



**IMPROVING ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP AMONGST THE YOUTH IN GWERU  
USING ACTION RESEARCH**

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## **Abstract**

A lack of citizenship virtues among youth facilitates their participation in violent civic and political processes, as well as low participation in key democratic processes. Patriotism, respect, dialogue, unity, and tolerance are integral values of citizenship that facilitate citizens' progressive participation in a democratic society. Some young people in Zimbabwe do not exhibit these virtues, as evidenced by their participation in electoral violence, and violent social service and human rights violations protests. The status quo shows little evidence of deliberate efforts made to inculcate peace-anchored citizenship virtues. This study adopted a qualitative research approach undergirded by a participatory action research design with the aim of improving citizenship virtues among selected youth in Gweru, Zimbabwe. Participants were selected using purposive sampling. Results reveal that that young people are not self-motivated to participate in violence, but there are contributing factors such as economic vulnerability and clientelism, frustrations from abuse of human rights, exclusion from decision-making processes, poor social service delivery, and coercion. It has also been flagged that there is low appreciation of peace-anchored citizenship virtues among the youth. It was therefore concluded that there is a need to blend inculcating citizenship virtues among the youth with promoting their economic empowerment. Hence, this research has designed a model on how to promote citizenship virtues among the youth through social entrepreneurship as action research.

## **Declaration**

I, Takaedza Tafirei, make this declaration that I am the sole author of this dissertation which is done in fulfilment of my Master's Degree requirements. I declare that neither this full dissertation or any part of it has been submitted for a degree to any other academic or non-academic institution. This work does not infringe anyone's copyrights, and all work by other people and institutions is fully acknowledged. This is the true copy of my dissertation as approved by my supervisors.

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this dissertation to Dr Tinashe Mutero for believing in me. You have taught me to enjoy being in academia as much as I enjoy being an activist. Thanks for the patience and academic mentorship. When we met, I boldly told you that I am not an academic. Maybe I am not, but I am greatly inspired and motivated to learn more. This journey was worth it. I am up for a doctorate.

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# **CHAPTER ONE: OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY**

## **1.1 Introduction**

Lack of citizenship virtues and the use of violence in civic and political processes by young people is a major challenge affecting Zimbabwean democracy and peace. Several studies have concluded that young people are both perpetrators and victims of violence, which subsequently affects their active citizenship (Mude 2014; Chari 2017; Asuelime 2018; Musarurwa 2018). This problem is caused by poor civic orientation, clientelism and structural inequalities such as repressive laws, marginalisation from democratic processes, poor social service delivery and insensitive response mechanisms (Masvaure 2016; Bratton and Masunungure 2018; Matsa, Mavugara and Dzawanda 2019).

Government has employed responsive strategies like the National Youth Service (NYS) and the National Strategic Studies (NASS) (Tendi 2010; Zembere 2019). Concurrently, civic society organisations have tried to complement government efforts through providing civic education to the youth (Mavhunga, Moyo and Chinyayi 2012). Sadly, young people are still engaged in violence and demonstrate a lack of citizenship virtues like respect, tolerance, dialogue, unity and patriotism (RAU 2018). This study examines why citizenship is a key subject in understanding violence in the context of Zimbabwe. It brings to light why young people participate in violence activities such as political violence, violent demonstrations, and protests against poor social service (Urdal 2012; Mude 2014). It shows how participatory action research can help to reduce youth participation in violence in Gweru through inculcating citizenship virtues (Gaventa 2004; Bland and Atweh 20017).

## **1.2 Background to the study**

The use of and participation in violence by young people in civic and electoral processes in Zimbabwe dates to the pre-independence period, where young people had to contest against the colonial regime to claim their citizenship rights (Ranger 2004). According to Mhike (2017a), nationalist movements relied on youth violence in mobilizing for the war effort during the liberation struggle against British colonialists. Youth energy and numbers were systematically utilised as an instrument to champion political agendas. The habit continued to

post-independence Zimbabwe: young people were again found at the forefront of political violence. Maringira and Gukurume (2020) write that, after independence, Mugabe's ruling party relied heavily on youth violence to suppress his rivals, notably the co-guerrilla military wing ZANLA, which massacred perceived enemies during the Gukurahundi. This continued until the 2000 elections, in which the ZANU-PF government recruited young people to orchestrate violence. Maringira and Gukurume (2020: 3) even note that:

*Post-2000 elections, ZANU-PF relied heavily on commanding youth to inflict violence against the MDC. The late Minister of Youth, Border Gezi, introduced the National Youth Service program to indoctrinate youth into ZANU-PF's politics of violence. The trained youth, pejoratively called 'green bombers' as a result of the fatigued uniforms they wore, were deployed in youth militia bases, especially in the rural areas.*

The statement above exhibits the deliberate and perennial engagement of young people in political violence in Zimbabwe. In what seems to have become a culture, the same violence has been employed by opposition political parties in Zimbabwe (Mwonzora and Hodzi 2021).

Violent demonstrations against poor governance, economic melt-down and poor social service delivery also loomed around 1995 and were exacerbated by the aftereffects of the unstructured and violent Fast-Track Land Reform Policy (Worby 2001). An opposition party was formed in 1999 and the government relied heavily on the security sector and youth militia to suppress this opposition (Mhike 2017a). On the other hand, the opposition was also taking advantage of unemployed youth to mobilise its counter-militia group (Mude 2014). Until today, the problem of youth engagement in violent civic processes like demonstrations remains a major challenge affecting Zimbabwe's democracy and peace. Many young people have been terrified, and some traumatised, by the violent civic and political experiences which have prompted them to disengage themselves from governance and sustainable development processes (Guzura, Dube and Madziwanzira 2017; Musarurwa 2018).

