inspector of police who must have been appointed to this position because of political patronage because

he had no formal educational qualifications. He was known for spearheading farm invasions and terrorising opposition supporters while on council time (Carver 2002).

6.2.2.3 The suspension

From the moment the executive mayor of the City of Harare took over, he was in constant political battles with the Minister of Local Government and the senior administrative staff. In an attempt to regularise the city's personnel the mayor laid off redundant labour (Mukaro 2005). The affected personnel had been appointed directly by former ZANU PF councillors so it seemed as if the mayor and the council were performing a witch hunt hence the Ministry of Local Government intervened by trying to protect 'ZANU PF' workers suspended by the executive mayor of Harare. The reasons for suspension[36], according to Chikuhwa (2004), were as follows:

- Mismanagement of council resources;

- Dismissing council workers without valid reasons; and

- Supporting mass strikes called by the opposition against government.

The Minister of Local Government used the Urban Council Act of 1995 to suspend the mayor. The minister also appointed a commission of enquiry headed by an academic Jameson Kurasha and hence it was known as Kurasha Commission. It is important to note that the head of the commission was previously a member of the commission which ran the affairs of the City of Harare from 1999 to 2002 before the executive mayor from the opposition took over. After he completed the investigation, he was appointed a member of the commission which ran the affairs of City of Harare after the mayor had been dismissed. His appointment was problematic in the sense that the issues which he was investigating were of the period when he was part of the commission managing the city so he was party to the personnel arrangements of that era. Therefore, fear of his bias may not have been unwarranted. The appointment and composition of the commission of enquiry was contested in court and the High Court declared that the commission was appointed improperly (Kamete 2006). This judgement was only passed after the commission had finished its work and had submitted its

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[36] No official documents of suspension were made public hence the public depended on unnamed sources who reported the reasons for suspension.

report and recommendations to the Minister of Local Government. The report of the commission was never made public.

In response to the judgement, the minister appointed another commission headed by a lawyer, Johannes Tomana. That commission recommended that the mayor be dismissed. The minister dismissed the mayor (News24 2004, 16 April). There are some important points to note; the first point is that the minister dismissed the mayor without affording him the opportunity to see the report prepared by the Tomana Commission (The Standard 2004, 25 July. p 2). The second point is that up to now the report has never been made public. This goes against the principle of fair justice and subverts democratic principles of openness, accountability and people's wishes. The allegations against the mayor bordered on criminality so one would have assumed that since the Tomana commission recommended dismissal of the mayor criminal charges would have been laid against the mayor. This did not happen which brings to the fore the inference that the dismissal of the mayor was motivated by political reasons.

According to the Minister of Local Government the dismissal of the mayor was in the interests of the residents of Harare. The very same residents who the minister purports to represent were not afforded the opportunity to scrutinsze the veracity of the report or decide on the course of action to be taken against the mayor, since it was them who voted him into power. In a normal democratic state the dismissal of the executive mayor is supposed to be the responsibility of the residents who voted him into office, not an appointed minister from an opposing political party, who is only accountable to the president. This is evidence that the state under ZANU PF believes that absolute power rests with the central state and hence it cannot tolerate disjuncture or a different approach to how it operates. This highlights the main thrust of this study of the vision of local authorities. The non-tolerance of vision from other political parties controlling local authorities is clear in this case. The belief by ZANU PF is that it holds the vision of all local authorities hence any deviation from what the central state dictates is punishable.

In any democratic state the elections are a process which is used to afford citizens power to hold the governors accountable and it also affords citizens the opportunity to choose their own leaders. In a representative democracy like Zimbabwe, once elected the representatives are supposed to advance the wishes of the electorate. It is only proper that the removal of elected representatives, therefore, should be done according to the wishes of the very same electorate who elected them. If the electorate is not involved in the process of removal of

elected representatives then democracy is subverted. It is important to note there is very little literature which tries to explain the process of removing elected representatives in situations such as in Zimbabwe. However, it also important to note that the new constitution of 2013 section 278 advocates two ways for the removal of mayor, deputy mayor and councillors from office. The first is the recall process which is similar to the removal of a member of parliament. The second method is the use of an independent tribunal.

6.3   Intra-local contestation / disjuncture

Contestation is not only experienced between the central state and the local state but also within the local state. The contestation within the local state is between the city administrators / bureaucracy and the elected councillors and mayors. The disjuncture within the local state also involves the central state. In order to understand this disjuncture it is important to revisit the structure of accountability in the City of Harare, examine its impact on the local disjuncture, and to cite examples. The results of this study show that the disjuncture is caused by three main issues:

1. The system of local government (reporting and accountability structures);

2.   Suspicion of political activism; and

3. Division/allocation of the roles of administrators and elected ward councillors.

6.3.1   Reporting structures of local government system in the City of Harare

The bureaucratic local government structure in Zimbabwe has dual reporting structures where bureaucrats. While on the one hand, they are expected to report to the central government through the Ministry of Local Government, and on the other, they are also expected to report to the elected councillors and the mayor. This system poses serious challenges, as city administrators are accountable to three different stakeholders, which are the central state, councillors and the residents who are the receivers of the services. As stated earlier, all the senior administrative staff is appointed by the Local Government Board; according to the Urban Councils Act of 2008, the elected councillors can only recommend their dismissal or appointment but the final decision is made by the Local Government Board with the approval of the Ministry of Local Government.

The administrative officials' professional accountability is divided between the central state bureaucrats and the local authority political leadership. It can be argued that this creates a professional accountability conundrum which is difficult for the bureaucrats to navigate in situations where the central government and the local authority political leadership give conflicting policy direction. It also affects the autonomy of the local authority as it has no control over its human resources hence it loses critical leverage to implement the policies it has crafted. By virtue of senior administrative staff reporting to the central government through the Ministry, an assumption is created that senior administrative officials are there as proxies of the ruling party[37]. One community leader supported this assumption by saying:

> *"Administrative officials were appointed by powerful politicians at times, they are whipped to follow orders now and then."*

This problem was compounded by the introduction of the executive mayoral system which created two centres of power. One councillor in the City of Harare highlighted the problem of the bureaucrats by saying:

> *"Those guys do not report to us, they report directly to the Ministry of Local Government and we are just bystanders in the whole process."*

Politically, the councillors are also required to report both to the Ministry of Local Government and to their political parties. This creates a situation where each and every issue is contested because of known political differences between the opposition and the ruling party. If the policies prescribed by the Ministry of Local Government differ from the policies of the elected representatives (councillors and mayor); then a political battle ensues between the bureaucrats and the councillors. It can be assumed that normally they are likely to implement central government directives for two reasons. Firstly, all the senior administrators are appointed and can be dismissed by an institution (Local Government Board) appointed by the Ministry of Local Government. In order to protect their jobs, they have to comply with central government directives or face dismissal. Secondly, precedents had been set in the City of Harare; whereby councillors had dismissed or recommended the dismissal of senior city administrators and the Ministry of Local Government rescinded the

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[37] The majority of respondents in this study are of the opinion there are no or few differences between the central state and ZANU PF.

dismissals; thereby portraying a picture that absolute power rests with the Ministry.[38]. Examples of this disjuncture and contestation between the senior administrators and the elected councillors will be discussed in the following sections. In order to circumvent the conundrum of dual professional accountability, I am suggesting that the system of local government be reformed, and the mayor be designated as the link (both politically and administratively) between the local authority and the central state. This will shield the administrative staff from being labelled as ruling party proxies and will enable the local authority administrative staff to be under one political party. The proposed system also prevents disjuncture between the city administrators and the councillors.

6.3.2   Suspicion of political activism

The majority of the councillors and residents of the City of Harare suspect that the city's administrators are ZANU PF political activists who have been appointed to senior posts to further ZANU PF political interests. Some of the suspicions come from the fact that most of the senior administrative officials were appointed during ZANU PF dominance in the City of Harare. There is also the assumption that the Local Government Board is aligned to central state, which is controlled by ZANU PF. Some of the appointments as discussed earlier were political appointments not based on merit. One councillor said:

> *"There is suspicion that since these administrators were appointed during the times of ZANU PF then they are aligned to it."*

The suspicion causes strain and tension in the relationship between councillors and administrators. In the event of differences between the councillors and the administrators, there is a high possibility that the differences are likely to be branded political differences.

6.3.3   Misunderstanding of roles

All administrative officials from the Ministry of Local Government and City of Harare interviewed for this study indicated that because the councillors do not understand their roles, they often encroach on administrative roles, causing tensions. One official said:

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[38] Detailed examples of the dismissals will be discussed in the remaining sections of this chapter.

"At times councillors do not understand their role, they want to meddle in administrative duties…"

Another official added to this saying:

"Councillors want to be involved in administrative issues which are not their turf … when we try to correct them they say we are being resistant to them and call the whole process insubordination."

One official indicated that in some cases councillors are involved in parcelling out land for housing which is the duty of the administrative officials. The official went onto explain that they faced this problem even when ZANU PF had the majority in the City of Harare, citing the example of land given to housing cooperatives by councillors illegally, and residents building on the land without approval of the city's housing and planning departments. According to city's bylaws such illegal settlements should be demolished.

"When such illegal issues are raised by officials (administrative) it becomes a political issue and might lead to dismissal depending on the political power of the councillors who parcelled out that land."

The reason for the lack of clarity and misunderstanding of roles can be attributed to the fact that they there is no legally binding document which stipulates the roles of councillors. If the Acts which give rise to local government in Zimbabwe are silent on the roles of councillors it opens the possibility of councillors assuming duties which are not theirs. Therefore, there is a need for reform of the Urban Councils Act and the Rural Councils Act.

Furthermore, the majority of current councillors in the City are new, and have no experience of council business. Figure 7 shows the number of years councillors have served (as of March 2015).

Figure 7: Years of experience as a councillor

Years of experience as a councillor

	Less than 2 years experience	7 years experience	More than 7 years experince
■ % of councillors	63	37	0

Various community members and civic leaders believe that the City of Harare has inexperienced and poor calibre councillors; hence their failure to use the local government system to further their development agenda. Administrative officials also believe that because councillors are inexperienced it takes them time to understand their role and act effectively in delivering services. Even the current mayor of the City of Harare (from MDC) publicly declared that the councillors do not possess enough skills and educational qualification. The following statement appeared in a daily newspaper:

"In 1927 Harare had two lawyers in council — nearly 90 years later the entire country has only one lawyer out of over 2 000 councillors. I would favour the inclusion of a non-partisan, non-political basis of individuals with minimum key skills that are critical to our tour of duty. Not less than one-third of city fathers[39] must be people that are able to present strong business credentials, academics, engineers, lawyers, finance persons, health specialists and others. When this is not achievable or achieved through electoral processes, modalities for accommodating special skills councillors must be found. 2018 is around the corner and it is time to look for new councillors. I prefer non-political actors, but with expertise. You can't expect me for

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[39] The language shows the patriarchal nature of local government politics. Subsequent chapters will show that less than 15% of councillors are females.

example, to supervise Dr (Prosper) Chonzi[40] when I am not a doctor and when I do not know the difference between ARVs and aspirin". (Matenga 2015*)*

Figure 8 shows the highest educational qualifications of councillors in the City of Harare (as of March 2015).

Figure 8: Highest educational qualification
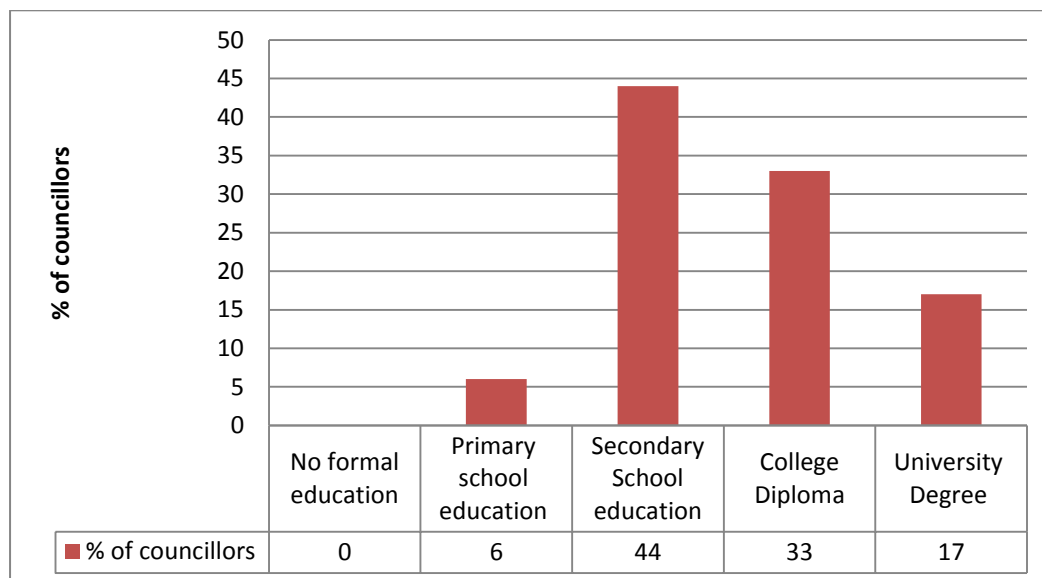
The low level of education amongst councillors was highlighted by most administrative officials as the cause of disjuncture as some of them fail to understand basic procedures and documents prepared for them. One respondent said:

> "*If you are going to be good councillor you need the ability to understand complex documents and understand the whole system of local government in Zimbabwe for you to be effective…*"

One central government official reiterated this point by saying:

> "*Democracy has no qualification; even the illiterate get elected and this has a huge impact on councils.*"

When I pointed out to the respondent that perhaps the administrative officials should help the councillors to understand their roles and duties since they are professionals with years of experience, the respondent said:

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[40] City of Harare Director of Health Services.

"The problem is that of suspicion that we are ZANU PF, so in most cases they do not accept our advice."

One civic leader observed that the nature of politics in the City means that councillors are not elected based on their ability to deliver services but on the political parties they represent. He went further to state that:

"If you look in Harare, I think the MDC is still winning the majority of the wards not because of the strength of their local government policy/performance but because residents are just fed up with national failures of ZANU PF. Since they took over in 2002 the service delivery has worsened so we cannot say they are being retained because they are providing better services."

These perspectives lead one to question the whole system of democratic elections, especially representative democracy. Does this system of democracy yield better quality representatives who are effective in service delivery? These results show that the current system of representative democracy does not produce the best councillors who are capable of delivering services. Because of political polarity and preferences candidates are voted in because of the political party they represent, and not their qualifications, expertise or experience.

In response to the problem of councillors encroaching on the roles of administrative officials, one official said:

"It's simple, councillors need to stop using political influence or muscle on issues which should follow administrative protocol."

The misunderstanding of roles is not one sided, administrative officials are also accused of encroaching on policymaking roles, which are the preserve of councillors. The detailed example below shows some of the encroachment by administrative officials on councillors' roles.

6.3.4   Resignation of the Finance Committee chairperson (2014)

The finance committee chairperson of the current City of Harare council resigned on 4 February 2014; citing several reasons for his resignation (Ruwende 2014). After each election local authorities are mandated to set up committees composed of councillors. The main responsibility of the committees is to hold the administrators under that particular committee

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accountable for their actions and provide policy direction. The finance committee in the City of Harare is responsible for overall financial administration; ensuring that the city's finances are used properly. In a normal situation, the entire city's revenue and expenditure is supposed to be approved by the finance committee before it is ratified by a full council meeting. The chairperson of the current committee resigned only after seven months as the chairperson. The following excerpt from his letter of resignation raises certain issues.

> "It is with regret that I tender my resignation as chairman of the finance committee and indeed the committee itself. I cannot believe that anyone with any self-respect would chair the Harare City Council finance committee as it stands and runs today.

> "For over six months we have been waiting for contracts for grade one to four employees. This scope, like all the grades is overstaffed for our resources, but the packages are extraordinary. This band alone accounts for nearly 10 percent of our wage bill. We have no control over contracts, benefits drawn…..

> "… An amazing folly which I cannot accept is a budget of US$ 1, 6 million to sponsor a football club in the current economic crisis. Yet Harare City Council cannot afford any support to its amenities and associated residents.