On the other hand, rapid urbanisation and the looming economic crisis have promoted poor social service delivery protests (Bloom, Canning and Sevellia 2003; Matsa, Mavugara and Dzawanda 2019; Nhapi and Mathende 2019). Unemployment has made young people vulnerable to clientelism and their frustration and energy have been harnessed into political violence to fight against each other (Mude 2014; Chikwawawa 2019). In essence, youth civic virtues have been eroded. The government has tried to introduce citizenship education in an attempt to promote civic or citizenship virtues among the youth. However, the programmes like the Political Economy Studies and National Youth Service were largely criticised as

ZANU-PF government propaganda and youth militia recruitment strategies. According to Mavhunga, Moyo and Chinyayi (2012),

*Many post-independence innovation projects attracted trenchant criticism from various stakeholders, particularly the church and opposition political parties. The former perceived it as the socialist government's move towards restricting church activities in the country while the latter saw it as government's way of propagating the ruling ZANU (PF) party's propaganda through the school system.*

The government succumbed to this criticism and this mode of citizenship education was terminated. As such, young people in Zimbabwe are still exhibiting a lack of citizenship virtues and very little has been done to employ participatory action research in cultivating these civic virtues, particularly in a less democratic society like Zimbabwe (Baldwin 2012; Balakrishnan and Claiborne 2016).

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

Lack of citizenship virtues among the youth is a problem that facilitates their engagement in violent civic and political process, and at times their low participation in key democratic processes (Mude 2014; Oosterom and Pswarayi 2014). Virtues like patriotism, respect, dialogue, unity, and tolerance are integral values of citizenship that facilitate progressive participation of citizens in a democratic society (Nathanson 1989). These values can be passed to young citizens as a mechanism to facilitate their quality transition into adulthood. In Zimbabwe, most young people do not demonstrate these virtues, and this is evidenced by their participation in electoral violence, and violent social service and human rights violations protests (Mude 2014; Masvaure 2016).

Intolerance and lack of respect among the youth across the political divide has promoted a “state of war” which often culminates in political violence (Mwonzora and Hodzi 2021). Political elites are taking advantage of this intolerance to sponsor aggression for their political advantage (Mude 2014; Mhike 2017b). According to Bratton and Masunungure (2018), “Zimbabweans are more polarized politically than the citizens of 31 other African countries where Afro barometer surveys have been conducted.” Through intolerance, young people have become largely polarised and have less appreciation of diversity in a democracy.

A low sense of unity and trust among the youth has further exacerbated the deliberate clientelism which has divided the youth along political lines (Mude 2014; Mhike 2017a; Mwonzora and Hodzi 2021). When it comes to social service protests, young people in Zimbabwe have exhibited a low sense of patriotism and dialogue. While protests and

demonstrations are part of civic and political rights, the practice of the same must be reasonable in a democratic society (Hoskins and Crick 2010). In Zimbabwe, demonstrations have often become bloody and retrogressive through property destruction (Gukurume 2017). Displaying their poor dialogical skills, young people have used both the digital and physical engagement spaces to vent their anger through hate speech. Ndebele and Billing (2011) note that youth have poor knowledge, skills and virtues of citizenship. The problem has many contributors, ranging from poor citizenship education to the frustrating civic and political environments (Magudu 2012; Mavhunga, Moyo and Chinyayi 2012).

#### **1.4 Research Aim**

To reduce youth involvement in citizenship-related violence in Gweru through improving their citizenship virtues such as respect, tolerance, unity, dialogue and patriotism.

#### **1.5 Research Objectives**

1. To examine active citizenship and virtues among young people in Gweru.
2. To investigate the factors influencing citizenship-related violence in Gweru and its consequences.
3. To find ways to improve citizenship virtues among youth in Gweru.
4. To promote peace in Zimbabwe.

#### **1.6 Literature Review**

This study examines how the concept of citizenship is essential to community peacebuilding. It discusses ways in which the practice or lack of citizenship virtues can divide or unite society, spark, or curb conflicts. It brings to light the relevance of citizenship study in peacebuilding, and traces the development of the concept and its virtues (Bellamy 2015). Among other citizenship virtues, the study examines respect, tolerance, unity of purpose, patriotism, social cohesion, and dialogue as integral values of peace (Burchell 2006; Bellamy 2015). The research proceeds to establish a discussion on the contribution of citizenship education in inducing citizenship virtues among the youth in Zimbabwe (Mavhunga, Moyo and Chinyayi 2012). It examines how a citizenship education and how it is administered influences the moulding young people to be more responsible and peaceful citizens (Ngozwana 2017). Thereafter it discusses how participatory action research (PAR) can be a responsive strategy to facilitate

increased and peaceful participation in civic and governance processes through improved citizenship virtues (Chukwudozie *et al* 2015; Bland and Atweh 20017).

The research acknowledges that citizenship study is critical in peacebuilding. It helps one to understand why youth in Zimbabwe participate in violent activities such as social service protests, political violence, and human rights violation activism (Coelho 2004; Mude 2014; Şan, Dedeali and Daşdemir 2019). Citizens' marginalisation and failure to enjoy their human or citizenship rights often evoke insurrection (Oosterom and Pswarayi 2014). The granting of citizenship rights and responsibilities is a critical factor that sustains peace in a community. In the absence of these, and where citizens feel marginalised or segregated from critical civic or governance processes, they often stage a revolution to demand those rights (Hoskins and Crick 2010; Weber 2019). The protracted Zimbabwean liberation war serves as an exhibit to how citizenship rights can influence war (Ranger 2004). The liberation war placed young people at the centre of the revolution as guerrillas and army aids.

The intersection between governance and service delivery is undoubtedly becoming more pronounced in conflict studies (Resnick and Thurlow 2015). Youth participation in violent social service protests is another challenge disturbing active youth citizenship in Zimbabwe. At a time when the country is battling inflation, rapid urbanisation, unemployment and unreasonable corruption, young people wish for a change of leadership. According to Musarurwa (2016), the rise of radical groups like the "Tajamuka" speaks volumes about the poor social service delivery crisis. Chen and Schmidtke (2017) note that poor social service delivery often makes citizens frustrated and they demand transformative reforms. However, while protests and demonstrations are basic human rights, the practice should also exhibit patriotism and respect for human rights. Violent demonstrations that result in loss of life and property are retrogressive and do not exhibit respect for human rights and patriotism (Hoskins and Crick 2010). Young people are criticised for lacking dialogue skills to champion their needs and aspirations, (Ndebele and Billing 2011). Mude (2014) and Mwonzora and Hodzi (2021) record youth participation in political violence. Youth in Zimbabwe are still actors in political violence, where they practice hate speech and engage in physical fights that even result in loss of lives.

As a meter for appreciating the concept of citizenship, Bellamy (2015) wrote extensively on the development of the citizenship concept and outlined critical factors of citizenship such as status, rights, responsibilities, and virtues. As such, the development of the concept of

citizenship has shown that there is a strong link between the citizenship virtues and peace (European Union 2012). According to Bellamy (2015), Greek and Roman citizenship was the prototype of citizenship, which contained citizenship status, rights and responsibilities and values like unity and patriotism. Kamen (2013) opines that violence was deeply connected to the contestation of citizenship where alienation of other citizens through denial of citizenship status, rights and responsibilities sparked conflicts. This facilitated the rise of republicanism, which granted human rights. However, the idea of social service protests was prevalent due to the demand factor of the social contract, with citizens demanding service from their governments (Laskar 2013).

This research further discusses the nexus between citizenship education and the development of citizenship virtues (Keyman and Icduygu 2003; Peterson and Bentley 2017). It discusses the shortfalls of the programmes that were introduced by the government of Zimbabwe, such as the Political Economy Studies, National Youth Service, and National Strategic Studies in a bid to capacitate the youth with citizenship virtues (Mavhunga, Moyo and Chinyayi 2012; Ngozwana 2017). These shortfalls include poor policing and administration. The discussion challenges the citizenship education curriculum of Zimbabwe, which is politicised by the government, and the administration strategy, which is not humanistic in nature (Honwana 2013; Nhapi and Mathende 2019). It also interrogates how the lived realities of the youth have distorted their citizenship virtues. This includes the flawed election processes, the failure of peaceful demonstrations to yield results and the shrinking civic space (Tendi 2010; Masvaure 2016). It then presents how participatory action research can be a strategy to promote the development of citizenship virtues among the youth in a polarised society (Reason and Bradbury 2001a).

## **1.7 Theoretical Framework**

This research employed social systems, social entrepreneurship behaviour and the youth bulge theories to guide the study towards understanding the challenges and solutions to improve active citizenship and citizenship virtues among youth in Gweru.

Social systems theory states that human development is a product of interaction between humans and other systems (Luhmann 1995; Schilippe and Hermann 2013). It acknowledges the role played by socio-economic and political institutions in influencing human behaviour, character, or attitude (Admiral and Dam 2014). The theory assisted in assessing why there is poor social capital, and a low sense of patriotism, unity, respect, and tolerance among the youth

of Zimbabwe. The theory contends that citizens' interaction and participation can be done at various levels, from inter-personal to socio-economic macro-systems (Jackson 1985; Golob and Makarovic 2017). Hence, social systems theory assisted in understanding why there is poor active citizenship through observing youth experiences in interacting with the socio-economic and political systems in Gweru and Zimbabwe as a whole. It further helped the action research in exploring the avenues of youth participation in Gweru.

Youth bulge theory recognises young people as a factually volatile and constantly growing population which, when they are unemployed and frustrated, can be a threat to community or state peace (Beehner 2010; Tlou 2016). It postulates that developing countries such as Zimbabwe, which has a growing youth population due to improved fertility and mortality rates, often face challenges in meeting the social and economic needs of its bulging youth dividend (Beehner 2010; Lin 2012). In return, youth will start to demonstrate or rise up against the poorly-performing governments (Jagietto and Heijden 2011; Urdal 2012). The theory presents a need to assess how the youth can become more active within the democratic spaces, and at the same time how they are engaged in social service protests (Nhapi and Mathende 2019).

This research is also guided by the social entrepreneurship behaviour theory (Martin and Osberg 2007; Tauber 2019). The theory focuses on the behavioural factors that define and lead an individual into contributing to the common good (Findıklı and Yozgat 2018). It also frames a discussion of the underlying dynamics and structures of organisations or groupings pursuing social change and how they sustain their impact (Kujur 2020). The theory is cognisant of Freire's view that meaningful engagement with people requires mutual respect, where people are treated as equals and as subjects rather than objects (Ebrashi 2013). Social entrepreneurs play the role of agents of change in the society by adopting and relentlessly pursuing a mission to create and sustain social value without being limited by resources (Martin and Osberg 2007; Ebrashi 2013). The theory guided the research in establishing context-specific strategies and models of youth-led regeneration of active citizenship and the subsequent virtues, like unity and patriotism, in an authoritarian environment (Tauber 2019; Kujur 2020).

## **1.8 Research Methodology**

### **1.8.1 Research Approach**

This study has utilised qualitative research methodology to gather accurate data with regards to the knowledge, feelings and attitudes of youth in Gweru. It used focus group discussions and

historical research to gather information about active citizenship among the youth in Gweru (Cibangu 2012).

### **1.8.2 Study design**

The study employed participatory action research to improve citizenship virtues among the youth in Gweru. It engaged selected youth in Gweru in taking actions to improve their own citizenship agency and virtues (Baum *et al* 2014: 854). This is key, because youth in Gweru were active in making informed decisions throughout the research process for the primary purpose of imparting social change and realising citizenship virtues (Bertrand 2016; Bland and Atweh 20017). The study has generated practical knowledge about citizenship virtues amongst the youth in Gweru through discussing with them their experiences and observations on exercise of citizenship among youth (Bland and Atweh 20017). This made participatory action research qualitative, democratic, equitable, liberating and life-enhancing.

Participatory action research (PAR) is a dynamic educative process, an approach to social investigation, and an approach to engaging in a socio-political action (Baldwin 2012). This made it suitable, because literature has informed the study that active citizenship is a concept that is largely influenced by socio-political processes, (Chikerema 2013; Akar 2016). Therefore, participatory action research assisted in unearthing the causes of poor active citizenship among the youth in Gweru and the possible socio-political action to improve it. It has been strategic in empowering the youth in Gweru to engage in social, economic and political activities in their community through capacity building and development (Gaventa 2004; Wittmayer and Schöpke 2014). According to Wittmayer and Schape (2014), PAR facilitates learning processes, initiating short-term actions, networking with actors, political systems and motivating and enabling participants to address local challenges. What is also key is that PAR has helped to create room to motivate the youth in Gweru to participate in community development activities through active participation in meaningful decision making, such as the local government budget-making process (Maguire 1987:30).