> "… I shudder at the water rehabilitation deal that has been signed in the deal. Information technology equipment is covered in this contract which I have not seen to the tune of over US$1 million. Yet in the HCC budget, we also had a similar budget placed for similar equipment…." (City of Harare 2014b, letter of resignation)

The letter of resignation raised two very critical issues in relevant to intra-local relations. The first issue is that the administrative arm of City of Harare feels that there is no obligation for them to be accountable to the elected representatives. This is evidenced by their refusal to reveal salary scales to the city's finance standing committee. The issue of salaries is a contentious issue in the city of Harare as the media during the same period alleged that the city's administrators were earning mega salaries at the expense of service delivery. According to two local newspapers (the state owned *The Herald* [Machivenyika 2014] and *Newsday* published on the 26th of January 2014) the top 18 directors and the town clerk of the city of Harare were earning a total monthly salary of US$500 000 which averages US$26 000 per month per individual. These salaries were confirmed by the parliamentary local government portfolio committee during a public hearing. This is more than some of the

average salaries paid to municipal officials of developed countries who have a bigger budget and provide better quality services compared to the City of Harare. It has to be noted that there is a lot of secrecy with regards to the salaries of top officials to the extent that what they earn is not easily accessible to the public or the city councillors.

In an effort to get to the bottom of the mega salaries, the ceremonial mayor, requested the salary schedule of the top executives of the city from the town clerk who refused to provide the schedule. In response the mayor suspended the town clerk pending a disciplinary hearing. The mayor was forced to withdraw the letter of suspension by the Minister of Local Government a day after the town clerk was suspended (Muperi 2014). This resulted in the mayor ending up with an egg on his face but also entrenched insubordination as the implication was that the mayor was powerless. It also perpetuated disjuncture in an institution which is supposed to be united.

The impact of these mega salaries on the City's ability to deliver services and service its residents can be best presented by examining the proportion of the city's wage bill against expenditure on service delivery. Table 5 presents the wage bill (employment costs) compared to expenditure on service delivery.

Table 5: Percentage of employment costs in the City of Harare budget

	2009	*2010*	*2011*	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*	*2015[41]*
Employment costs	96%	73%	65%	55%	48%	48%	40%
Service delivery cost	4%	27%	35%	45%	52%	52%	60%

Source: City of Harare 2014 Budget

The Ministry of Local Government guidelines stipulate that both rural and urban councils are to cap their employment costs at 30% of their total budget. The City of Harare has not met this requirement for the past 5 years. The majority of the city's budget is to finance employment costs. In 2009 and 2010, the city spent 96% and 73% of the income on employment costs respectively. City residents raised this issue in several meetings but it was not dealt with during the consultation process adequately. One resident interviewed for the current study said:

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[41] Projected costs.

"If most of the revenue raised goes to pay salaries instead of offering a service, then something is wrong in this city. How can we pay someone a salary for not doing their job?"

Another resident concurred with this view by saying:

".... We are just donating money to the council."

What these salaries show is that the administrators are not accountable to the residents and the elected councillors which open the door for looting of council resources. In order to address the issue of the huge wage bill, city councils should stick to the Ministry guidelines which stipulate that both rural and urban councils should cap their employment costs at 30% of their total budget.

The second issue raised by the resignation letter is that elected councillors have very little control over the council's financial resources. This is problematic in the sense that public resources are supposed to be managed in an accountable and open manner. The fact that the residents, through the councillors, are not able to play an oversight role in the city's finances is against the democratic principle of active citizenry where the residents are supposed to determine the development agenda of their communities. The letter shows two examples of misuse of council resources, the first example being the sponsoring of a football club when most of the residents are not receiving any services. This shows misplaced priorities in a city where most residents are receiving erratic water supply of questionable quality. The second example is the duplicity of financial decisions, where the same Information Communication Technology (ICT) equipment is budgeted for twice thereby opening a window of mismanagement of public resources.

The fact that the councillors do not have control over the financial resources shows that they are mere bystanders in the whole process. One can argue that since the councillors are not able to play an oversight role over the administrative officials then there is no room for another political party to introduce a new vision and new approaches to governance in local authorities in Zimbabwe. If councillors are not able to control the operations of the local authority then it can be argued that there is an unshared vision within the local authority. In this case the local authority's vision is determined by the stakeholder who carries more power; this goes against good governance and democratic principles.

6.4   Contestation of substance

Contestation of substance refers to the local government policies of the political parties controlling central state and local state. It is pertinent to analyse what each political party stands for when it comes to decentralisation in Zimbabwe so that the disjuncture at play can be understood in its context. It is also important to examine whether the MDC won the urban local authorities through the strength of their local government policy or whether it was mainly a protest vote. The MDC general policies are mainly centred on neo liberal politics with a touch of socialist ideology. The ZANU PF policies are similar although they emphasise socialist ideology, which is just rhetoric because in a practical sense they are implementing neoliberal policies which are at times adjusted to suit their strategy for political survival. One would assume that the battles being fought between the central and local state are to please the voters/residents as they have the power to give the governing mandate through elections. In order to understand the contestation of substance it is important to examine ZANU PF and MDC local government policies using three broad themes which are governance, service delivery and community participation.

6.4.1   Policy differences

As discussed earlier, governance in this study is defined as a government's ability to make and enforce rules, and to deliver services, regardless of whether that government is democratic or not (Fukuyama 2013). In governance there is a distinction between the governors and the governed. From ZANU PF's point of view the party with the mandate to govern the central state has absolute authority over all the other state institutions; hence decentralised institutions are supposed to propagate the ideals and policies of the central state hence there is not room for disjuncture in policies. This perspective has been instilled in all the bureaucratic structures of the state. One Ministry of Local Government official espoused the fact that there is no disjuncture or argument about which policy to follow in local government in Zimbabwe by saying:

> *"...there is no unshared vision in local government in Zimbabwe, local authorities carry out the policies of the ruling government and we adhere to that..."*

The approach by ZANU PF shows that they believe that the local state is an avenue which the central state uses to achieve its developmental objectives. The party does not believe in

devolving power to the local level, but rather in a semi-autonomous local state which reports to the central state. The central state decides and has to be consulted with before any major decisions can be taken by the local state. To reinforce this point, the Minister of Local Government was quoted by a daily newspaper in 2004 as saying: "local councils enjoy a delegated authority, and thus should follow government and by extension, ZANU PF policies" (The Daily Mirror, 30 August 2004: 4)

The grip which the central state has on the local state has resulted in the local state being used to further the ruling party's fortunes during elections. As discussed earlier, ZANU PF created a clientalistic state which depends on the spheres of the state for its patronage network hence there is a need for the central state to control the local state and perpetuate the patronage system. Losing control of the local state means losing the means to pay patronage rewards, and eventually losing the political favours during the elections. The local authorities in Zimbabwe have been manipulated so that they serve ZANU PF interests. This is highlighted by one of the City of Harare administrative officials interviewed for this study.

> *"...In most cases we are afraid to go against the ZANU PF, taking action against them has its own consequences. A good example is the illegal parcelling out of council land to ZANU PF aligned cooperatives by ZANU PF politicians. We can't do anything about it because if you raise these issues you will find yourself unemployed. Even the local councillors cannot evict these cooperatives because once they try to do that they will be dismissed..."*

What this shows is that the local state is a pawn of the central state and is expected to follow directives from the central state. The situation is that either you carry out the directives of the central state (ZANU PF) or you are dismissed. This situation applies for both the elected councillors and administrators. This has affected how the local state is governed and the professionalism of the local state administrators. It has also subverted the purported neoliberal democratic politics in Zimbabwe. In Harare the electorate voted to be governed by the MDC hence their wishes must be respected.

The approach of the MDC to governance is the devolution of power[42] and letting the citizens/residents decide on governance. What is lacking in the practical approach of both the MDC and ZANU PF is their failure to put service delivery above politics. A critical analysis of service delivery in Harare shows that the central state and the local state through their governing political parties prioritised national political battles, instead of service delivery to the residents. One of the community leaders interviewed for this study highlighted this by saying:

> "*What is evident is that these two political parties are caught up in this big political battle and they are forgetting the residents of Harare. This is the reason why we have such appalling level of service delivery.*"

One of the residents and a self-confessed member of the MDC added that:

> "*...when you read the MDC's local government policy you will find out that there is an emphasis on citizens governing themselves, but this not happening, why? Now our councillors in Harare want to introduce prepaid water meters, who did they consult? They want us to pre pay for unsafe water?*"

Other residents said that the last time their taps were running was in 2008, but they still pay a fixed water charge 7 years later. The majority of the MDC councillors in Harare blame the Ministry of local government for its interference which leads to poor delivery of services. They place all the challenges they face squarely at the door of the Ministry of Local Government. A deeper analysis of the MDC governing period since 2002 shows that there is prioritisation of winning political battles against the Ministry of Local Government. In the process, accountability has been shifted from the councillors to the central government hence the tendency to blame the central government for poor service delivery and in turn the central government blames the MDC councillors. One would expect both the central state and local state to deliver services to the residents but this has been converted into political battles which do not help the residents.

One MDC councillor in Harare said:

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[42] The issue of devolution is propounded by a large constituency in the MDC which is the Matabeleland region mainly made up of the Ndebele tribe. The argument is that the Shona dominated government failed to bring development to Matebeleland provinces hence the need for devolution so that the Matebeleland people can determine their own development agenda.

"If the system does not favour us how can we deliver services?"

This researcher agrees that the system does not favour opposition political parties controlling local authorities. However, the opposition could be more pragmatic in their approach to deliver services. Instead of focusing on fighting political battles, the MDC could have taken a different approach aimed at improving service delivery in local authorities. They could have started by implementing their policy on active citizenry. What is evident is that the MDC councillors do not value community views and do not consult on decisions they take in the council. The only time they are compelled to consult is during the budget consultation process.

Literature on decentralisation shows that devolution is not a panacea for poor service delivery. Devolved local authorities may fail to deliver services, whilst deconcentrated local authorities are delivering better services. Of course, the issue of disjuncture has a bearing on the ability of the decentralised institution to deliver services but one has to examine disjuncture in other countries, for example South Africa. In South Africa the Democratic Alliance (DA) won the Cape Town metropolitan city when the Western Cape was still under the African National Congress (ANC). What the DA pursued was not abrasive politics, but improved service delivery in the metropolitan area. This enabled them to win the elections in the Western Cape Province twice (in the 2009 and 2014 elections). The lesson which can be learnt from this is that the DA as the governing stake holder in a local authority which is under the broader central state government of ANC did not take a confrontational approach but channelled its efforts towards better service delivery. The same could have happened in the City of Harare. One City of Harare administrator said:

> *".... if the MDC were to lose power in the next election, what infrastructure will they say this is our legacy? Nothing! ... at the present moment everything is on standstill because of politics, why can't everyone say let's forget about politics and fix this city?"*

6.5   Conclusion

The various examples of disjuncture/contestation show that the central state and the local state do not share the same vision. Vision is defined in this study as the ability of the state (local or central) to think or act about the future development agenda of its citizens and how it is supposed to be achieved. Vision is shaped by the political ideology of the political party

controlling any tier of the state. Political ideology also defines the processes which the state must use to achieve development. The research related to this section revealed that there is a contestation between the central state and the local state in the following areas: political ideology, processes, and political personal differences. These differences show that there is unshared vision in local government in the City of Harare. One would argue that the goal of each and every political party should be to see the state fulfilling its development agenda, but in this case this goal is not sacrosanct as other issues like political survival become more important because of unshared vision in local government. The interference by the Minister of local governance is a direct defending of ZANU PF's political grip on local authorities. The main argument is that ZANU PF has used state resources to fight its party political battles. There is also strong centralisation of the local authorities which the raises the argument by Bland (2011: 348) that this results in the intrusion of national politics in local authorities rendering them unable to respond to local community needs. The contestation in the City of Harare can be summarised by Linder (2009: 3) who states: "The process of decentralisation is always political, accompanied by conflict as new actors gain and old actors lose power".

In the next chapter the issue of public participation will be discussed, which is a critical component of decentralisation and democracy. The approach is to examine how the contestation of vision in the City of Harare has influenced citizen participation

CHAPTER 7 : ACTIVE CITIZENRY AMIDST POLITICAL CONTESTATION

"All politicians in my own view serve their own interests first, and then their families, relatives and then the general residents will follow last." (City of Harare Resident)

7.1   Introduction

The literature review has shown that in the African context the principles of decentralisation are not being applied in practice. As highlighted in Chapter 2 decentralisation must be able to transfer power and hold the state accountable to its citizens. It must also enable citizens to play a role and contribute to shaping the developmental trajectory of both the central and local state. Transfer of power and accountability requires a transformation of political and state structures so that the public have genuine access to power which enables them to hold state bureaucrats and political parties accountable. The previous chapter has shown that this has not happened in Zimbabwe. Instead, ZANU PF has created an interventionist state, which has made it difficult to separate the public and the private spheres in social life. The state is reluctant to cede some of its governance powers and functions to local authorities; let alone citizens.

The Zimbabwean context has shown that the central state at some point believed in the involvement of ordinary citizens in development planning through the VIDCOs, WADCOs and DDCs (as discussed in Chapter 4). In this chapter policy contradictions in the relationship between public participation, governance and development will be examined. The chapter is based on the premise that Zimbabwe sees itself as a democracy. Therefore, one should expect the state to promote 'a rule by the people or, at least, 'rule with the consent of the governed' (Diamond 1990). It also regards decentralisation as a process of bringing government closer to the people.

The previous chapter dealt with the various contestations within the City of Harare and they have shown that there is a bitter political struggle between the central state and the City of Harare. The rhetoric peddled by the contesting parties is that the bitter struggle is centred on advancing the wishes of the ordinary residents of the City of Harare. The intervention by the Minister of Local Government in various instances in the City of Harare is premised on the

understanding that he/she is furthering and defending the interests of the residents. On the other hand, the elected councillors view themselves as the bona fide representatives of the residents of the City of Harare. This chapter will examine how residents are part of governance systems of the City of Harare amidst the political disjuncture and will examine the purported claim by the contesting parties that they represent the residents of the City of Harare. It also examines how the residents hold the bureaucrats and political actors accountable. Within all this examination the focus is on presenting the perspectives of the residents of the City of Harare. At the end of this chapter, a case study of the budgeting process is presented to illustrate the level of public participation within the City of Harare.

7.2   Public participation, governance and development

Public participation is a very important concept in decentralisation as it is regarded as the driving force for better governance and service delivery. Gaventa and Valderama (1999: 7) define public participation as the exercise of power by various actors in the spaces created for the interaction between citizens and local authorities. Through public participation, citizens claim the right to participate in decision making which affects their lives and well-being and promotes active citizenry (Cornwall and Coelho 2007). It also entails the redistribution of decision-making power from the state to citizens as a core element of a democratic governance system (Zinyama 2012: 76). In democracies, public participation is regarded as a basic principle. Governments derive their power from the citizens so they have an obligation to respond to citizen's needs in local government, it leads to government or the state meeting the real needs of the community (Mafunisa and Xaba 2008: 454).

The decentralisation process does not guarantee that the decentralised institution is going to implement an effective public participation process. Decentralisation (delegation and deconcentration) can result in local authorities being agents of the central state which mean they are mainly there to further the development vision of the central state with very limited contribution from the local communities. In some cases (for example devolution), decentralisation can also ensure that the local state, through effective public participation, is the agent of the public who consume the goods and services produced. In the case of the City of Harare, the Minister of Local Government claims to be an agent of the consuming public hence the various interventions in the operational matters of the City of Harare. On the other hand, the councillors, by virtue of being elected by the consuming public, also claim that they

are their agents. If these claims are taken at face value it will mean that the City of Harare is the agent of the consuming public since the Ministry of Local Government and the elected councillors claim to be working for the public. I am of the opinion that given the level of disjuncture within the City of Harare and between the councillors and the central state, there is something amiss with regards to the agency being claimed by these two stakeholders. This warrants a further examination of how the issue of agency gives rise to public participation. By virtue of claiming agency, it means there must be a process which is used to source, include and incorporate the development aspirations and wishes of the consuming public by these two stakeholders.

The stakeholders allude to a situation whereby public participation is incorporated into a system of governance so that the residents can determine their own developmental agenda which their 'agents' will implement. In this way a link is created between public participation, governance and development. The link between these three aspects describes the extent of a shared vision between the various stakeholders in decentralised local authorities. It also measures the practicalities of decentralisation within the context of different actors claiming to be agents of the public. The triangle in Figure 9 illustrates the relationship between public participation, governance and development.