### **1.8.3 Study Population**

The study comprised 14 youth in Gweru, who have resided in the area for the past five years (the research needed to engage participants who have experience of living in Gweru). The researcher considered gender balance (male and female) and location (high- and low-density suburbs) to ensure a fair representation of the Gweru youth community. The youth group considered is that which is between the ages of 18 and 35, despite the fact that the Constitution



of Zimbabwe restricts youth to being between 15 and 35 (Constitution of Zimbabwe 2013). The reason why youth below the age of 18 were not included is that the youth within this range are minors and for ethical reasons they were not involved.

#### **1.8.4 Sampling Procedure**

Purposive sampling was used to select youth who hold Zimbabwean citizenship and have stayed in Gweru for at least five years in either the high- or low-density suburbs. According to Mason (2002:124), purposive sampling entails

*selecting groups or categories to study on the basis of their relevance to your research questions, your theoretical position and analytical framework, your analytical practice, and most importantly the argument or explanation that you are developing.*

This concurs with the assertion of Elder (2009) that purposive sampling is embedded in the idea of who is located within a group and where that person is located. The research selected young people who were Zimbabwean citizens because they hold the right to vote. The requirement that one should have lived in Gweru for at least five years is premised on the assumption that youth are mobile, and the five years coincides with the time Zimbabwe last had a general election. The sample consisted of 7 males and 7 females with a fair representation of the above-mentioned locations. Participants were not discriminated against for their gender, religious views, political affiliation, or any social classification.

Participants were targeted through churches, student bodies, youth organisations and community leaders. The plan was to identify participants who represent a diverse group of people and who all have “tacit knowledge of the rules, conventions and stocks of knowledge that they use and draw on in everyday life” (Atkinson and Pugsley 2005). I employed the referral strategy of engaging leaders of these institutions, by outlining the study purpose and expected participant requirements as per a sample study design. Thereafter, after referrals, I distributed the recruitment forms.

#### **1.8.5 Data collection**

I used focus group discussions and interviews in English to gather information about the experiences, enhancements, hindrances, avenues and solutions to youth involvement in violence among the youth in Gweru. The engagements were narrowed to also discuss citizenship virtues. This qualitative study conveyed why the youth have thoughts and feelings that might affect the way they behave (Sutton and Austin 2019). A structure of questions was

to employed to guide the participants in their discussion and to ensure that the data which was captured was sufficient to meet the objectives of this study. I also used in-depth interviews to gather personal experiences on the same through participants sharing their ideas, thoughts and memories (Reinhardt 1996). Interviews were set as a platform for reciprocal learning, whereby questions were strategically developed to gather data on personal experiences (Gills and Jackson 2002: 466).

### **1.8.6 Data analysis**

I employed coding in the manner and fashion of DeSantis and Ugarriza (2000: 362) to analyse qualitative data gathered through focus group discussions and interviews. Key patterns and themes were drawn through the systematic grouping of data, such as the conceptualisation of active citizenship among the youth, citizenship virtues, causes of youth participation in violence, and the solutions. According to DeSantis and Ugarriza (2000: 362), themes act as abstract entity that brings meaning and identity to a recurrent experience and variant manifestation. The themes include five aspects: overall experience, basis of experience, function of experience, variability of manifestations of experience and recurrence of experience.

### **1.8.7 Delimitations**

The research was done in Gweru and only involved youth who had stayed in Gweru for the past five years and who are between the age of 18 and 35 years with respect to gender and suburb. Gweru is a city located in the midlands region of Zimbabwe; hence, it has both Shona and Ndebele people. It is currently considered a stronghold of the main opposition party, with the record of having all councillors of the Gweru city council belonging to that party and 3 out of 4 legislators of the city (ZEC 2018). This explains why the city is a target of state-engineered political violence, as witnessed in the post-2018 elections, when many youths and two legislators from MDC-A were arbitrarily arrested in Gweru during the January shut-down protests (Solidarity Peace Trust 2019). Hence, there are high levels of fear and youth disengagement from public activities. Gweru is largely urban and its biggest industry, Zim-Alloys, is non-functional. Gweru is essentially a university town, with four tertiary institutions that produce thousands of graduates every year. The presence of learning institutions is, however, paralleled with very few employment opportunities. As a result, young people engage in self-enriching activities, most of which are selfish and contribute to weakening the social capital and sense of community (Masvaure 2016).

### **1.8.8 Limitations**

The study engaged a very small population; therefore, the results cannot be generalised. However, the theoretical insights might be of use for communities in similar contexts.

### **1.8.9 Reliability and Validity**

To ensure validity and reliability of the research data, purposive sampling became key in selecting participants with regards to the study prerequisites, such as living in Gweru for five years, gender, and location within Gweru. To ensure content reliability, evaluation of research instruments was exercised with the assistance of my research supervisor to ensure accurate and ethical data collection (Dwivedi 2005). I employed triangulation of data from different sources as a mechanism to counter the weakness of each method and to get a better understanding of active citizenship (Huck 2007).

## **1.9 Ethical considerations, Anonymity and Confidentiality**

Anonymity and confidentiality were ensured through advising participants before the study that they could use pseudonyms during interviews and focus group discussions. Participants were also asked to keep the research information confidential through signing the consent form. No actual names were mentioned in the data presentation and analysis. Thereafter, collected data was stored in a secure folder in a computer protected with passwords. The data can only be used for the study purposes and will be deleted after 5 years in accordance with the DUT Guidelines.

Ethical considerations refer to the expected and appropriate manner in which research is conducted. Ethical considerations dictate that the research should not cause any harm to the research participants. In this research, participants were notified of their rights and responsibilities as volunteers, no child was involved, and all the DUT ethical considerations were followed.

## **1. 10 Chapter Conclusion**

This chapter has captured an overview of the whole research. It has shared the introduction, objectives, the structure of the literature review, the employed theories, the research methodology, data presentation and analysis, and the ethical considerations which were observed. It offers a skeleton of the entire research.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter explores literature related to active citizenship virtues. Specifically, it examines how the concept of citizenship is central to community peacebuilding. It discusses ways in which the practice or lack of citizenship virtues can divide or unite society, spark, or curb conflicts. It brings to the light the relevance of citizenship study in peacebuilding, and traces the development of the concept and its virtues. Among other citizenship virtues, the study examines respect, tolerance, unity of purpose, patriotism, social cohesion, a sense of agency and community belonging as integral values of community peacebuilding (Burchell 2006; Bellamy 2015).

### **2.2 Active Citizenship**

It is imperative to discuss the development of the concept of citizenship in order to appreciate the importance of improving civic virtues amongst contemporary youth and the relevance of the phenomenon to peacebuilding. In pursuit of this, it is prudent to briefly discuss the evolution of the concept of active citizenship from the classical processes and practices to today's democracies, and to outline some of the key citizenship virtues. The term "active citizenship" does not have a single and universally agreed definition. However, it is generally believed that active citizenship is the access and practice of citizenship rights and responsibilities by citizens in a society or democracy (Hoskins and Crick 2010). According to Bellamy (2015), there are three significant eras in the history of active citizenship, namely the classical era, the republican era of democracy, and good governance. Each period presents unique practices or thoughts pertinent to this study of improving citizenship virtues among the youth.

#### **2.2.1 Classical Citizenship**

The traditional thought of citizenship and its practice has its roots in the Greek city state and the Roman Empire, where it was perceived as a political and legal status respectively. This became a source of citizenship conflicts which jeopardised community peace. According to Bellamy (2015), "the distinctive core of citizenship was the possession of the formal status of membership of a political and legal entity and having particular sorts of rights and obligations within it." As such, citizenship became a process of community membership accreditation.

where one would be recognised and assume certain rights and duties. For instance, in Greece citizenship was political and patriarchal, given to male descendent warriors of Athens aged 20 years and above, who were masters of slaves and possessing arms (Finley 1983; Kamen 2013). This meant that citizenship in Greece was therefore granted exclusively on political grounds.

However this form of citizenship was criticised by scholars like Berlin (1969), who portrays it as marginalisation of citizens and a cause of conflict within society. The model was problematic in the sense that the downtrodden would fight for their recognition: as Baubock (2008) avers that discriminatory citizenship is a cause of concern in a democracy, where the idea of equality needs to be observed. In other words, discriminatory citizenship can cause inequalities and subsequently class struggles. Taking a close look at the citizenship struggle among the youth in Zimbabwe, Mavhunga (2018) notes that the current struggle for the youth is for political recognition.

Commenting on the classical societies, Stubbs (1995) and Akin, Calik and Engin-Demir (2017) note that participation in civic and political activities of society was the climax of active citizenship. This thought has been sustained up to the present era in Zimbabwe by many civic society organisations, with most of them championing youth and women's participation in civic and political processes. However, in Zimbabwe while there is a record of youth participating in civic and political processes, the larger part of their record points to their involvement in political violence (Mude 2014).

### **2.2.2 Republicanism**

The republican thought of citizenship is centred around the idea of respect for human rights, equality, and good governance (Bërduf and Dushi 2015). It presents the idea of citizens' participation in the law making processes and their challenging the government over governance insufficiencies such as poor policy-making or social service delivery (Hammersley 2015a; Guy 2020). These ideas were inspired by the discontent among the Roman people about the idea of the emperor's law and poor governance system. According to Bellamy (2015), the imperial rule was dictatorial in nature. This scholar further writes that, if the laws of the empire depended on the emperor, then the law meant to serve the imperial rule rather than rule by and for the public. Hence, the idea of a republic gained traction with philosophers such as Locke, Rousseau and Machiavelli, championing the establishment of a social contract and a republic which gives the citizens the right to choose their government, co-create laws and influence distribution of public resources (Bërduf and Dushi 2015; Hammersley 2015b).

This has influenced efforts made by political and civic stakeholders in Zimbabwe, such as political parties and non-governmental organisations, to work on youth participation in electoral processes and in holding the government to account (Guzura, Dube and Madziwanzira 2017). Rousseau's account of citizenship emphasised the imperative role of citizens in the law-making processes, and to him citizens are an assembled body that is responsible for crafting and enacting laws. As opined by Hammersley (2015a), the sovereign has no power other than that of the legislature, and acts only in accordance with the law, which is only a product of citizenship or authentic act of a general will. The sovereign therefore functions solely when the people have gathered and made a decision.

Sadly, the assembly of people has always proved to be a challenge, especially in the law-making process of Zimbabwe (Mapuva and Muyengwa 2015). Despite the legal provision, the government has made it difficult for citizens to influence the law and other policy-making processes through poor information dissemination, inaccessible venues, and the whipping system (Makaye and Dube 2014). Consequently, the government of ZANU-PF has been successful in crafting repressive laws and policies that are meant to advance the interests of the party against those of the public. Laws like the Maintenance of Law and Public Order (MOPO) Act are being used to silence dissenting voices, while the Procurement Act has rendered local municipalities ineffective with subsequent poor service delivery, and the Constitutional Amendment No 2 Act has been argued to be a threat to representative democracy and human rights (Matsa, Mavugara and Dzawanda 2019; Chimwamurombe 2021).

This has triggered discontent between the government and the citizens, and the youth are mostly found in the forefront of violent demonstrations (Solidarity Peace Trust 2020). As such, Tlou (2016) noted that in Zimbabwe the government's law-making process, limitation of rights and service provision are a source of conflict, especially with the disengaged and unemployed youth bulge. For Locke, in a social contract, the citizen has the right to contest an underperforming government (Hammersley 2015b). However, the assertion of Locke has been left vague in terms of directing the path to challenging or appraising the underperforming government. As noted in MacPherson (1980: page?), Locke asserted that citizens can dissolve the government and "the people are at liberty to provide for themselves, by erecting a new legislative, differing from the other, by the change of persons, or form, or both, as they shall find it most for their safety and good."