Figure 9: Link between public participation, governance and development
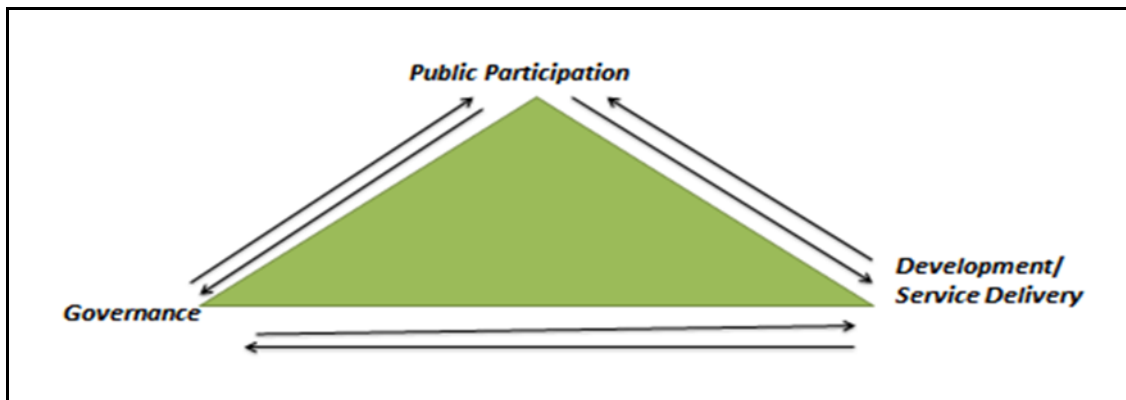
The triangle highlights three important issues in a democracy. For governance to be effective it requires sufficient concentration and autonomy of power to be divested bestowed on the governors to choose and implement policies with energy and vigour (Diamond 1990). Public participation entails the need to hold those in power (governors) accountable to popular scrutiny, representation and control. A closer examination of these two indicates that a conflict can be created between the governors and the public. If the consuming public has too

much power it will stifle the power and ability of the governors to choose and implement policies; leading to a 'hamstrung' government. This situation is reversed if there is too much concentration of power in the governors; leading to a situation where the consuming public loses its access to power and its ability to influence decisions. The third critical component of the triangle is development / service delivery. In a mature democracy, the legitimacy of the governors depends on effective performance in delivering development to the citizens. Failure to deliver development influences the attitude of the citizens because, through public participation, they can change the governors (Kohli 1993). The assumption is that in a democracy, the electorate is supposed to reward office holders they approve of and throw out the ones they are dissatisfied with (Randall and Svasand 2002: 5). In such a situation public participation becomes a vital tool for enforcing accountability and oversight over the governors. The ideal situation in local authorities is a situation where the correlation between governance, public participation and service delivery is strong.

The following sections of this chapter examine how the system of decentralisation in the City of Harare conforms to or deviates from this triangle of public participation. It also examines the agency of the central state and the locally elected councillors. It also examines the avenues which the residents use to influence the development trajectory of the City of Harare. Throughout the chapter, there is an analysis of how the disjuncture and political contestation among the various governors has affected (either positively or negatively) the residents of the City of Harare.

7.3   Avenues for public participation in Harare

The system of local government in Zimbabwe does not prescribe what the councillors should do between the elections, with regards to community engagement. However, there are avenues which the residents can use to engage with the administrative officials and councillors. Residents may raise administrative issues at various district offices in the city. The issues raised at these offices are mainly related to fault reporting for example burst water pipes, faulty street lights and so forth. All the other issues which have anything to do with the governance of the council are supposed to be raised with the ward councillors. Nationally citizens are expected to engage with the Members of Parliament from their elective constituency.

Most ward councillors interviewed said that for ease of consultation they meet the residents of their ward once in a month on a stipulated day of the week, for example, the first Tuesday of the month. The meeting venues are also fixed so that the residents are not confused. It is expected that those who would like to raise issues with the councillors will have to attend these meetings and engage with the councillors. Some councillors regard these meetings as feedback meetings, where they can update their ward residents on programmes which the council is carrying out in the city. The Urban Councils Act of 2008 is not very clear on how councillors must interact with their wards. However, in the Handbook for Induction of Councillors, great emphasis is placed on that fact that a good councillor must consult regularly with his/her ward. The only time the City of Harare is expected to consult and show evidence of consultation is during the budget formulation process (According to Circular 3 of 2012 as a directive by the Minister of Local Government).

While all the councillors interviewed, alluded to the fact that they consult residents on a monthly basis, this assertion this contradicts other sources of data on consultation. Reports by the City of Harare residents' associations show that councillors hardly consult. For example, during the period July 2013 to June 2014 the Harare Residents Trust[43] documented that on average, City councillors in Harare held only one formal consultative meeting (Harare Residents Trust [HRT] 2014). Even though consultation of residents may have happened informally, it is suspected that the HRT was merely talking about a formal invitation. Furthermore, citizens themselves indicated that monthly meetings do not occur, that they do not even know who their councillor is, and that the first time they saw their councillor was on the ballot paper on voting day. The elective wards also lack structures such as Ward War Rooms found in South Africa. These are structures which involve various stakeholders who meet and work regularly, to advance the aspirations of the ward residents. In the case of the City of Harare the absence of systems and structures which allow politically acquired structures to translate into neutral development structures which in turn, serve the community/ward as whole, has resulted in the politicisation of the genuine community development issues. As discussed earlier, Zimbabwe is a country marked by political polarity and violence which might be a contributing factor which makes it difficult for the creation of ward structures which represent all the residents as they are open to capture by political

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[43] According to officials from HRT, they send representatives to all the official meetings called for by the councillors in each and every ward in the City of Harare.

parties. Later in this chapter evidence will be provided to show that ward structures are politicised to the extent that there is a perception that the councillors only represent the members of their party as compared to all the community members.

The City of Harare employs various methods to communicate with the residents; including public notices on radio, television, flyers, newspapers, and council notices boards. The residents may also attend full council meetings as observers and have access to council minutes. An interesting observation is that, full council meeting minutes are in most cases useless to the residents as they mostly refer to council committee meetings which are closed to the public. Without access to committee meetings residents are not be able to make sense of the bulk of full council meeting minutes.

7.4   Representative democracy in Harare

The City of Harare conforms to the type of democracy which is a representative democracy. In Zimbabwe, the nature of democracy entails citizens electing representatives who will sit either in a local authority councils or parliament. These representatives may be independent candidates or from political parties. The assumption is that citizens are knowledgeable to elect representatives who will represent them for a specific term (five years in local government).

Participation in a representative democracy manifests in citizens engaging in political parties, and voting in national and local elections (Hingels et al. 2009: 3). In a democracy, the electorate is supposed to reward office holders they approve of, and throw out the ones they are dissatisfied with (Randall and Svasand 2002: 5). While voting occurs periodically, what is critical is to understand what happens between election periods. For example, do the citizens have the power and opportunity to influence decisions between elections? Several scholars have tried to answer this question which varies across countries in Africa. However, the underlying general agreement is that, on the African continent, there have been muted attempts by governments to achieve effective citizen control of public decision-making process in decentralised institutions. Cornwall and Gaventa (2001) noted that, for effective citizen control to be achieved, there is a need to change the perceptions of citizens from being 'users and choosers', to being 'makers and shapers' of interventions and services. For effective public participation to be achieved, Gaventa and Valderama (1999) stated that

citizen education and awareness building, training of officials, alliances with civil society, and advocacy is crucial for citizen control.

In the City of Harare, all the current councillors come from political parties. The interviews conducted with the residents of Harare show that councillors are elected not because of their ability, but because of the political party they represent. Political parties play a large role in determining who is going to be elected as a councillor. In terms of qualities they would look for in a councillor, most of the residents indicated that they prefer councillors who are honest, hardworking, and have people at heart.

> *"We normally look at councillors who are hardworking, honest and have people at heart but the first selection issue is which political party they are coming from."*

One resident emphasised this point by saying:

> *"I only vote for a councillor from the political party of my choice."*

The tendency to prioritise the political party instead of the qualities of councillors can be explained by the nature of national politics. Nationally most urban voters believe that the economic problems they are experiencing are as a result of ZANU PF. Therefore, there is a need to vote it out of power. It can be argued that voting for the opposition is more of a protest vote. National election results show that, since 2002, the opposition has been winning the majority of wards and parliamentary constituencies in urban areas.

The polarity of the national politics leads one to expect voters to stick to one political party; both nationally and locally. This brings to bear a second question: Is the opposition winning the elections in urban local authorities because of the calibre of their candidates, or are they beneficiaries of a protest vote against ZANU PF? One resident's observation may hint at an answer to the question above. The resident said:

> *"Unfortunately, councillors are imposed on people by political parties even though they have little education and experience."*

However, several inferences can be drawn. Since the opposition took over in 2002, service delivery has decreased to appalling levels Even though some of the opposition councillors were caught up in proven corrupt activities, the residents still voted for them. One can infer from this that national politics is playing a role in influencing who gets elected at the local

level. Therefore, it can be said that the political situation in Zimbabwe, and specifically the City of Harare, is not conducive to the election of the best councillors. The quality and calibre of the councillors are superceded by their political affiliations.

7.4.1 Whose views do these councillors represent?

This question was posed to city residents and elicited some very interesting responses. The objective was to get an understanding of whether councillors represent the views of the residents. One resident said:

> "No! No! Councillors do not represent my views; most of them have their agendas that have nothing to do with residents. Once voted in, they forget about their promises."

Another resident said:

> "All politicians in my own view serve their own interests first, and then their families, relatives and then the general residents will follow last."

Almost all the residents' association / civil society leaders interviewed echoed the opinion that the councillors serve their own interests, and do not represent the interests of the general residents. One resident, when pressed what course of action he takes if councillors do not represent his wishes, said:

> "Personally, I have stopped voting since it's not making any difference. No councillor is serious to represent my vote."

The feeling amongst residents is that the councillors are not representing their needs and aspirations. It is important to note that the councillors being referred to here are from the opposition MDC. The residents also believe that the Minister of Local Government in Zimbabwe does not represent them. If these views are to be generalised[44] across the City of Harare then it shows that there is a huge gap between what politicians represent and what residents want. One respondent said:

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[44] As stated in the methodology section, the residents sample did not allow for generalisation but it captured views from low, middle and high income groups within the City of Harare.

"Despite voting, I do not think we have the power to change anything, even if we complain there is no response from authorities."

What this shows is that there is a clear disassociation between what the councillors represent and what the residents want; there is also no consequence for non-delivery of service. The whole electoral process becomes detached from public participation and at times the residents themselves do not see the reason why they should continue participating in a process over which they have no control over and yields no tangible benefits to them. The complexity of the political context in Zimbabwe limits how the residents punish the governors for non-performance. Public participation is still relevant but it has been overshadowed by national politics to the extent that the residents in the City of Harare are now lenient towards the governors even though they are not delivering.

7.3.1.1 Gender representation in the City of Harare

Gender representation is important if the objective of inclusiveness is to be achieved in decentralised local authorities. Since 2002, women's representation in the composition of the City council has been below 15%. Gender representation from 2002 to March 2015 is depicted in Figure 10 below:

Figure 10: Gender representation in the City of Harare Council

	2002	2008	2013
% of Female Councillors	11	11	11
% of Male Councillors	89	89	89
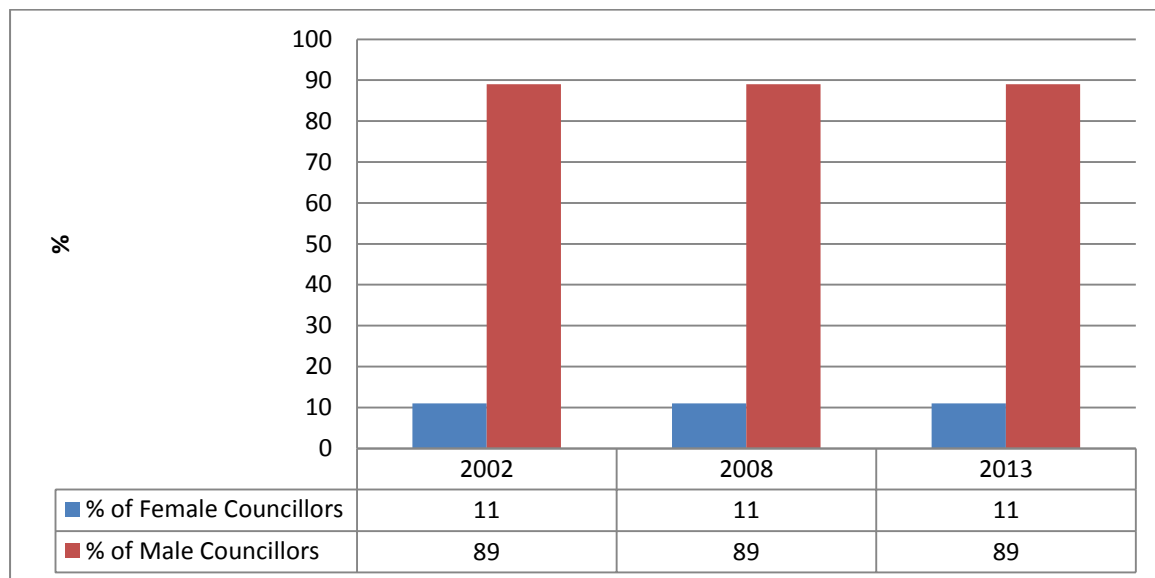
Figure 10 does not paint a good picture of gender representation in the City of Harare. It shows that the overwhelming majority of the councillors are males. This goes against the policy pronouncements of the MDC which advocate for gender equality in council and other

political body representation. This skewed representation of females in the City of Harare is ironic in the sense that an observation made by the Harare Residents Trust (2014) over the years was that the majority of participants of council budget meetings are females as compared to males. Given the cultural context of the City of Harare; failure in service delivery is felt more by the females who are culturally responsible for the majority of household chores like cooking, cleaning, laundry and so forth; it is these women who bear the brunt of fetching water from open wells yet they are not represented in the city council.

The problem of non-representation is entrenched to the extent that even the few elected female councillors do not hold any positions of influence in the city council's committees. At the present moment, only two females are deputy committee chairpersons and none are chairperson, mayor or deputy mayor. What this means is that there is under-representation of issues which are faced by women in the City of Harare as the majority of decision makers are males. I argue that there is a need for political parties to ensure that the political environment and system guarantee equity in gender representation in the candidates put forward for election as councillors. The argument is that if more women are elected as councillors then the decisions taken will reflect more accurately the issues affecting women who bear the brunt of poor service delivery. I take cognisance of recent work on gender representation which shows that equitable representation does not always yield a critical representation of women's issues. However, equitable representation in itself is a step forward. If the MDC and ZANU PF had wanted to address the issue of gender inequality they could have fielded more female candidates but this has never happened. Even the language of these political parties resists female leadership and refers to city leadership as 'city fathers'. There is a need for political parties in the City of Harare to address gender inequality not only fielding females as candidates but female candidates who are effective decision makers.

7.4.2   What happens in between elections in Harare?

As discussed earlier, representative democracy works on the premise that the elected councillors represent the interests of the electorate. Representation can be achieved in two ways. In the first instance, the elected representative can continuously consult the electorate on various issues during the course of his/her term. Secondly, the elected representative is entrusted with making decisions on behalf of the residents using his/her own judgement. However, what is missing, is the role of the political parties from whence the representatives come. Political parties by nature have their own agenda and policies, which they peddle

between elections. In the case of representation in the city, there is clear evidence that the representatives hardly consult the electorate between the elections. Most residents interviewed feel very bitter about the lack of consultation and visibility by the councillors. Several residents said:

> "We only see councillors when they come to campaign for elections."

> "Once elected, they don't come back to us."

> "There is total silence in my ward. I do not even know who the councillor is. I will just wait till 2018."

The views expressed here indicates that public participation ends once voting is completed during elections, and that residents have no further say in the affairs of the city. Some residents felt very strongly that they must be involved in the entire decision-making process. One resident said:

> "Ratepayers should be involved in decision-making in the council rather than them making decisions that deprive ratepayers."

Some of the residents even felt that councillors have no power to make decisions in the council once elected.

> "Councillors are doing nothing once elected into office."

> "In council affairs councillors are passive participants, they are not doing anything visible. Maybe I do not know; as for residents, there is zero consultation."

These views allude to the disjuncture between the principles and practicalities of representative democracy. The system lacks oversight mechanisms to ensure that, the councillors once elected, continue to represent the views of the residents. It would seem that the current system only uses the residents as voting fodder; with no expected or elicited contribution from them between elections. If democratic decentralisation is to achieve its objectives, then there is a need processes whereby residents can have decision-making powers and are able to participate in governance matters between elections.

7.4.3   Role of civil society and community forums in Harare

Civil society and community-based forums are pivotal stakeholders in decentralisation and governance in any democracy. The growth and development of civil society and community-based forums largely depend on the environment which is created by the state. These forums play a critical role in holding the state accountable and enhancing active citizen engagement with the state. According to Diamond (1990: 54), "civil society not only checks and scrutinises power; they also enhance the legitimacy of democracy by providing new means to express political interests; increasing the political awareness, efficacy, and confidence of citizens; and training and recruiting new political leaders." As stated in the methodology chapter, in Harare one would have expected a variety of community-based forums to be in existence and being used as a vehicle to advance the agenda of various community members, but this is not the case. Such community-based forums or structures enable communities to come together and deliberate on issues of service delivery and governance.