This thought of Locke's about the republic was rendered inadequate and a source of instability. According to O'Toole (2011), Locke's perception of citizenship in a republic is one that promotes endless rebellion. Further, this thought of Locke's, and of his successors like Jefferson and Madison, of citizens' right to rebellion has been contested (Pole 2005; O'Toole 2011). Locke insisted that citizens will not just revolt and that was his final argument. In the face of this debate, little has been discussed with regards to virtues that citizens should possess in the face of authoritarianism, poor service delivery and subsequently the need to revolt. Hence, this thesis examines citizenship virtues of the youth in Gweru.,

## **2.3 Active Citizenship and Peacebuilding**

It is also prudent to discuss the relevance of the concept of active citizenship and citizenship virtues in peacebuilding. This research discusses two arguments on the importance of citizenship study in peacebuilding. The first is on its usefulness in understanding the nexus between citizens' marginalisation and youth violence in a democracy. The second argument is on the relationship between good governance and social service protests by the youth.

### **2.3.1 Citizens' marginalisation in a democracy**

Active citizenship is at the centre of democracy, through which citizens must enjoy political, social, and economic equality (European Union 2012; Çakmaklı 2015). It determines the degree to which citizens realise their sense of belonging and ultimately their loyalty to the state. Fundamentally, it enhances the understanding of human behaviour in a state, such as pledging loyalty or contesting democratic processes of the state (Şan, Dedeşali and Daşdemir 2019). As such, in a democracy, citizenship means membership of a political unit, and constitutes a set of values, usually interpreted as a commitment to the common good of a particular political unit. It also involves practising a degree of participation in the process of political life, and an understanding of laws, structures, and processes of governance (Abowitz and Harnish 2006).

Citizenship status and rights can be a source of unity and patriotism through which citizens derive common identity and tolerance (Naujoks 2020). In principle, it is the primary duty of the state to grant citizenship status to its members. The task of granting citizenship status by the government is imperative in promoting peace; it must be inclusive and promote equality and unity. If the process is exclusive, marginalised members will seek recognition through a rebellion. Naujoks (2020:5) writes that

*States can grant a status and create a state label, they may (and generally will) substantiate the status with concrete and special rights and often also duties (privilege dimension), they may grant status holders certain powers to change the rules of the polity, most importantly by providing for political participation.*

This statement confirms the state's duty to pronounce citizenship status and goes on to highlight the idea of "state label" which can be rendered a distinguishing factor or a mark of discrimination. Hence, the granting of citizenship status can be a source of conflicts that threaten state peace. Adejumobi (2001) warns against such insufficiency of citizenship and argues that it can cause conflicts by which marginalised classes or groups will fight for their recognition in the society.

On identity lines, the concept of citizenship has influenced nationalism and civil wars by which citizens fight for recognition and privileges. Erdal and Sagmo (2017) distinguish these two forms of conflicts as vertical and horizontal citizenship conflicts. Vertical citizenship is between citizens and the state, premised on the granting of membership or citizenry status within a polity. Horizontal citizenship is between citizens and other citizens. Zimbabwe has a record of vertical citizenship conflict in the form of the protracted liberation war in which young people of the time were hailed as heroes and liberators. According to Ranger (2004), when the native blacks were denied recognition as equal citizens through the racial discrimination system, they liberated themselves through a violent guerrilla war.

As such, Gabrielsson (2017) writes that nationalism is a form of political culture which is determined by the logic of equality, and which shapes people's attitudes and action through inclusion or exclusion of membership status in the community, attachment to government acts, and attitudes towards egalitarianism. This confirms that citizenship is a determinant of how citizens would choose to relate to the state. Where the state treats them as equal citizens, they can choose to act peacefully, but when the state treats them as outcasts, they can demand their citizenship recognition through waging an insurrection or war (Baubock 2008). In Zimbabwe, the growing discontent of the youth due to their exclusion from key government processes and positions of authority is a threat to community peace (Tlou 2016). The 2020 highly state-suppressed demonstration after the exclusive Constitutional Amendment No 2 Bill public hearings serve as an example of citizenship tension. Hegre (2014) notes that an increase in democratic participation decreases the chance of communities resolving problems through violence.



Citizens have the right and responsibility to influence state political processes, and the deprivation of the same can be a source of conflict (Naujoks 2020). Dodo (2018) perceives the political violence in Zimbabwe as a ventilation of anger against the failed process of self-determination. The failure of elections to facilitate the peaceful transition of power in Zimbabwe and the dominance of war veterans and the army in the process is a war against the younger generation, particularly the youth (Hove and Harris 2015; Musarurwa 2018). In Zimbabwe, the growing patterns of violence, especially by the youth, and the growing revolutionary sentiments on social media validate the claim of citizenship privileges as a source of conflict. Gani and Jamal (2020: page?) opine that the process of citizenship discrimination is a “process of dehumanization”, and human beings can realise their humanness only within the confines of genuine citizenship. According to Peterson and Bentley (2017), genuine citizenship means equal status and enjoyment of rights and privileges within a state. When citizens fail to feel or enjoy those rights, they will eventually realise the subjugation and can relentlessly challenge the system –sometimes violently.

Citizenship as a matter of claiming responsibility is a process by which citizens in a state claim certain agency in community governance and development (Naujoks 2020). Citizenship is understood to facilitate liberal peace in Kantian thought, where citizens are more engaged in governance processes and influencing decisions (Hammett and Marshall 2017). This idea puts democratic values at the frontline of peacebuilding, through which citizens are responsible and participate in decision-making and other democratic processes. Jones (2012) is of the view that the democratic environment will ensure the comprehension of social justice and human rights, and when these values are realised, active citizenship flourishes. This implies that where there is suppression of human rights, freedoms, and social justice, chances that rebellion emanates are high (O'Toole 2011; International Peace Institute 2012). In such cases protests become the new way of engaging the government when citizens are facing hurdles in engaging it formally (Mattijssen *et al* 2019).