As a researcher I take cognisance of the complexities of civil society in developing countries, and am aware that there are various forms of civil society in Zimbabwe. Some are controlled by the state, some are only issue based activist civil society groups, some are controlled by their funders and some originate within the community and are centred on community issues. It is important to note that despite the various debates about aims and objectives of various forms of civil society in developing countries, they play a critical role in the development and shaping of democracy. A vibrant civil society enhances governance and accountability, and strengthens representation and the vitality of democracy. Although the functional capacity and effectiveness of the civil society are debatable it is important to note that they can offer a platform to transform politically acquired structures into neutral development structures.

There are two main residents' associations in Harare; namely. Harare Residents Trust (HRT) and Combined Harare Residents' Association (CHRA). These organisations are not ward based and have evolved to become registered non-governmental organisations. They do not get their funding from the residents but from local and international donors. Although these organisations advance the issues affecting the residents, the residents themselves have no control on how these organisations are governed. Most of the residents interviewed stated that they have never engaged with these organisations.

The fact that the residents' associations operating in the City are funded by donors, and lack continuous engagement with citizens, causes them to be viewed with suspicion by political parties, who then question their agenda. Civil society is critical in holding the state accountable for its actions. In Harare, where there is a lack of viable community-based forums, civil society organisation can be very useful in building the capacity of residents so that they can engage meaningfully with the city council.

All the councillors interviewed in this study admitted that there are no politically neutral structures in their wards which focus on governance and service delivery. The only structures which are prevalent in the wards are political party structures. Political party structures by nature are not representative of the communities. Political party structures push the agenda of their political party so they are not suitable as avenues for active citizenry, especially in a polarised political environment. The absence of community-based forums in the city of Harare depicts the state of poor active citizen engagement as community members lack the opportunity to speak with one voice hence in most cases they are not heard.

Most councillors admitted that they use their political party structures to communicate council related information to the residents. One resident confirmed this by saying:

> *"The meetings are only called for the members of the political parties."*

Another resident went further and explained the influence of political structures by saying:

> *"Councillors only serve their own members and some of the councillors victimise supporters of other political parties."*

This communication is not likely to reach other residents with no political affiliation or from a different political party because of political contestation and polarity between the national ruling party ZANU PF and MDC, a good example of such a scenario was observed during the 2015 budget consultation process meetings where the meetings were punctuated by political party slogans; despite the fact that the councillors represent all the residents in the ward. One resident emphasised this view by saying:

> *"Councillors chant their party slogans at ward meetings and say all the new projects were done by their political party even though we know that the projects were funded by us through City of Harare."*

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In order to inculcate a culture of active citizenry in the City, there is a need to create platforms where the citizens can participate in making decisions on matters which directly affect them. The aim of local democracy is to give the residents genuine access to power whilst at the same time ensuring the smooth functioning of state institutions. Several studies (Nabatchi 2012, Baiocchi 2001, Cornwall and Coelho 2007, Morrison and Dearden 2013) have confirmed that there is a greater chance of achieving a developmental agenda and success in development programmes if citizens are part of the whole process.

7.5   The state and impact of public participation in the city of Harare

The main challenge to public participation is that all the stakeholders in local government, except residents, do not seem to take public participation seriously. The main reasons for this is that firstly, residents do not have a platform where they are actually involved in development planning of their city; secondly, in cases where the public has been involved in consultation, the public voice is only used as a tick boxes by the councillors and the city administrators to show that they have consulted the people; thirdly, there are no attempts by various stakeholders in decentralisation to capacitate the residents, so that their contribution to decision making is of high quality and effective. Fourthly, national politics is playing a major role in how the various stakeholders view active citizenry engagement in the City of Harare. Because of national political battles between ZANU PF and the MDC active citizen engagement has not been regarded as a key component of decentralisation. This leads to decisions being implemented in the City of Harare going off tangent compared to what the residents want to see. The residents feel that their representatives and administrators do not represent them hence they do not have control over what happens in the City of Harare. Lastly, is the argument that in the City of Harare the avenues available for public participation by residents does not guarantee that their contribution will be respected and/or implemented, or and that they will be able to hold the stakeholders responsible for implementation. In this case, it can be argued that in the City of Harare residents are allowed to be heard, they have no assurance that their decisions are implemented. This is supported by Mushamba (2010: 113) who said that presently the focus of public engagements in local government in Zimbabwe is not on participation but on consultation.

All the five issues raised above, show that democracy and decentralisation in Zimbabwe is not functioning as it should be. Democracy must be a contest of policies and effective delivery of services; not a contest of political survival. My argument is that the governors', especially political parties, are of the opinion that they do not need to be legitimised by the citizenry of the city. On the one hand, the residents end up with the perception that the state is no longer a neutral agent for providing public goods and services, and on the other, the governors have become too powerful to the extent that accountability is non-existent, and the residents no longer have access to power.

7.6 Conclusion

Public participation in the City of Harare must be allowed to play a critical role; given the disjuncture in the city. If the City of Harare had a vibrant system which encourages active citizen participation, then residents could act as the voice of reason between various political stakeholders and bureaucrats who are contesting each other. Since the residents are the receivers, users and financiers of the services delivered by the City of Harare, then reason dictates that they should have a greater say in how the city is run. The results of this study showed that, while the Ministry of Local Government purports to act on behalf of residents, it does not provide avenues and platforms to elicit residents' views and encourage/accept proposals, before it acts in local authorities. Furthermore, elected representatives, purport to act on behalf of the residents, but do not consult; even where some avenues which they can use to engage with the residents, may exist. Both the central and the local state only use the rhetoric of public participation when it suits them.

For public participation to be successful in the City of Harare, residents must be capacitated, and must have the power to force implementation of their decisions so that their participation is effective. Such public participation must be transparent, responsive, accountable and inclusive. Therefore, for effective public participation in the City of Harare requires institutionalising the state, and new political habits and beliefs. If the state is not institutionalised properly, it will produce a weak bureaucracy; resulting in capture of the state by in political parties and denying the citizens not only access to decision-making power, but also the opportunity to hold the state accountable. The following case study illustrates the level of public participation in the City of Harare.

7.7 Case study: City of Harare 2015 Budget Consultation Process

7.7.1 Introduction

The Ministry of Local Government, in Circular 3 of 2012, requires that all local councils conduct pre-budget consultations with the residents before the annual budget is crafted and adopted. The circular provides guidance in terms of the level of consultations which are supposed to take place before a budget is adopted. Section 288 of the Urban Councils Act (Chapter 29.15) requires that, before the expiry of any financial year, a local government authority's Finance Committee shall draw up and present for the approval of Council, estimates in such detail as the Council may require regarding the income and expenditure on revenue, and capital accounts of the Council for the succeeding financial year. The Minister of Local Government is responsible for administering this piece of legislation. The Act is in the form of carrot and stick. The carrot is realised when the council consults the residents; thereby legitimising its operations and creating a buy-in from the residents in the event of effective consultation. The stick is realised in the form of the Ministry having the power to not approve the budget in the absence of non-consultation. The legislation is silent on the consultation methods and expected outcomes; leaving room for local government authorities to have their own interpretation which might result in unintended outcomes.

7.7.2 Results and discussion

7.7.2.1 The consultation process

The consultation process for the 2015 budget followed the guidelines of Circular 3 of 2012. Notices for the consultative meetings were published in the newspapers, council district offices, radio and online media platforms. It was the responsibility of councillors to make sure their wards were notified of the budget consultative meetings. Because of political polarity in the City of Harare this researcher observed some issues with regards to the residents' notification of these meetings. There was blatant partisanship of councillors in terms of how they interacted with their wards. In most cases councillors used ward party political structures to communicate council related notices. This created the likelihood that the meeting notices were mainly targeted at members of the councillors' political party. This argument is supported by observations at some of these meetings where the majority of the

attendees were from a certain political party. This goes against the principle of inclusiveness in public participation. If the process is not inclusive then it does not advance the ideals of effective public participation as it does not afford all the residents equal opportunity to decide on how they are governed and to influence development decisions in their wards.

The consultative meetings were chaired by administrative officials from the City of Harare. An interesting observation in some situations was that administrative officials who were there were not prepared to answer some of the questions posed to them by residents despite the fact that they were representing the city's various departments. In some cases, the contingent of the administrative officials was more than the number of residents present at some consultative meetings. This created an intimidating environment which did not encourage robust debate on issues affecting the residents. The average number of administrative officials per meeting was between ten and twenty. A residents' association official was of the opinion that the high number of administrative officials was as a result of the allowances they are paid to attend these meetings. If this opinion is correct then the high attendance of council employees has a direct bearing on the high employment costs of the City of Harare.

The meetings were being conducted in a rushed manner; the chair was sticking to strict time frames and there was no opportunity for proper deliberation and feedback. The approach was mainly to document what the people expected in the 2015 budget. In most cases the consultative meetings degenerated into a fault reporting meeting about street lights not working, unavailability of water, potholes etc. What can be deduced from these meetings is that there is a lack of continuous engagement by the City of Harare with residents. Continuous engagement with the residents builds capacity and trust between the residents and the city officials. In other wards meetings were punctuated by party political sloganeering and singing thereby turning the consultative meetings into party political rallies. The environment was intimidating for the neutrals let alone to the members of other political parties.

7.7.2.2 Attendance at budget consultative meetings

The attendance across the wards highlights the issue of apathy with regards to the consultative process. It has to be noted that in the 2014 financial year this was the only meeting which was called for by the city administrators. Councillors have also conducted, on average, only one feedback meeting in their wards for the whole year. This might also explain low attendance as there is no culture of deliberative interaction between the city

authorities and the residents. Table 6 shows the raw numbers of attendees at consultative meetings.

Table 6: Consultative meeting attendance

Range of Attendees per ward	Number of Wards
1 -25	12
26 - 50	18
51 - 75	8
76 - 100	4
101 and above	4

Source: HRT, 2014

It has to be noted that scheduling of only one consultative meeting per ward with an average of 4000 active voters is not conducive if the views of all the citizens were to be captured. It is important to note the observation that the way in which the residents contributed to these meetings showed that they had not met and agreed on common positions prior to the consultative meeting. This weakened the bargaining power of the residents and created discord in residents' voices. In Zimbabwe, there is a very low culture of active citizenry through community-based forums and other spaces afforded to communities. If there was a strong active citizen engagement, then attendance to these meetings and their effectiveness would be improved. By virtue of residents coming together and agreeing on common positions before the budget consultative meeting, residents would increase their bargaining power.

Residents revealed the underlying reasons why they did not attend these meetings. Most of the reasons are based on the perception that the consultative meetings were not effective and that they are a fruitless process. One resident said:

"… we are tired of meetings which do not yield anything."

This statement shows that residents draw from their previous experience and perceive these meetings as a waste of time because they are not effective in influencing the final budget. Another resident bolstered this view by saying:

"… if they cannot solve our day to day problems like potholes how can we expect them to take our views seriously in these meetings?"

What is clear from residents' perspective is that they feel that they do not have a say in decision-making process within the City of Harare. If there was continuous engagement with the residents most of the issues raised above would not have occurred. It is important to note that the objective of the Ministry of Local Government in enforcing budget consultation process is that there is a sense of ownership of the budget by the residents. It seems that the whole participatory budgeting process is alienating the very residents who are supposed to be owners of the budget.

7.7.2.3 Pre-budget proposals

Prior to commencement of the budget consultation process, the Harare City Council's Finance Department consolidates priorities from various city departments and comes up with draft proposals which are taken to the residents for consultation. An analysis of the 2015 budget draft proposals shows that the proposals were actually based on the previous year's budget priorities with no or little deviation. The city's pre-budget draft proposals are discussed below. Most of the 2014 projects were not completed because of limited funding which is compounded by growing debt.

The first priority was to address the water and sanitation infrastructure. This component of the budget is being funded through loans acquired from international stakeholders. The justification of the city is that for them to provide clean adequate water to the residents they will have to rehabilitate the water system. The second priority was road maintenance, with the main objective being the forming and capacitating of zonal road repair teams. These teams are responsible for maintaining the road networks in Harare. The third priority was refuse collection capacitation; the city acknowledges that for a number of years they have failed to provide a full service to the city residents with regards to the provision of refuse collection despite the fact that residents are paying for it on a monthly basis. The final two priorities were the construction of public transport holding bays and improving Wireless Local Area Network (WLAN) connectivity within the various City of Harare offices.

7.7.2.4 Residents' priorities

During residents' consultative meetings in Harare, the majority highlighted certain priorities which they wanted addressed in the 2015 budget. What is unique about the priorities of the residents is that most of them highlighted issues which are to do with basic services which

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they feel are not being delivered by the city authorities. The issue of clean reliable water supply is a contentious issue in the City of Harare. Some suburbs go for days without water but at the end of the month, there is no significant change in the water bill. Some residents angrily told the city officials this:

> *"... the water which you are providing is discoloured and smells; it's not suitable for consumption... You are charging us for pumping dirty water to our homes."*

Other residents highlighted the problem of the shortage of water in such as in the following statement:

> *"At times we go for weeks without water but still we still receive bills with no variation in water usage, this is daylight robbery,"*

Even the city council officials admit that some areas have gone for years without water.

> *"Areas that have gone for years without water have begun to experience some positive results of the on-going water and wastewater rehabilitation programmes."* (City of Harare 2014)

Observations in most of the middle and higher income areas show that most of the residents now source their water from private boreholes drilled on their properties. In low-income areas, some depend on council drilled boreholes but in some suburbs, residents depend on open unsecured wells for water. The general availability of piped water is erratic and most of the residents do not use it for drinking purposes because of its perceived poor quality. The problem of water supply is a perennial problem; water-borne diseases (like cholera and typhoid) breaking out is not new in Harare. A careful analysis of the City of Harare budget shows that water revenue contributes about 50% of the total city revenue.

The second major issue raised during the consultation process was the issue of leaking sewage and non-collected refuse is also a very emotive issue which was raised by residents. Some residents said:

> *"... this past year I can count on my fingers the number of times the city collected refuse from our street. We rely on burning whatever refuse we produce and some families do not burn they just dump their refuse in the streets. This is a health hazard."*

One resident emphasised this point by saying:

> *"... look around our streets, they are full of used diapers and flowing raw sewage, but every month you charge us for refuse removal."*

Poor refuse removal has a direct bearing on the quality of water which the city receives at its treatment plants. The City of Harare is situated in the middle of a water catchment area which then supplies water to the city. Improper sewage and refuse removal means that this waste can work its way into the water supply which means that the city has to pay more in water purification costs.

Another major issue raised was that of street lighting; residents complained that because broken street lights are not fixed on time, thieves are taking advantage of the darkness at night to rob residents. In some suburbs in Harare, the city authorities are encouraging residents to fit lights on their fences to provide street lighting. Most suburbs have gone for years without street lighting which is not ideal as this increased exposure of residents to the danger of criminals.

Residents also highlighted the problems of the dilapidated road network infrastructure. The major concern of the road network in Harare is that it is old and most of the roads in residential areas are in dire need of repair. One resident at a meeting in Highfield Township said:

> *"These roads were inherited from the colonial administration and since then they have never been repaired. Most of them have reverted from being tarred to gravel roads."*

The impact of poor roads is mainly felt in the damage it causes to vehicles and the number of road accidents which are related to the poor road network.

The final contentious issue raised by the residents was the high ratio of employment costs. The Ministry of Local Government guidelines stipulate that both the rural and the urban councils are to cap their employment costs at 30% of the total budget. The Harare City Council has not met this requirement for the past 5 years. The majority of the city's budget is to finance employment costs. In 2009 and 2010, the city spent 96% and 73% of the income on employment costs respectively. City of Harare residents raised this issue in several

meetings but it was not dealt with adequately during the consultation process. One resident said:

> "*If most of the revenue raised goes to pay salaries instead of offering a service, then something is wrong in this city. How can we pay someone a salary for not doing their job?*"

Another resident concurred with this view by saying

> "*.... We are just donating money to the council*".

The cause of high employment costs in the past years has to be understood in the context that the city employs a workforce of around 9271 to serve a total population of 1.6 million as of June 2014. The other context with regards to the salaries is the high salaries paid to directors and their deputies. In 2014, the salary schedule submitted to a parliamentary portfolio committee on local government shows that the average salary of the directors of the city of Harare was around US$15, 000 per month (allowances not included) (Machivenyika 2014). This is more than some of the average salaries paid to municipal officials of developed countries who have a bigger budget and provide better quality services compared to the City of Harare. It has to be noted that there is a lot of secrecy with regards to the salaries of top officials to the extent that what they earn is not easily accessible to the public or the city councillors.

Table 7: Percentage of employment costs in the City of Harare budget

	2009	*2010*	*2011*	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*	*2015*
Employment costs	*96%*	*73%*	*65%*	*55%*	*48%*	*48%*	*40%*
Service delivery cost	*4%*	*27%*	*35%*	*45%*	*52%*	*52%*	*60%*

Source: City of Harare, 2014

There is a need for the city to contain the employment costs so that the larger chunk (at least 70%) of the budget can be directed towards improving service delivery. There are several ways in which the issue of employment costs can be addressed. The city administration can reduce its number of workers through a human resource audit and weed out redundant staff. This would have an impact on reducing the salary bill and related costs. One recognises that laying off of employees has various social implications but on the other hand it is not fair for residents not to receive services due to the expense of paying wages for redundant staff. The second approach is to adjust salaries so that they reflect the financial situation of the

municipality and the overall economic situation of the country. It is folly to continue paying mega salaries at the expense of better service delivery to the residents who are the clients.

7. 7.2.5 Revenue sources

The main sources of income for the city of Harare are mainly water charges and property rates. These two sources contribute 76% of the total city revenue. An interesting observation during the budget consultation process was that the administrative officials of the City of Harare did not disclose how much they borrowed or how much they intend to borrow from local and international funders for the current year and the following budget year. If the city is borrowing, it is borrowing on behalf of the residents and there is a need for residents to be involved in decision making since it has a direct bearing on the current and future financial situation of the city. The table below shows the sources of revenue for the City of Harare.

Table 8: Sources of revenue for the City of Harare

Source	*Amount in US$*
Property Tax (domestic/industrial/commercial)	*105.3 million*
Refuse collection	*23.8 million*
Welfare	*0.8 million*
ZINARA and Billboards	*4.0 million*
City Architect	*6.7 million*
Clamping and Towing	*5.8 million*
Health Fees	*6.6 million*
Housing: Rentals, Leases and Markets	*9.0 million*
Harare Water	*102.0 million*
Parks and Cemeteries	*0.8 million*
Public Safety	*0.8 million*
Education	*0.7 million*
Estates	*3.2 million*
Other	*3.5 million*
TOTAL	***272.7 MILLION***

Source: City of Harare, 2014

A closer analysis of the budget shows that the majority of the capital projects which are being carried were not funded directly from the budget but from borrowing. This poses a problem because it shows that the budget of the city of Harare is not capable of maintaining and funding new capital projects from its own resources. What is needed is for the residents to understand whether the borrowing was as a result of a liquidity crisis or because the revenue being raised by the council is not enough for capital projects. If the city is borrowing for capital projects, questions which need to be addressed with the residents are: what are the

terms of the loans? Is the city capable of repaying the loans? What impact does it have on the future of the city and what are these loans used for? Without providing clear answers to these questions residents will continue to doubt the effectiveness of the city in managing the city's revenue resources.

7. 7.2.6 Final budget allocation for 2015

In the City of Harare, the approach to consultation is centred on taking ideas to the people instead of taking ideas from the people. There is overwhelming evidence that consultations are only conducted as a result of fulfilling the legal obligations mandated by the Ministry of Local Government. The attitude of the city authorities is that the whole process is a matter of ticking boxes, thereby fulfilling the requirements of Circular no 3 of 2012. This view is supported by the allocation of the 2015 budget which does not reflect the priorities raised by the residents during the consultation. The underlying finding of the final budget allocation was that it did not deviate from the city authorities' pre-budget proposals. It is clear that the public consultation process in the City of Harare is devoid of substance and effectiveness and geared to mollify the residents.

7. 7.2.7 Addressing service delivery challenges

According to the city authorities, the reason why they are not able to provide services is because of low revenue. The low revenue base, according to the councillors and administrators, is as a result of the Ministry of Local Government which caps and controls how much the local authorities can charge and levy on the services which they provide. Most of the councillors and administrators interviewed concurred that they are charging rates and levies which are below cost recovery. There has been an instance where the urban local authorities attempted to charge cost recovery rates and levies but the Ministry of Local Government did not approve the budget. City of Harare revenue base needs to be extended; this can be achieved by charging full cost for the services they provide as collecting less than it costs to provide a service leads to deterioration of the service. It is pointless not to collect the revenue using full cost recovery since this leads to non-delivery of services and non-maintenance of infrastructure which leads to huge future costs. The future generation must not be forced to bear the costs of the present generation. Where the government decides to cushion the poor, the cushioning policy must be of direct subsidisation of the poor in order to

ensure that local authorities balance their books and continue providing services at acceptable levels.

7. 7.2.8 Addressing public participation inadequacies in the City of Harare

There is evidence to show that the City of Harare does not provide adequate capacity building opportunities and channels of information to the public so as to enhance their participation capabilities. An informed citizenry forms the basis of effective and active citizen engagement. There is no system which ensures a two-way flow of information from the council to the residents and from the residents to the council. For residents to engage effectively there is a need for the continuous building of their capacity. Capacity building is not a once off event; there is a need to continuously build the capacity of the residents so that they reach a point where they can contribute effectively to decision making within the City of Harare. Civic societies and other non-governmental organisations can play a role in building the capacity of residents so that they equipped with the skills to participate. This can only be possible if the political environment is conducive to the formation of community forums and encourages the operation of civic organisations without impediments.

There is a belief by city administrators that there is no need to be continuously engaging with citizens since the citizens are represented by councillors. Most of the councillors only hold an average of two meetings in two years. Councillors heavily depend on their political party caucus for policy direction hence the record of poor consultation and feedback meetings. This may be addressed by enacting the necessary acts and policies which ensure that residents of local authorities form a critical component (backed by active citizenry) in the governance structures of these institutions. One can argue that because the residents are represented by democratically elected councillors then there is no need for continuous engagement with residents of the local government authorities. This argument goes against decentralisation principles where the citizens are supposed to have a voice in decision making; in the City of Harare, it is clear that what the city administrators and councillors put forward is completely different from what the residents want. The councillors are elected on the pretext that they will represent the residents in their wards but in the City of Harare, but this is not the case. I argue that within the acts and policies of local government there should be a framework which makes it possible for the residents to hold both the administrative officials and councillors accountable for their actions. In the event that the councillors no longer represent the aspirations of their wards then there should be a provision for recalling them. In the case

of the City of Harare there is little conceptualisation of who is accountable to whom in what domain of life, or how a person might deal with a variety of often contesting individuals. Strengthening systems of accountability in the City of Harare would lead to the greater inclusion of the residents in decision making within the city thereby increasing the effectiveness of public participation.

The local government system in Zimbabwe provides for people's participation in choosing their representatives in council with a degree of success. It is when it comes to planning and provision of services that the local government system faces the greatest challenge leading to services which residents and communities have no ownership of or affection for, thereby creating serious challenges. It is recommended that active public participation in all council operations should start from the planning stage up to full implementation including the design, monitoring and evaluation. The budgetary process should be a continuous exercise in order for people to appreciate the need for and levels of rates and service charges.

7.7.3   Conclusion

Active citizen engagement helps develop citizens into informed citizens who are aware of their rights. Participation is not a once off event but a continuous process. To reach full participation there is a need for the city to engage citizens on a constant basis. Citizens do not just wake up and say we have our rights. Citizens learn by starting to engage with various stakeholders and in the process gain critical skills. Active citizen engagement is not about one voice it is about collective action by the community for its benefit. The collective action comes from the forming of various networks; this bolsters certain positions in the community. Citizen engagement deepens democracy as citizens are transformed from being users of services to decision makers.

In the City of Harare, there is a need for a public participation system which is inclusive, accountable, responsive and open. The administrative officials and the councillors need to change their attitude on public participation and ensure that they respond in an open manner to the issues raised by the residents. The residents' views must not be viewed as optional but must be integral in decision making in the City of Harare. This calls for a change in how the central state and local state tackle active citizen engagement. For the budget formulation process to succeed in the City of Harare, there is a need for the whole process of public

consultation to be part of a broader citizen engagement approach which is centred on inclusiveness, openness, accountability and responsiveness.

CHAPTER 8 : THE STATE OF SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE CITY OF HARARE

"This is criminal! We cannot be paying for non-existent services..." City of Harare resident.

"Do not drink tap water it's not safe. If you are going to important meetings always carry a shoe brush, the roads are more of dust than tar. You do not want to meet some very important people with dusty shoes." Another City of Harare resident.

8.1   Introduction

The second verbatim quote above is a set of instructions given to me by my sister when I first arrived for my fieldwork in Harare; signifying the state of service delivery in the City of Harare. What is evident to everyone in the City of Harare is that the service delivery is appalling and of a low standard. The only bone of contention in terms of service delivery in Zimbabwe is the answer to the question: who is the architect of this poor level of service delivery? All the residents interviewed acknowledged the impact of the economic situation on service delivery, and were critical of how the city authorities are managing the affairs of the City of Harare. What is evident is that there is no zeal or urgency regarding service delivery, and that the focus of the various stakeholders is on contestation for political spaces, and accruing personal benefits. This chapter focuses on how the City of Harare is faring on its service delivery mandate. The later sections of this chapter will deal with some of the factors that impede service delivery, and finally the chapter proposes some approaches to achieving basic minimum levels of service delivery.

8.2   The mandate of City of Harare in service delivery

The Urban Councils Act of 2008 prescribes certain responsibilities to urban local authorities. The major mandate of urban councils is to deliver the following services to residents: water provision, infrastructure development and maintenance, housing provision, health services, sewerage and sewage reticulation, refuse collection and general governance function. As discussed earlier in chapter 5, the local authorities have two broad functions. Firstly, administrative functions, performed by administrative officials, include the implementation

of policies and secondly, the policy and legislative function (making of policies and bylaws), which is performed by the elected councillors and the central state legislative arm.

The setup of local government in Zimbabwe creates the impression that whatever is implemented is coming directly coming from the policies developed and enacted by the councillors and the central state. The policy and legislative framework roles performed by the councillors fall within the broader constitutional and policy framework prescribed by the central state. This means that councillors have very little room for manoeuvre and they must work within the constitutional and policy framework prescribed by the central state. The assumption is that before councillors start manoeuvring, they need to first exhaust the prescribed mandate. Local authorities are also mandated to spearhead the development agenda (socio-economic development) of the areas under their jurisdiction, by acting as facilitators and catalysts of development in their areas. With the new constitutional dispensation, enacted in May 2013, the function of steering development has been legislated through the creation of metropolitan and provincial councils. The major challenge is that this constitutional provision has not yet been implemented. Therefore, the City of Harare's major function is to deliver the services discussed above.

8.3   Sources of funding for the city of Harare

Local authorities in Zimbabwe get their funding from various sources. Urban local authorities get their funding from property rates and levies which are charged on services delivered to the residents (Urban Councils Act of 2008). The city mainly charges for property rates, water charges, and sewage and refuse collection rates. The city also receives levies from housing rentals, health facilities, and licence fees from various business entities operating in the city. The majority of the city's revenue is generated from selling water and property rates. The central state is also expected to augment the revenue of local authorities through grants, which are channelled towards development projects within the local authority. These grants ceased in the late 1990s, because of a shortage of resources. Local authorities can source funding through loans from local and international financial markets, and multilateral aid institutions. Previously World Bank and USAID funded several housing and infrastructure projects.

8.4 The state of service delivery in the City of Harare

The state of service delivery in the City of Harare is appalling. Evidence from interviews conducted with various stakeholders; including residents, city officials, Ministry of Local Government officials, and councillors reveal the level of service delivery is low and of unacceptable standards. Most residents blame both administrative officials and councillors for focusing on raising revenue for their salaries and allowances, instead of using revenue to improve service delivery. One resident said:

> *"The majority of the budget must be allocated to services not salaries and administrative costs. The thrust of Harare officials is on raising revenue to pay for salaries instead of providing a needed service to the residents."*

In order to understand the level of services being provided by the City, services such as water provision, infrastructure development, refuse and sewage, are examined in the sections below.

8.4.1 Water provision

Water provision is a major service which the City of Harare must deliver to the residents. The importance of safe portable water cannot be underestimated, as it forms part of the broader component of the health and sanitation of the city's residents. Without safe clean water provision, outbreaks of disease are inevitable. However, interviews and observations suggest that the City has been failing to provide clean safe water to its residents. Water department officials stated that the city has a daily demand of 1.4 million cubic metres, while the council is only able to deliver 600,000 cubic metres, less than half of that. The evidence of this failure is mainly illustrated by several outbreaks of water-borne diseases, like cholera and typhoid in the City of Harare since the year 2000. The most devastating outbreak of cholera in Zimbabwe was in 2008, when there were 98 592 reported cases and 4 293 deaths (World Health Organization 2009). The cause of this outbreak was the failure of the urban water supply system in major urban centres in Zimbabwe. What is interesting is that, since independence, the City's revenue from water service contributed closer to 50% of the city's revenue. However, most of this revenue is not ploughed back into the city's water infrastructure. In 2008, water services charges contributed to more than 50% of the city's revenue, but in total, the city allocated only 4% of the budget to service delivery; with the

other 96% of the budget going to pay for employment costs (City of Harare Budget Statement 2014). This highlights a major issue. The focus is not on planning for better service delivery but on fundraising for city workers' salaries. To highlight how the issue of clean water provision has deteriorated, one resident interviewed for this study stated:

> *"Water supplies ceased in 2008 up to date no drop from my tap at my house but I am still being levied water charge. We actually rely on open wells for domestic water."*

My observation from my various visits to the City of Harare revealed that the issue of water supply is causing residents a great deal of hardship. The water supply is erratic, of low pressure, and of poor quality to the extent that at times it is discoloured and has a foul smell. Most of the residents no longer use it for drinking and are forced to buy borehole water from those residents who have drilled private boreholes. At times, the residents go for days without reticulated water; exposing themselves to unsafe water sources. Sanitation in the urban areas also relies on water supply, unlike in the rural areas where toilets are not designed to use running water and the rural residents have other sources of water.

The public spat conveyed below illustrates the lack of prioritisation and planning with regards to water and infrastructure. The public exchange of words was started by the mayor when he posted the following on social media, which was published in The Herald newspaper on 12 February 2015.

> *"Would you unveil a new spanking Land Rover in addition to just as new* (Toyota Land Cruiser) *V 8? Ignoring all public sentiment ... would you guys look residents straight in the eye and say yes I have two new cars from the same employer for the same job?"* (The Herald 12 February 2015)

In response, the town clerk emphasised that the car was not allocated to him but was part of the water infrastructure upgrading scheme which was being funded by a loan sourced from China. It is evident that individuals working for the City are not prioritising the delivery of services, but instead are maximising personal gain. With the poor levels of water provision, one would not expect the city administrators utilise the loan to develop water infrastructure. The city cannot go to the residents and say they are lacking resources to deliver services when they are travelling in expensive sport utility vehicles (SUVs); it is a slap in the face of the residents who are responsible for footing the bill of the loan. The failure to provide clean safe water in the City of Harare can squarely be blamed on both the current and previous

councillors, and the city administrators, who failed to plan for future population growth and for maintaining the water infrastructure.

8.4.2 Housing provision

In the City of Harare housing is a service which can be provided by both the central government and the local authority. The approach to housing in the City of Harare is twofold: the site and service scheme and the provision of core dwellings, which can be extended later. The Directorate of Housing and Community Services officials in the city of Harare estimated that the housing backlog in the city is above one million. In a 2013 study, I found that in one of the townships in Harare, low-income earners were failing to access houses to the extent that the number of tenants per dwelling has increased dramatically. The study revealed that on average, each household in Glen Norah has 3 tenant households living in one dwelling. The shortage of housing is affecting both the high and low-income earners, to the extent that the high-income earners are now competing with low-income earners in low-cost housing developments; thereby causing gentrification (Masvaure 2015).

The main approach to housing provision at the present moment is the site and service scheme, which entails the city providing all the basic services like water, sewerage and road networks before it allocates the plots to the residents on the waiting list. The residents will then be given a specified time period within which to complete core permanent dwelling units on their own. The second option entails the city authorities building permanent core dwellings which are composed of bathroom, kitchen and a bedroom. The rest of the house is supposed to be completed by the new owner within a stipulated time.

Housing developments in the City of Harare from the 1980s to the 2000s was being spearheaded by the international donor community, with the main funders being the World Bank and the USAID, through their Urban I and Urban II infrastructural development project (Kamete 2001). The target of the donor housing provision was mainly low-income urban residents. The international donors later suffered donor fatigue; resulting in in a very low quantity of housing units being delivered to the residents. The central government has not facilitated any new housing developments in Harare since the late 1990s.