In the case of Gweru, like anywhere in Zimbabwe, young people still struggle to access governance processes (Jachi *et al* 2020). According to Chikerema (2013), in Gweru youth participation in local government elections, participatory budgeting, public hearings, consultative forums, and civil society activities remains very low. To Chikerema, the processes are ignorant to youth social and economic needs such as unemployment and poverty. Public hearings have remained inaccessible, though available. Public hearings are being conducted in hard-to-reach areas such as out-of-town venues, whereas young people do not have access to

these venues for financial reasons. This is contrary to ethos of democracy. Hence, young people are frustrated and bitter, and trying to champion their cause.

The concept of citizenship applauds egalitarianism where citizens should enjoy rights equally. In Zimbabwe, the rise of youth movements demanding access and representation in high level public offices echoes those of Mali and Chad, where young people fought for equality. Macheke and Masuku (2019: page?) concur that, “in places such as Mali and Chad, youth protests are perennially staged in the struggle for equitable citizenship or belonging and rightful representation.” In Zimbabwe, these protests are starting to gain momentum with movements like “Not Too Young To Run” being championed by activists such as Namatai Kwekweza, who has been arrested for challenging the government for holding an exclusive process such (public hearings) during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Zimbabwean youth constitute more than 60% of the population (ZimStats 2012) but are less represented in governance offices, especially in parliament (Macheke and Masuku 2019). On the other hand, the law restricts young people below the age of 21 from contesting for a legislative seat, and below 40 years for a presidential one (Constitution of Zimbabwe 2013). Hence, the youth feel treated as less than equals and are starting to contest that, with a danger that they will employ violence, as in Mali and Chad (Resnick and Thurlow 2015). When the youth feel that their citizenship is subjugated, they will make known their discontent through an insurrection or violent demonstrations. It is this granting or denying of citizenship status and privileges to individuals in the society that has developed the concept of active citizenship and made it very relevant to the field of peace studies. Equally, trends in Zimbabwe have shown that, in Zimbabwe, Harare, Bulawayo and Gweru have active young people who participate in demonstrations which are at times violent (Maringira and Gukurume 2020) (Gukurume 2017).

### **2.3.2 Social service protests**

Social service delivery protests are a contemporary feature of citizenship challenges, especially in urban areas like Harare, Bulawayo and Gweru. In Zimbabwe, through rapid urbanisation, the intersection between governance and service delivery has become more pronounced in conflict studies (Resnick and Thurlow 2015). According to Marumahoko and Afolabi (2020: page?), in Zimbabwe

*...many local authorities are failing to provide these services, begging the question of whether they should forfeit their right to exist. The failure of service delivery in urban areas in Zimbabwe can be seen from infrequent water provision, burst water and sewer pipes, faecal contamination of major water sources, deterioration in road*

*networks, the non-functioning of traffic lights, non-collection of refuse, uncompleted capital projects and service delivery protests, among other factors.*

This statement clearly exposes the failure of governance, which has a negative consequence in that citizens demand that the government or office bearers reform or step down.

Gweru has proved not to be an exception. Over the past 10 years or more the city has been in expansion mode. The city has created more than seven residential areas, notably, Hertfordshire, Charlton Park, Paradise Park, Ascot Infill, and Ascot Extension, to single out a few. In juxtaposition, the city authorities have done nothing to match the required social service delivery, such as water. According to Matsa (2012) and Matsa, Mavugara and Dzawanda (2019), no dam was constructed post-independence, which means that citizens are now abusing the water source initially set for the old city plan. Consequently, young people are feeling the effect through having to assume the energetic task of ferrying water in long queues and at odd hours. This is the anger that Tlou (2016) warns against, which prompts protests. The current insults to office bearers via social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook projects the looming tension between the residents and office bearers (Gukurume 2017; Oosterom and Gukurume 2019). In other cases, the citizens use physical meetings to vent their anger with hate speech and scolding of the office bearers (Musarurwa 2016, 2018).

Social and economic inequalities have created serious anger and a class struggle which threatens societal peace. In terms that sound Marxist, Turner (1990) warns of the inequalities in the capitalist society and writes that

*The account of citizenship lies in the contradiction between the formal political equality of the franchise and the persistence of extensive social and economic inequality, ultimately rooted in the character of the capitalist marketplace and the existence of private property.*

Coelho (2004) notes that in many democracies, citizens enjoy their political rights such as voting, but still experience gross inequalities in accessing public goods that are non-political. This conception of active citizenship supersedes the traditional one which only looks at political rights and participation, by incorporating social and economic rights. Therefore, when these rights are not enjoyed, citizens resort to protests (Beehner 2010). Poor social service delivery protests engender two key issues: citizens' right to demand the provision of social amenities from the government, and the poor exercise of that right to demand, using violence. Through the social contract, citizens give the government the duty to make and enforce policies that ensure the quality enjoyment of those social and economic rights which go beyond

personal practice (Lazarski 2013). These rights include access to clean and safe water, health facilities and good roads, among others. The failure of governments to facilitate this constitutional duty in most cases causes a tug of war with citizens, through petitions and protests which at times turn violent. This is generally the case in Africa: the persistence of protests and riots is argued to be an indication of poor social service delivery through which citizens feel disappointed by the state and demand transformative reforms (Chen and Schmidtke 2017).

A case in point is the 2019 fuel protests in Zimbabwe. When the President announced the shocking increase in the fuel price, people saw this as a capitalist enrichment move. Hence, they embarked on the violent fuel protest, which was again a poor exercise of citizenship. The comment on the fuel protest by Beardsworth, Cheeseman and Tinhu (2019: page?) exhibits the challenges of social and economic inequalities among citizens. They write that, “in early 2019, protests against the increase in the price of fuel amidst the deteriorating economic situation were met brutally by the security forces, while access to internet was shut down...” In other words, the fuel protests were a manifestation of the anger amongst the citizens at poor social service delivery.

This shows that inequalities and poor service delivery cause anger amongst the citizens, and in this case, citizens have tried to hold the government to account through violent protests; sadly the government responded brutally. Human rights organisations condemned the government for an unfair response to the protest, using excessive force, and many youth aligned to the opposition parties were arrested (Oosterom and Gukurume 2019). Mattijssen *et al* (2019) even argue that protests are a new way of taking on the government when citizens often experience hurdles in engaging the government.