Another funding model for housing development in the City of Harare is through the formation of housing cooperatives, which the ZANU PF government encouraged in the late 1980s (Rakodi and Withers 1995). The cooperative members would come together and pool

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their resources and apply for housing plots from the city, usually the low-cost housing plots. The city would provide basic infrastructure and services and allocate the plots to the cooperatives. The cooperative members would then pool resources and build houses for each other. Several low-income earners in the City of Harare gained access to housing through this method.

According to the Directorate of Housing and Community Services officials, the cooperative method was a viable method of providing housing to low-income earners until it was hijacked by politicians for political patronage purposes. One official explained the hijack by saying:

> "*Politicians mobilised their supporters without houses to form cooperatives and exerted enormous pressure on the city officials through the councillors to provide land for plots for their cooperatives. In this way the waiting list was no longer followed; only housing cooperatives from a certain political party were assured of housing land.*"

Observations made during fieldwork show that political interference in housing provision in the City of Harare has resulted in the illegal occupation and construction of permanent structures by cooperatives and individual residents on city land. One city senior administrative official interviewed for this study communicated the following with regards to this practice:

> "*...the problem we have at the present moment is that, because the city is failing to provide houses, senior ZANU PF officials allocated land to their supporters without city's approval since they can't approach the council because it is controlled by the MDC. We cannot even demolish the illegal structures before getting a go-ahead from the Ministry of Local Government. If we demolish the structures then it means we will be fired by the minister. We are just spectators in this whole issue of housing provisions.*"

This perspective was graphically illustrated during the fieldwork for this study, during which time a campaign was being spearheaded by the Ministry of Local Government to demolish 'illegal'[45] housing structures. The so-called illegal structures were fully permanent, brick and

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[45] The quality of some of these houses is better than middle income houses in the City of Harare.

mortar houses, some of which were built some years back and had been receiving water and refuse services from the City of Harare. The fact that the houses targeted for demolishing were permanent structures, shows that it was either that the city's administrators turned a blind eye to the illegal housing developments in the first place, or that someone applied pressure for them not to act. Politicisation of services has resulted in illegal activities, which have disadvantaged genuine and desperate house seekers.

The main issue which emanates from this example is that there are differences in vision between the central state and the local authorities. The administrative arm of the city is hamstrung by this unshared vision, to the extent that they are not able to execute their duties without stepping on the 'overextended toes' of the political actors. The unshared vision has also resulted in the politicisation of housing provision. Political machinations in housing provision in the city should be stopped, if the city is to fulfil its mandate. The city must allocate housing impartially to all residents. The provision of housing for political patronage purposes deprives residents who may be supporting a different political party or are politically inactive. The long waiting list for housing in the city is a clear indication that the, City of Harare has failed to provide affordable houses to its residents.

8.4.3   Health delivery

Health delivery in the City of Harare is mainly through the primary health care facilities and hospitals, managed by the city's health department. The health services are not free. Residents are required to pay a nominal fee when they visit these facilities. The majority of the working residents in Harare (a small proportion of the total city's population) prefer to contribute to medical aid / health insurance, as they do not trust that the public health facilities can provide adequate health facilities. The low-income earners and unemployed are the main users of the city's primary health facilities. Given the economic decay in Zimbabwe, there is a huge population of low-income earners without medical insurance. This has increased the number of residents who use public health facilities in the City of Harare

Like all the other services, the health services are also not adequate and are of poor quality. Residents who were interviewed for this study highlighted some of the biggest challenges they face when they try to access these services.

> *"The problem is that the city expects us to pay charges when we go to clinics, some of*
> *us we don't have that money. If you do not have money you are sent home without*

getting treatment. You can also pay the charges and end up getting painkillers because they say they do not have money to buy proper medication."

The system of charging levies to those who want health care services is not an ideal situation for those who cannot afford to pay. In most instances cases some of the health issues are caused by the failure of the city to provide safe clean drinking water and providing adequate sewage and refuse disposal infrastructure for example the persistent outbreak of waterborne diseases. The health facilities also have not been spared from water shortages, and in some cases, the major referral hospital operated by the City of Harare (Harare Hospital) has gone for months without running water. According to a report from a daily newspaper, The Daily News of 13 August 2014 (Chikwanha 2014) health practitioners were using water from buckets in the intensive care unit.

"There is no running water at Harare hospital and they are using buckets to wash hands in the ICU."

One Member of Parliament (National Assembly) interviewed for this study stated that, the city has misplaced priorities with regards to health provision. He went on to say that you will find that the hospital's chief executive officer is rented a car which costs the city USD$ 6000 per month, but the hospital does not even have drugs or clean running water. It is clear that the City is prioritising the benefits and comfort of the workers, at the expense of delivering basic services to the residents. These sentiments support the results presented earlier, that the city spends more on administrative costs and salaries on actual service delivery. Access to proper health care is a basic human right. If the institutions mandated to provide such services are failing to provide them, then there is a need to take remedial action and provide policies and legislation to ensure that residents of local authorities receive these services at all the times; regardless of the economic circumstances of the local authority.

8.4.4 Infrastructure maintenance and development

Cities across the world plan for the future growth of their population through the development of their infrastructure and by prioritising the maintenance of their existing infrastructure. A close examination of the past five years' budgets shows, that there is very little money budgeted for infrastructure maintenance, let alone development. This trend has been going on in Harare since the early 1990s, when the government changed its focus from the massive infrastructure developments of the 1980s. If new infrastructure is not constructed

it means that the growing population will put a strain on the present and old infrastructure; leading to its quick deterioration and ultimate collapse. In the case of the City of Harare, two things have happened; neither is city constructing new infrastructure, nor is it maintaining the old infrastructure.

The majority of councillors and residents in Harare highlighted the fact that there are no major projects in their wards. The only 'major' projects indicated by councillors and residents are those associated with borehole drilling; which is as a result of the failure of the city to provide clean, safe tap water. From the city administrators' perspective, the only major project they are undertaking is the rehabilitation of the water supply infrastructure in the City of Harare. However, there is no evidence of such maintenance going on, from what can be observed. Instead, there is evidence of a potholes, non-working traffic lights, raw sewage flowing in some residential streets, and non-working street lights. In certain affluent suburbs the city has encouraged residents to fit lights at the entrances to their properties, to deal with the problem of pitch darkness at night, because the street lights are not working. In terms of road infrastructure, the increased vehicle traffic, and poor maintenance and development of road networks are causing a traffic nightmare throughout the day. In the residential areas, observations reveal that many of the once tarred roads are now dirt roads because of lack of maintenance. One resident said:

> *"When we pay property rates, we expect the city council, at least, to take care of roads and other infrastructure. Now look at the roads, pot holes everywhere, when it rains it becomes very dangerous because these potholes are filled with water. The City of Harare does not care about the damage to our cars."*

In the case of damage to cars, in most cases there is no recourse for the owners. The current state of infrastructure in the City of Harare is not adequate to cater for its residents. If this issue is not addressed, then it will worsen as some of the infrastructure is collapsing. The city administrators and councillors must find innovative ways of funding infrastructure. It is convenient to blame the economic situation of the country as the main cause of poor infrastructure, but there is a need to understand that if the infrastructure is not maintained then a total collapse is inevitable.

8.4.5 Sewage and refuse collection

Sewage and refuse collection services in Harare, although improved from previous years (residents views), is not being adequate. One resident narrated why the city is unable to provide better quality sewage services by saying:

> *"If I report a burst sewage pipe in my street they say come and fetch us or give us money for fuel since the city does not have fuel to come and fix it but their senior managers are going around in expensive cars bought by our money."*

The problem of raw sewage flowing in residential streets is common occurrence. According to the City officials, the sewage reticulation infrastructure is old and needs to be replaced. As one official emphasised, this infrastructure was designed to serve less than half a million residents but is now serving more than one and a half million residents. Previous city budgets show that this was not prioritised; despite its impact on the outbreak of the water borne diseases like cholera. There is a high possibility of raw sewage flowing into open wells, which residents rely on for water during the rainy season.

The same can be said for refuse collection. Even though rresidents explained that there is a slight improvement from the previous years, there were times when refuse collection was erratic; leading to residents illegally dumping or burning their uncollected refuse. One resident highlighted the following:

> *"... because of poor service we end up boycotting payment of rates and opting for other options such as creating our own dumping sites and digging our own wells."*

Observations and responses from both city officials and residents show that the City of Harare is not able to deliver even basic services to the residents. This failure exacerbates the problem of non-payment of rates and other services charges by the residents. The city is in a vicious circle; failure to deliver services results in residents not being willing to pay for 'non-existent' services, while at the same time the city needs revenue to improve its service delivery.

8.5   Challenges to service delivery in the City of Harare

There are various reasons which were proffered as to why the City of Harare is failing to deliver services. Both the official and councillor perspectives indicate that the lack of

adequate resources is a major impediment to service delivery. All the councillors interviewed agreed that they are not able to execute their duties to the fullest, because the city lacks access to resources. What is very interesting is that there is no reference to political contestation as an impediment to service delivery. Administrative officials views on the reasons for the lack of resources may be summarised as follows and discussed in detail in the next section: The huge debt which is owed by the City residents, lack of borrowing powers because of poor credit ratings and charging below cost recovery for services provided.

8.5.1 Residents' debt

The City of Harare indicated that their biggest problem is residents' bad debt. Residents are not paying rates and other service charges; leaving the city with no financial resources to deliver services. The issue of debt is a contentious issue amongst residents and political players alike. Residents cited several reasons why they are not paying their levies and rates. Some of the responses from the residents are as follows:

> *"Why should we pay them anything? They just send bills for things they didn't deliver; it's criminal to collect revenue on non-delivered services."*

Another resident said:

> *"There is too much corruption within the top hierarchy of council. We see them driving top of the range vehicles and they award themselves hefty salaries; so why should we pay for all this?"*

The general sentiment among the residents interviewed is that while City requires revenue to deliver services, they believe that the city officials are not using the available resources efficiently and effectively. As discussed and confirmed earlier, the residents hold the view that the senior administrators and councillors are there to serve their needs only. Any campaign to drive the settlement of the huge debt is met by resistance as there is a general belief (which might be true), that the drive is for city officials to raise funds for their luxurious perks and salaries, at the expense of service delivery.

The second major reason why residents are not settling their debt is that, in July 2013-two weeks before the harmonised national and local government elections, the Minister of Local Government issued a directive (Section 133 of the Rural District Councils Act Chapter 29: 13 as read with section 303 of the Urban Councils Act chapter 29: 15) addressed to all local

authorities to wipe out all the debt owed by the urban and rural residents (Matenga 2014). The main reason, proffered by the Minister, was that all the local authorities controlled by the opposition were overcharging the residents. The irony of this reasoning is that all the local authorities' budgets were approved by the Minister.   It can be inferred that the timing of this initiative was guided by political considerations, as ZANU PF was trying to regain its foothold in urban areas through courting voters by using the debt write off. This shows that interventions by the central state in local authorities were being used to prop up the ruling party during the election period. The impact of the directive was that the residents, who had been paying their rates and levies and were up to date in their payments, did not benefit from this directive. This directive might therefore have had the unintended consequence of discouraged the paying residents, and in so doing, further exacerbated the situation. The following response, from one of the residents sums up residents' feelings regarding paying rates and levies.

"We are not going to pay them anything, we are waiting for 2018."

What this statement means is that, in 2018, when the country is due to hold another general election, there is likely to be another announcement by the Ministry that all the debt owed by the residents will be wiped out. The consequence of writing off the debt, according to the City of Harare, is that the city is no longer able to collect enough revenue to meet its administrative costs, let alone to improve service delivery. If the central state is keen on cushioning the poor, it should devise strategies which do not discourage other ratepayers from paying. It can be argued that the debt write-off by the Minister worsened the revenue collection challenges in the City; and that it only served the political purpose of ZANU PF. This created the mind-set on the part of residents that they can get away with non-payment, because another debt write-off is to be expected before the next elections. Debt write offs two weeks before local elections can be regarded as using state resources for patronage; thereby subverting the principle of fairness in elections. It is also clear that the Ministry was usurping the operational responsibilities of the local authorities. This brings to the fore once again the disjuncture in vision and policy, between the local authorities controlled by the opposition and the ruling party.

8.5.2 *Messy borrowing powers and poor credit rating*

As discussed earlier, the City of Harare has a complicated borrowing mechanism. In order for the City of Harare to borrow funds from the open market, locally and internationally, the Urban Councils Act dictates that the local authority has to get approval from Local Government Ministry. The other condition is that, borrowed funds can only be used on capital/infrastructure projects. In all loan deals, the central state acts as a guarantor of the loans. Throughout the process of borrowing, what is interesting is that, there is no requirement that residents have to be consulted; despite the fact that the residents are the ones responsible for paying back the money. At the present moment, the city's credit rating is poor, because it has defaulted on loans since the late 1990s (Matumbike 2009). Consequently, the city is finding it difficult to get loans; let alone at favourable interest rates. This is further compounded by the fact that the central state which acts as the guarantor has a poor credit rating itself, because it defaulted on several loans. At the present moment, the only major loan to the City is the Chinese loan, meant for water infrastructure rehabilitation.

Most city officials believe that the failure to secure loans for infrastructure development is a major impediment. Although a detailed examination of the city's finances is beyond the scope of this research study, it is important to note that the national credit rating had a major impact on the ability of the local authorities to borrow from international financiers. The Zimbabwean central state has defaulted on several international loans;[46] leading to a poor credit rating, and rendering as worthless its role as a guarantor for international loans. In an effort to access funds to pay its running costs, the City bartered undeveloped council residential and commercial land for hard cash from local individuals;[47] resulting in the council selling land far below its market value, so that the city could pay salaries and running costs.

The major problem is that the city has never prioritised funding of new infrastructure projects or maintaining of infrastructure, let alone the provision of basic services. It is clear that if substantial funds are not allocated for infrastructure development, it would lead to the present

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[46] This is international public knowledge. The Bretton Woods institutions [WB and IMF] are reluctant to advance loans to Zimbabwe because of previous payment defaults. There has been discussion amongst Zimbabwean officials regarding an approach to these institutions to request a debt write off.

[47] This was communicated to me by Department of Housing and Community Services officials.

infrastructure becoming increasingly dilapidated and no new infrastructure being developed. The city must only secure loans to augment what it has allocated from its own revenue. The city must find creative and prudent ways of raising enough revenue for infrastructure development.

8.5.3 *Charging below cost recovery rates*

According to the city authorities, the reason they are not able to provide services is because of low revenue. All the councillors and the administrative officials alluded to the fact that the Ministry does not allow the city to charge cost recovery rates. All the local authorities' budgets have to be approved, before being implemented, and such increases are generally vetoed. The main argument is that if the local authorities charge full cost recovery rates then the poor would not be able to afford the services. While this may be a plausible reason, the problem is that central state does not subsidise/contribute financially towards the provision of services to those who cannot afford them. If the city cannot charge the full cost of services, then where would it source additional finance to augment the revenue collected from residents? In most African countries and cities in the developed world, the central state normally cushions the poor residents, by subsidising certain services. An example is South Africa, where municipalities subsidise poor households in terms of rates, water, and electricity. In the case of the Harare, even those residents who are in a position to pay the full cost of services, are charged below cost rates. The city needs to develop strategies whereby, the poor can access subsidies. This would make the city's pro-poor approach financially sensible.

The City's revenue base needs to be extended. This can be achieved through charging full cost for the services they provide. If less revenue is collected than what it costs to provide a service, it would lead to a deterioration of the service, non-delivery of services, and non-maintenance of infrastructure; which will lead to huge future costs. Where the government decides to cushion the poor, the policy must be of direct subsidisation, in order to ensure that local authorities balance their books and continue providing services at acceptable levels.

A previous study (Masvaure 2015) in Glen Norah Township in Harare, revealed that the households which are regarded as poor are not necessarily poor in the true sense, as they earn income from their homes through renting out rooms. This study revealed that on average there are three tenant households living on one property. The tenant households do not pay

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anything directly, beside water usage to the city coffers; whilst at the same time enjoying all the other services offered by the city. What this study shows is that if the city authorities charge the full cost of services delivery then the owners of the properties will be forced to use some of the rental income to pay for the services; hence there would be an improvement in city revenue.

8.6   Conclusion

In a normal democratic state, the local authorities are the ones who should be spearheading the development agenda of the local communities they govern over. A democratic system should ensure that while the broad development agenda of the state is determined by the central state, the local authorities work within the parameters and framework provided for by the national legislative and policy framework. The basic services which the local authorities are expected to deliver are water, health, infrastructure, sanitation services, and housing. All local authorities are expected to deliver these services, although in some cases the central state may fund some of these services. In the light of expected normal democratic practice, it is important to examine the influence of political contestation on the development trajectory of local authorities.

The normal expectation is that the central state carries the development vision of the country and dictates/influences lower tiers of the state to implement development interventions; which are in turn tailored to achieve the development vision of the central state. The main aim of this study is to examine how the development vision of the central state and the local state (local authorities) share the development vision. This is issue is deemed relevant in this case since these two variants of the state are controlled by different political parties. As discussed in chapter 6 development vision is not shared between these two entities. Therefore, the impact of the unshared vision on the ability of the City of Harare to deliver services and its development vision is relevant.

The difference in vision has resulted in the local state and the central state playing the blame game with regards to poor service delivery. While on the one hand, the central state blames the opposition led local authorities as being clueless when it comes to service delivery; on the other hand, the City blames the central state for interfering in the affairs of the city. The blame game helps both parties achieve their political agenda, but does very little in terms of service delivery. In an environment where there is unshared vision one would expect a win-

win situation for residents, as the different political parties would be competing for their votes through the delivery of services. However, this is not the case. Instead the contestation has affected the professional bureaucrats to the extent that they are no longer performing their duties as expected; but are instead expending their energy on being politically active in the whole process. Disjuncture of vision and political contestation have stifled the creation of a good operative environment, so that the tedious work of formulating a sound budget, planning, subsidisation of some services and coordination can take place properly. I posit that a decentralisation system, in states where democracy has not yet fully developed, should protect and ensure that local authorities are at least able to deliver basic services to the people. There is no need for political grandstanding in local authorities if they are not delivering on their core functions. Decentralised local authorities must be primed to deliver basic services even in situations where there is a disjuncture between the central state and the local state. If the local authorities fail to deliver services, then the residents in turn are not likely to pay their bills.

CHAPTER 9 : CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

"The actors in decentralised state system use every avenue and weakness within the state system to pursue their personal and political ambitions".

9.1   Introduction

This chapter synthesises the critical findings and conclusions of this study and their significance for policy and practice. This thesis examined the interface between governance and development through the lens of decentralisation. The approach focused on three main components of decentralisation; namely, the state system, the actors, and how decentralised institutions react to various actions of the actors and the state system. The understanding of these three components leads to an understanding of why decentralised institutions deliver or fail to deliver services to their constituencies. This chapter begins by summarising the findings of this study and moves to a discussion of the core contribution of this study. This chapter later briefly examines the theoretical implications and recommendations emanating from this study.

9.2   Summary of findings

The results and the discussion section of this thesis have shown that there are four broad themes emerging from this study. These are:

1. The design of the democratic state system;

2. The influence actors in decentralisation;

3. The extent of public participation; and

4. The ability of decentralised institutions to deliver services to the residents.

These themes are interwoven and a combination of these themes produces the outcomes of decentralisation in Zimbabwe. Through the course of this research I have become convinced that although different countries might be using the same system of decentralisation, they are likely to have different outcomes because of the context created by the interface of these themes. This means that it might be difficult to generalise the findings of this study, without a

clear understanding of these themes, and their influence on the outcomes of decentralisation. The four themes are articulated below.

9.2.1. *Democratic nature of state system and decentralisation*

This study has revealed that the nature of the state plays a critical role in decentralisation. In the case of Zimbabwe, the state regards itself as democratic. The main argument for this belief is that since the Zimbabwean state holds periodic multiparty elections then it qualifies to be regarded as a democratic state. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 of this thesis show that the nature of democracy in Zimbabwe has gradually transformed from the history of the struggle to the reality of manoeuvre and consolidation of power by the ZANU PF. In essence, the Zimbabwean state system did not produce institutions which advance democratic principles, where democracy has been institutionalised through the development of state institutions which advance democratic principles. The underdevelopment of state institutions has led to ZANU PF as a political party capturing state institutions and stifling democracy. Democratic institutions and systems allow the opposition political parties to contest elections, and use available avenues to gain power. In the case of Zimbabwe, the opposition has used the available avenue of democratic decentralisation to gain some power. Because the state institutions in Zimbabwe are not yet fully developed, the ruling party behaves as if it is superior to state institutions and shuts these avenues so that it protects its uncontested power in state institutions. This has resulted in a very thin line between the ruling party and the state institutions and in most cases the ruling party has the final say even in situations where the legal framework states that the local bureaucrats have the final say. The situation where the ruling party is more powerful than the state has resulted in various contestations in decentralisation. The contestations have resulted in the City of Harare being dysfunctional, and unable to deliver basic services to its residents. It has also resulted in central state hegemonic tendencies and problems being replicated at the local level, and, in this way, dispelling the notion that decentralisation makes the local state more efficient than the central state (at least in the case of the City of Harare).

The main argument for decentralisation in Zimbabwe was to bring government closer to the people (Smoke 2003: 9), and by implication this would mean that the citizens will have a greater say in the development decisions taken by local authorities. To achieve this goal the Zimbabwean state decentralised local authorities, and enabled the citizens to elect ward councillors to represent them in local authority decision-making. The results of this study

show that the councillors themselves do not actually represent the views of the residents, and are elected not because of their ability, but because of their political party affiliation. The election of councillors is also heavily influenced by national political issues, rather than local political issues. Furthermore, the councillors do not consult their wards regularly; and even if they do, the challenge is that if the decisions the residents propose are not in step with what the central state wants, then the Minister of Local Government vetoes the decisions. Such a situation makes the objective of bringing government closer to the people a façade. The residents/citizens have been relegated to being voting fodder, which is where their participation in governance primarily ends.

The 'democratic' state system in Zimbabwe has created a ruling party that is too powerful, which uses state institutions to fight its political battles; thereby disadvantaging the opposition political parties. The system of decentralisation does not allow a different political party to effectively control another tier of government, as it does not allow a different development vision to be implemented, in these state institutions. In situations where the opposition has gained state power in decentralised institutions, there have been various contestations; to the extent that the opposition political parties have failed to implement their own vision in decentralised institutions which they control. This has rendered the whole process of decentralisation pointless and fruitless as the decisions of the central state still carry the day in local authorities.

9.2.2. Influence of actors in decentralisation

The findings of this study have also indicated that the outcomes of decentralisation in Zimbabwe are not determined by the state system only, but by the personal ambitions of actors within the decentralised state system. The actors in decentralised state system use every avenue and weakness within the state system to pursue their personal and political ambitions. The ruling party as an actor has captured the bureaucratic arms of different tiers of the state to advance its political ambitions. This capture has also resulted in the professionalism and accountability of bureaucrats being compromised; thereby creating a disjuncture between bureaucrats and opposition political parties.

The study has shown that the actors in decentralisation have not behaved/acted rationally. In most cases the actors are influenced by political and personal considerations and which has led to clashes in the local government systems as the actors contest for political power. The

results show that the main priority of the political actors is to win political battles; regardless of the impact of these battles on service delivery. The state bureaucrats have not only been passive at times, but have also compromised their professional duties by being complicit and aligned to certain political parties. In these battles (Chapter 6) , the ruling party, and central and local state bureaucrats have emerged as victors. The opposition political parties and civil society in decentralised institutions have been subjugated, and are being forced to comply with central government orders. The residents, who are supposed to be beneficiaries of decentralisation, have been reduced to be passive spectators who are only courted during election time. The actors' underhand tactics and actions have contributed to the present decentralisation processes' failure to deliver services. The responsibility of the state system for being the neutral provider of public goods and services has been subverted; hence the citizens regard the state as partisan.

9.2.3. *Public participation*

Public participation forms a critical component in democratic decentralisation. Decentralisation purports to bring government closer to the people. In the City of Harare, there is evidence to show that decentralisation did not bring government closer to the people, but actually alienated the residents further from the government. Residents in the City of Harare do not have proper avenues to participate in decision making, and they are not capacitated to participate effectively. They also lack avenues and the power to hold various state actors accountable for their actions. The only avenue which is available to residents for holding accountable their representatives is through elections which are only conducted once every five years. While the structural design of politics can bring warm bodies and committees closer to the people in name, the intangible reality of loyalties and patronage can create a huge gap between people and the governance system.

Various factors like national political polarities have affected how the residents decide who their representatives should be. Consequently, they end up electing councillors according to the political parties they represent; and not their qualities and/or skills. This is supported by data from the profiles of the councillors. Elections and votes are no longer used as tools to reward performing governors and remove nonperforming governors. This situation does not promote the ideals of decentralisation. In fact, the decentralisation process in Zimbabwe has been captured and diverted from the residents by the political parties and political elites, who manipulate how decentralised institutions operate. City of Harare residents have been

relegated to being voting fodder for political parties, because councillor ward meetings are being organised according to political party structures. The voters have lost their weapon, the power of electoral defeat due to the political elites' manipulation of the system. The power of electoral defeat serves as a handicap to representatives' temptation to deviate from what the community wants. One can argue that, in a representative democracy, it is difficult for political representatives to represent the views of everyone. However, this argument cannot be sustained in the case of the City of Harare, because everyone is yearning for the same thing – delivery of basic frontline services. The failure of the representatives to deliver these services is a clear indication that the whole system of representation has been captured by the political elites.

The research question in this study on the issue of public participation was: What are the forms and outcomes of community participation in local government in Harare? The answer to this question shows that there is very little public participation; to the extent that the residents do not have control of what happens in the City; except for voting for councillors. There are no proper community participation platforms which lead to a lack of accountability, openness, responsiveness, and effectiveness of the system. A system of decentralisation which does not solicit and disregards the contribution of the residents goes against the main ideal of democratic decentralisation in the first place. The residents need to take control of the decision-making process in local authorities since they are the funders and receivers of services delivered by these institutions.

9.2.4. Service delivery conundrum

The findings of the study confirm that the level of services delivery in the City is appalling. The problems being experienced by the centralised state have also been replicated at the local state level. The main argument for decentralising is that decentralisation removes the local authorities from the inefficiencies of the central state; hence the expectation is that decentralised local authorities will be efficient, effective, and respond more efficiently to the developmental ambitions of the residents/communities. One does not expect local authorities to deviate from their core duties of delivering services to their communities, and be caught up in political battles, thereby limiting their ability to deliver services. Ever since the city has been under the stewardship of the opposition, the city's capacity to deliver services such as clean water, street lighting, infrastructure, sewerage and sewage reticulation, refuse collection, transport and housing, has deteriorated. The system of decentralisation has failed

if problems experienced by the central state are being replicated at the local level. Decentralisation is meant to shield the decentralised institutions from the challenges experienced by the central state. In the case of Harare, it could be argued that unshared vision, between the ruling party and local government (the opposition), has made the service delivery challenges all the more problematic.

In a democratic space where two different political parties are controlling different tiers of the state the expectation is that the two political parties will be competing to please the citizens/residents as they get the mandate to be in government from them. The expectation is that the voters/citizens will be spoiled as political parties perform their duties with an eye on pleasing the voters so as to be elected in the next election. The competition to deliver should be greater in a decentralised institution as the opposition political parties aim to prove to the voters that they are capable of running national government through delivering services at the local level. The ruling party should also be trying to reclaim the lost decentralised institutions through rectifying the issues which led the residents rejecting it. Such a condition would create a win-win situation for the residents of the decentralised institutions.

However, the findings in this study show that the residents of the City have not been able to capitalise as beneficiaries, when the opposition party MDC gained power in the council in 2002. What this study revealed is that because of the differences between the political parties controlling the national government and local state, the residents have actually received deteriorating services and there is no urgency to deliver services in the City of Harare. The blame game and contestation between central state actors and local state actors has eclipsed the core mandate of local authorities which is to deliver services. The arguments proffered by the various actors for failure to deliver services include economic decay affecting the country, and according to opposition party, unnecessary interventions by the central state at local level. I posit that of course the economic decay plays a role in limiting the ability of the local authority to deliver services but the opposition had more than a decade to change its approach in service delivery in the City of Harare. The opposition just slotted into the system of local government defined by the ruling party with minimal complaints or pragmatic reshaping of the system so that at least it was able to deliver basic services. For its part, the ruling party has tightened the screws of control via the uninstitutional discretion of the Ministry of Local Government.

If the opposition had ensured that the residents of the City of Harare had control of decision making and had inculcated a different model of decentralisation based on citizen control, then perhaps different outcomes could have been experienced. At the present moment, the residents have no control of service delivery and their options in terms of the election of ward councillors and political parties are limited. One would assume that the residents will use their voting power to hold the two political parties accountable for their actions but this is not the case as the democratic space has been captured and redefined by the political elites hence the lack of viable alternatives. This has resulted in residents preferring not to pay levies and charges, and in the end, this has crippled the ability of the city to raise revenue. In some cases, because of poor service delivery, the residents are of the opinion that there is no need for them to vote as it does not bring any change in service delivery. My argument is that if the residents had control of the local authorities then they would have appreciated the problems of raising revenues in the City of Harare and perhaps will have mobilised so that the city raises enough revenue for its core mandate. Even in the event of failure to raise revenue, if the residents had control of the local authority they would have at least understood and appreciated the problems positively.

9.3 Core contributions of this study to decentralisation

The main objective of this study was to understand the mechanisms leading to different outcomes of decentralisation in the event that the central state and the local state are different. In mature democracies, as stated earlier, these differences might not have a huge impact on how the decentralised institutions operate and their outputs and outcomes. In the African context, especially in those countries where there are political polarities and tendencies to use the 'freeness and fairness' of elections as the only yardstick for democracy, unshared vision becomes a critical factor which needs to be examined. This study contributes to decentralisation in two ways which are discussed below.

9.3.1. *Central and local state disjuncture in decentralisation*

This study contributes to the body of literature on decentralisation, with special reference to the issue of unshared vision between the central state and the local state. Despite several studies conducted in the African context, there are very few studies which have examined this phenomenon in detail. This study highlights the fact that the state system and its actors play a critical role in determining decentralisation outcomes in situations where the political parties

controlling the central state and local state are different. The ruling party can use state institutions and all avenues, either legally or illegally, to control the decentralised local authorities. This does not occur automatically. Therefore, a thorough knowledge of the history of the state helps one to fully understand the context and how decentralisation unfolds. Where the ruling party has been in power for a long period of time, it can place its people in strategic bureaucratic positions, so that in the event of the change of political parties at the decentralised levels, the ruling party will use these bureaucrats as proxies to fight its battles. This process is regarded as capturing of the state institutions by the ruling party.

The second condition which favours this scenario is where the legal and policy framework gives power to the central government to intervene in local authorities. As articulated in chapter 6 the central government uses its power to control decision-making at the local level; thereby rendering the opposition political parties powerless and unable to pursue their development goals. The whole system of decentralisation is rendered dysfunctional as the ruling party through the central state dictates the vision of the decentralised institutions.

The third condition is related to the ruling party feeling that its control of the central state is threatened. In the case of Zimbabwe, the battles which are being fought at the local level are not always about local government but are national political battles. In the case of the City of Harare, the fact that the opposition political party is controlling the capital city of the country and the seat of central government is felt by the ruling party as a considerable threat which means they will use all means to survive politically, including interfering with local government so that it cannot be effective and efficient on its own (local government's) terms. This is the basis for disjuncture. Ultimately any state must invest in establishing respect for institutions and meritocracy in bureaucracy as this will enable the system to resist negative political manoeuvre.

9.3.2. *The role of actors in decentralisation*

The second contribution of this study is that it provides an understanding of decentralisation that goes beyond the normal legal and policy framework. Earlier work on decentralisation placed emphasis on an analysis of the legal framework and policy documents and then reached conclusions on whether the system is capable of delivering services. Where representatives are elected, and if elections are regarded as free and fair, then there is an

expectation that the system is working fine. This study goes beyond this. It sought to examine what happens in- between the elections; unravelling how the actors behave and shape the outcomes of decentralisation. As revealed in this study actors use underhand and unorthodox tactics to further their interests. These tactics are not visible if a researcher only scratches the surface; they only become evident when one digs deeper.

There has been an infatuation by the international community regarding the enforcement of democracy and especially of democratic decentralisation in African countries hoping that the Western model of democracy will be realised. What is lacking is an understanding of how the actors will use the model of democracy to achieve their objectives which do not necessarily conform to the Western democratic model. The fallacy of this infatuation is that in the current sense a country can be classed as a democracy just because it managed to hold 'free and fair' elections in a multiparty environment even though the state in reality is autocratic and the ruling party uses state institutions to fight its political battles.

To reiterate the contribution of this thesis; the majority of research on decentralisation in Africa has focused on institutional and structural issues and have concluded that most of the problems are as a result of these. This research goes further than pointing to the deficiencies of the systems and frameworks. It highlights the unseen actions of the actors which are not formalised but affect the outcomes of decentralisation. My argument is that in states where democracy has not matured and where decentralisation has been implemented the actors play a critical role in influencing how decentralised institutions operate and deliver services. The influence of actors is strengthened in situations where there is no shared vision and where there is a lack of civility between the central state and the local state. Actors use the chaotic environment created by disjuncture to further their ambitions and goals which are not in line with the developmental aspirations of the residents/citizens. It is important in decentralisation research to examine the role and influence of actors in decentralisation processes. Focusing only policies, legislation and how the institutions of the state in decentralisation are arranged and structured will not reveal a proper understanding of decentralisation. Assuming that bureaucrats act professionally and that councillors represent the interests of the voters (residents) are naïve, hence, there is a need to examine how these actors influence the outputs and outcomes of decentralisation.

9.4   Theoretical implications

The overarching objective of this study was to examine how 'unshared vision' between the various tiers of state in decentralisation influences service delivery. Theoretically, the study is based on a simplistic definition of the state as a single, unified source of political authority for a territory; drawing upon the undivided loyalties of its population, operating in a well-organised and permanent way, and directed towards the interests of the whole society (Dryzek and Dunleavy 2009). If this view of the state informs how interventions are tailored in decentralisation, then challenges are expected, because in the African context neither is the state unified, nor does it represent the interests of the whole society. The level of polarity between political parties and how ruling parties have entrenched themselves in the arms of the state, makes it important for future studies to revisit the state system in Africa. This thesis has also shown that, the view by Kalu (2001), that in Zimbabwe democracy mitigates the personalisation of administrative issues into political conflicts can be contested.

The context of the state in most African countries shows that there are vacillations of ideology and governance systems. In most cases African states at one point pursued one party state systems and changed to multi-party state systems because of various pressures from the international community and their own citizens. In terms of state ideology, there has been a dalliance with socialism at the political level but in actual policies states have pursued capitalist and neoliberal policies. The post-colonial state in Africa also has a history of being highly centralised. This historical background is important in shaping the theoretical understanding of decentralisation. The vacillations of the state regarding ideologies and governance forms shows that the main emphasis of the state has not been about changing its structure so that it delivers its mandate to the citizens but more about political survival of the ruling party. This emphasis is also seen in decentralisation where the central state resists ceding autonomy to decentralised institutions mainly because these institutions form a critical component of the ruling party's patronage networks. If the ruling party loses control of the decentralised institutions it loses the source of patronage goods for its clientelistic network hence it is likely to find itself out of power in due course. This perspective is supported by Chabal and Daloz (1999) who observed that the state in Africa has not been institutionalised hence there is no distinction between public and private spheres of state actors.

The theoretical arguments that I am proposing in this thesis are that firstly, decentralisation cannot be understood in its entirety, by using singular dimensional analysis. This study has shown that various factors like the nature of democracy, state systems, and actors play a critical role in influencing the processes taking place within decentralised institutions. The second argument is that although the outcomes of decentralisation may be the same in the African context (failure in most cases), the context in which the decentralisation is implemented cannot be generalised hence understanding of the context leads to correct interventions being designed and implemented. This study advocates for research methods which incorporate a holistic understanding of the context in which decentralisation is taking place without which it will be difficult to understand why the systems of decentralisation are working in some countries and not in other countries.

9.5   Recommendations for policy and practise

This study proposes several recommendations to rectify the challenges being faced in decentralisation in the City of Harare in Zimbabwe. The recommendations address the policy gaps and the challenges experienced in the implementation of decisions in local authorities. This researcher acknowledges that other researchers have recommended several policy directions in decentralisation so this study builds on some of these policy recommendations. The recommendations are as follows:

1. The current Constitution of Zimbabwe calls for devolution in local government. This means that there is a need for acts of parliament which support devolution to be promulgated as the country is still using old acts which are not aligned to the new constitution. At the present moment, it seems decentralisation in Zimbabwe is vacillating between delegation, deconcentration and devolution depending on the mood of the central state. There is a need for the Urban Councils Act and other related acts to stipulate what powers local authorities can exercise and stipulate under what conditions the central state can intervene in the affairs of local authorities, and the extent of that intervention. The legal framework must close all the lacunas which cause contestations in local authorities.

2. The accountability matrix in local government in Zimbabwe needs to be reformed. The mayor should be the designated political and administrative link between local

authorities and the central state. This would prevent divided professional accountability of bureaucrats as well as, direct interventions in operational matters of the city by the central state. Local authorities should have control over their senior bureaucrats; including their appointment and dismissal. If the councillors do not have control over bureaucrats it creates a gap, as the bureaucrats feel that they are not accountable to the elected councillors, but to the central state officials. In countries such as South Africa, these bureaucrats are appointed by the local authorities; unlike in Zimbabwe, where they are appointed by a board which is controlled by the central state. The town clerk should be appointed on a five-year contractual basis synchronised with the term of the councillors so that the recruitment process is conducted by the newly elected councillors. The argument for this approach is that since the new council is coming in with a new vision, it should be afforded the opportunity to appoint someone whom they think is able to implement their decisions without any political contestations. This will ensure that the local authority overcomes the challenge of bureaucrats paying themselves mega salaries at the expense of service delivery. Issues to do with unfair labour practices which the Local Government Board tries to solve must be addressed through the common labour laws of Zimbabwe.

3. The central state in Zimbabwe should come up with a commonly agreed upon local government policy. The lack of a local government policy 35 years after independence opens gaps for contestation as various stakeholders are not clear on what the central state wants to see in local government. As evidenced in this study if there are gaps caused by uncertainty then actors use the gaps to further their interests in local authorities. The policy should provide a framework within which local government operates stating the broad objectives of decentralisation. The policy should leave room for local authorities to decide and define in detail how they want to achieve the broad objectives.

4. If decentralisation is to achieve the objective of bringing government and decision-making closer to the people then there need to be legal and policy changes which strengthens active citizenry in local authorities. At the present moment, the residents have no control of decision in local authorities; even the councillors who represent the

residents have very little decision-making power. The system to strengthen active citizenry in local authorities must be effective in order to ensure capacity building of residents, openness, accountability, responsiveness and inclusiveness. Strengthening active citizenry will reduce the grip of political parties and political elites on local government systems and eventually will lead to a better calibre candidates being fielded in local government elections. If the residents are empowered decision makers then in the event of non-delivery of services they will be able to understand why their local authority is not delivering and come up with solutions.

5. Local authorities should be able to provide and guarantee basic frontline services like water, sewage and waste removal, infrastructure maintenance and development, sanitation services and administrative services using the revenue from the levies and charges paid by residents. This researcher acknowledges the zeal to cushion the poor in cities through capping of levies charged for these services But the problem in the City of Harare is that everyone benefits from these caps whether they are able to pay or not. Services should be provided at cost recovery level; if the central state and the local state want to subsidise the poor then it should be directed only towards poor households and not be a blanket subsidy. The central state must also follow through its decisions on subsidising through the payment of the grants not expecting the local authority to fund the implementation of its decisions.

6. Decentralisation should not only focus on political democratic decentralisation but also use decentralisation as a way of improving service delivery. Several studies in Africa have shown that democratic decentralisation has not resulted in a positive change to the delivery of services by the decentralised institutions. The reason for this is that the main focus of decentralisation has been on the political aspect of decentralisation (as dictated by advocates of neo-liberal politics). This led to neglecting factors related to how decentralised institutions will be capacitated to deliver better services to the citizens. Decentralisation must not be a process of only ticking boxes (for a country to be regarded as a democracy) but must ensure that improving service delivery is the main objective. This can be achieved through ensuring that decentralised institutions receive adequate revenue bases and, fiscal and political powers to implement their programmes.

My final concluding remarks are mainly focused on research methods. In order to achieve a holistic understanding of the mechanisms driving decentralisation in the African context, it is recommended that future studies should place greater emphasis on research theoretical approaches which advocate for methods which go beyond what is seen on the surface. Research approaches such as grounded theory and critical realism ensure that the mechanisms driving decentralisation are exposed.

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Annexure A: Ward Councillor Survey

'Unshared vision': Decentralization in Zimbabwe, a special reference to Harare City Council.

All the questions below must be answered by an elected councilor.

Basic information

1. Full Name (*only provide name if you are comfortable doing so*)

   _____

2. Ward number represented _____

   b) Which category does your ward falls in? *(Please tick the correct choice)*

Low income residential area (high density)	
Middle income residential area (middle income)	
High income residential area (low density)	

3. Which political party do you represent? _____

4. How many years and months have you been serving as a councillor?

   _____

5. Gender (please tick)

Male		Female	

6. What is your age group?

18-20 yrs	
21-30 yrs	
31-40 yrs	
41-50 yrs	
51-60 yrs	
Over 60 yrs	

7. What is your level of education?

No formal education	
Primary school	
Secondary	
College	
University degree	

8. Which Harare City Council committee/committees do you sit on (please tick)

Human Resources and General Purposes Committee	
Finance and Development Committee	
Environmental Management Committee	
Education, Health, Housing and Community Services and Licensing Committee	
Audit Committee	
Procurement Board	
Business committee	
Information and Publicity Committee	
Other	

a) If you answered **other** specify

…………………………………………………………………………………………

b) Are you a chairperson of any committee?

Yes		No	

c) If you answered **<u>Yes</u>** which committee? _____

9. How long have you been staying in Harare?

0-5 years	
6-10 years	
11-15 years	
16-20 years	
21-25 years	
Above 25 years	

10. What is the status of the house you are living in?

Own house	
Lodger /tenant	
Other	

If you ticked "**other**" explain

……

11. Besides being a councillor in the Harare City Council what other economic activities are you involved in?

Formally employed	
Informally employed	
Unemployed	

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Pensioner	
Student	
Own a formal business	
Other	

If you answered **other** explain your answer

……

Governance and Community Participation.

12. How often do you hold consultative meetings in your ward?

…………………………times per month or

…………………………times per year

13. What method/s of communication do you use to invite ward residents for community consultative meetings?

……

……

……

14. How can you describe the attendance of residents to your meetings? (Please tick)

Well attended	
Average attendance	
Poorly attended	

Explain your answer

……

……

……

……

15. What do you normally do with community views after consultations?

……

……

……

……

……

……

16. What are the main problems/ challenges which the residents of your ward normally bring forward?

……

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17. In your own opinion do you think residents from your ward understand your role as a councillor?

Yes		No	

Explain your answer

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18. In your own opinion does community consultation have an impact on the services which are provided by the city council?

Yes		No	

Explain your answer

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19. What are the challenges you face when consulting residents in your ward?

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How can these challenges be solved.

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20. Is there any other way/s your ward residents can use to influence the quality of service they are receiving from the city council?

	Yes		No	

Explain your answer.

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21. How does the community hold you accountable if you are not performing to their standards?

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22. Do you consult with your political party before voting on any council business?

	Yes		No	

Explain your answer

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Central government relations

23. Do you interact with the ministry of local government and rural development as an individual councillor?

	Yes		No	

If you answered **yes,** how do you interact with the ministry?

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24. Harare City Council is currently controlled by the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). In your own opinion what are the challenges that are created when the MDC controlled council is dealing with the ZANU (pf) controlled Ministry of Local Government, urban and Rural Development or is this never an issue?

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In your own opinion what can be done to solve these challenges mentioned above?

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25. In your own opinion should the ministry intervene in city affairs of the Harare city council?

Yes		No	

Explain your answer

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26. Does the intervention of the ministry affect the level of services you deliver to the Harare residents in a positive or negative way?

Positive		Negative	

Explain your answer

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27. Is there a major project that you are involved with that is inter-governmental?

Yes		No	

If you answered yes what is the project about?

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28. Briefly describe the relationship between the councilors and the senior administrative officials.

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29. Do you think that Harare city council senior administrative officials are apolitical?

Yes		No	

Explain your answer

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30. What actions are taken if the council employees fail to implement council directives?

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31. Would you be kind to allow a follow up interview?

Yes		No	

If you answered **Yes** may you please provide your contact details below

Telephone number ……………………………………………………………………….

Street address

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……..

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND UNDERSTANDING.

Annexure B: Interview Guide – Administrative Officials

Administrative officials' questions

1. Briefly describe your duties

2. How can you describe your relationship with Councillors or the city of Harare?

3. What is your relationship with administrative officials of the city of Harare/ the Ministry of local government?

4. Is there a difference between ZANU Pf dominated council/ MDC dominated council?

5. What are the challenges you normally face when dealing council officials (administrative/ councillors). How did you deal with these challenges?

6. What is the vision of councils which are under your watch/ city council?

7. Do you share the same the vision with opposition dominated councils?

8. Can you briefly describe how directives are communicated between the ministry of local government and local government structures?

   - Do you by any chance the community regarding directives you issue?

   - What methods do you use to consult communities?

   - Are these methods effective?

9. How do you deal with noncompliance of your directives?

10. Do you think councillors understand their role in local government?

11. What can be done to strengthen the relationship between the ministry of local government and local authorities?

12. As a ministry/council are you satisfied with the level of services being delivered by the municipalities?

13. What can be done to improve the level of services being provided by the city of Harare? (Basic services).

Annexure C: Interview Guide – Community Members/ Residents

Community and civic groups

A: Service delivery

1. What services do you receive from the Harare

2. What is your opinion on the state of service delivery in Harare?

3. In your own opinion what causes the city of Harare to fail to deliver services to the residents of Harare?

4. In your own opinion do you think that the workers of the city council are doing a thorough and diligent job in delivering services?

5. Do you think that councillors can control the performance of administrative workers of Harare city council?

6. During the past years more than 50% of the council budget was used for salaries, to be specific in 2010, 94% of the budget was used for salaries with only 6% used for service delivery, what is your opinion on this situation

7. What is your opinion on a situation when you pay for services and you don't receive them for example water and refuse collection?

B Community Participation and Governance

8. How often does the local councillor consult with members in your ward about city affairs?

a) Do you think that these consultations are useful?

b) In your own opinion how can the effectiveness of community participation be increased or improved in local government?

9. In your own opinion do you think that councillors are doing their work effectively? Explain your answer.

10. Do you think councillors represent your views or their political parties? Explain your answer and give examples.

11. During voting for councillors what qualities do you normally look for in the candidates? Does the political party they represent matter? Explain your answer.

12. Do you think that councillors are there to serve all people?

13. During the previous years many Harare city councillors and a mayor were dismissed by the minister of local government, urban and rural development. What is your opinion on the dismissals?

14. Must the minister be directly involved in the affairs of the city?

15. In your own opinion whose interest does the minister serve?

16. What form of strategies or interventions must be used by the ministry when dealing with local authorities?

17. What are the major projects that are done by government in your area?

18. How have these been of benefit to you?

Annexure D: Consent Form

UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES, DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Dear Participant

I am Steven Masvaure a Ph.D. Social Science Candidate at the School of Community Development studies at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal (UKZN). I am doing a research on decentralization and local government in Zimbabwe. This research will help in the understanding of the role being played by decentralization and local government actors in service delivery to the residents of Harare.

I am inviting you to be part of this research. You do not have to decide today whether or not you will participate in the research. Before you decide, you can talk to anyone you feel comfortable with about the research. This consent form may contain words that you do not understand. Please ask me to stop as we go through the information and I will take time to explain.

This research will involve your participation in answering the questions on the questionnaire/ interview schedule. Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. It's your choice whether to participate or not. There will be no direct benefit to you if you participate in this research, but your participation is likely to help generate knowledge which will help improve the understanding of decentralization, local government and service delivery in Harare and elsewhere.

The information you are going to provide will not be shared with anyone outside the research team. The information I am going to collect will remain private and confidential. Any information about you will be coded using a number on it instead of your name. Only the researcher will know your name. This questionnaire/ interview will take approximately 30 minutes of your time.

If you have any questions, you can ask them now or later. If you wish to ask questions later please contact me (Steven Masvaure +27747768815 e-mail 212553305@stu.ukzn.ac.za)　or my supervisor (Professor Sithole +27312602288 e-mail sitholep3@ukzn.ac.za).

Questions about your rights as a study participant, comments or complaints about the study also may be presented to the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal Research Ethics Committee by contacting Ms P Ximba telephone +27312603587. Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

I…………………………………………………………………… (Full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.
I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.
SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT   DATE
…………………………………………   ………………………

I hereby (*tick appropriate*: **Agree** ⌐¯⌐ or **disagree** ⌐¯¦   ) to the digital recording (audio/ visual) of my participation in the study and to the keeping of a permanent record of this interview with the understanding that my name and other identifying information will be removed to ensure confidentiality. (*Tick appropriate boxes in the table below*)

	Agree	Disagree
Audio recording		
Video recording		

…………………………..   …………………………...

Signature of Participant   Date

Annexure E: Ethical Clearance Letter