## **2.4 Young People and Citizenship Virtues**

This section examines the enjoyment of citizenship virtues, namely issues of respect, tolerance, patriotism, trust, and unity by youth in Zimbabwe. Civic virtues can be defined as a standard of righteous or good behaviour of a citizen with regards to his or her involvement in society (White 1996; Bosin 2020). According to Arthur (2020), they play an important role in “safeguarding communities from the threats of a lack of concern for truth, poor leadership, charlatanism, and bigotry.” In other words, civic virtues guard the community peace by influencing good conduct by citizens or responsible exercise of rights and freedoms, as noted in Manning (2007). Hence, this study discusses the conduct of young people in Gweru amidst

poor leadership and poor social service delivery (Chikerema 2013; Matsa, Mavugara and Dzawanda 2019).

Bosin (2020: 34) is of the view that civic virtue helps people understand their ties to the community and their responsibilities within it.” As such, the assumption has been made in this research that if civic virtues among the youth are improved, their conduct will not threaten societal peace. As noted by Cunningham (2011)

*“Civic virtues are motivating values and as such must be internalized within the phenomenological make up of individuals. They must become part of everyday common sense. So still needed is the identification of a cultural “glue” binding people across individual differences and committing them to behaviour consonant with the virtues of concern, toleration, and trusteeship.*

This statement speaks to peacebuilding issues by which citizens are encouraged to have certain agreed values that appraise their conduct in a society. These values are argued to promote peace or unity in a heterogenous society. Hence, Cunningham (2011: page?) further notes that “the proper function of a citizen, or the essence of citizenship correctly understood, is to govern and to be governed in this way.” In this vein, this research also discusses some of the citizenship virtues, such as patriotism, respect, tolerance and trust.

#### **2.4.1 Patriotism**

Patriotism is a key virtue of citizenship which is essential in peacebuilding. It is generally the connection of a group to their land, and it provides a basic foundation for every society’s life and survival through promoting unity and social solidarity (Nathanson 1989; Kahne and Middaugh 2006). According to Bar-Tal and Staub (1997: 48), patriotism is a citizenship virtue which influences societal peace:

*Patriotism in a nation state has become a central value and motivational force potentially involved in processes such as political participation, supportive and critical evaluation of the leadership and policies, political mobilisation, societal conformity and obedience, conflict management and resolution.*

This statement highlights key processes in which citizens, particularly the youth, have been found wanting in terms of exercising their rights, freedoms, and responsibility. Patriotism requires citizens to value the welfare and survival of their state; hence, any acts of aggression, violence or underdevelopment are contrary to the ethos of patriotism (Kahne and Middaugh 2006). In Zimbabwe, violence has been exercised by political actors across all political divides for political participation and mobilisation, contrary to the spirit of patriotism (Oosterom and Pswarayi 2014; Mhike 2017a).

The youth have been used to perpetrate such violence, which has caused not only the loss of life but the destruction of property (Mude 2014). Violence has also been employed by citizens to contest poor leadership and policies through hate speech and violent demonstrations (Maringira and Gukurume 2020). This can even be noted by the acts of the youth activist group called “*Tajamuka*”, which translates as “we have rebelled” (Musarurwa 2018). The group has claimed responsibility for a number of demonstrations that resembled irresponsible participation. This is contrary to the dictates of active citizenship as postulated by Manning, that citizens should exercise their rights and freedoms responsibly. According to Manning (2007), democracy promotes liberal peace by which citizens can enjoy their rights and pursue happiness responsibly, and patriotism is a guiding virtue.

Patriotism can be exercised vertically or horizontally, with its poor practice having detrimental effects on community peace. Vertically, the leadership of the state must show concern and love for their citizens in policy formulation, implementation – even during the worst moments of community aggression. Policies that favour the interests of the community oftentimes receive community support, but policies that favour a particular group, especially the elite, are often met with rebellion. Samuel (1989: 304) wrote that, “patriotism helps citizens to bridge the gap of us, them and other, it is the foundation of community union by the way of having a collective future which includes social mobility and economic rewards.” This rebukes elitist laws and policies such as Zimbabwe’s Maintenance of Public Order (MOPO) Act, which is largely criticised for restricting ordinary Zimbabweans from enjoying their civic and political rights. The law is hated equally to its predecessor, the Public Order and Security Act (POSA), which was used to violently suppress dissent civic and political demonstrations or public gatherings (Bratton and Masunungure 2011).

The attitude and behaviour of citizens towards their nation is a factor of patriotism and citizenship. Nathanson’s patriotism model contains five elements of patriotism that are crucial in promoting peace. These include a special affection for one’s country, the desire that one’s country prosper and flourish, a special but not exclusive concern for one’s country, support for morally-constrained pursuit of national goals, and, conditional support of one’s country’s own policies (Nathanson 1989).

The first three restrict violence and extremism by which citizens are compelled to love their nation and see it flourish. It means that even during worst moments, like poor social service

delivery protests and political tensions, they can still demonstrate peacefully and champion their ideologies responsibly without destroying properties and hurting one another.

Patriotism is key in making citizens reasonable in carrying out their citizenship responsibilities. Instead of political violence in solving disputes, out of patriotism citizens can resort to dialogue (Samuel 1989). The 2009 Global Political Agreement which was signed between ZANU-PF and two MDC formations after the 2008 elections to create a Government of National Unity in 2009, is a good example of the political commitment to patriotism in Zimbabwe (Mutisi 2011). ZANU-PF and MDC-T, after a highly contested political period characterised by political violence, undermining of state institutions, loss of life and property destruction, decided to resolve their disputes through a dialogue. The agreement, under Article VII, even stated that it was designed to promote equality, national healing cohesion, and unity (GPA 2008). Hence, Bar-Tal and Staub (1997) note patriotism as a key component that influences parties in conflict management and resolution.

The last two elements of Nathanson's model speak to rationality in exercising dutiful citizenry responsibilities, such as creating and supporting state policies. The idea of conditional support does not disqualify loyalty to the state but ensures moral support to the state. This is critical in understanding the context of Zimbabwe, where patriotism has various meanings which are pinned to political interests, most particularly to ZANU-PF (Mlambo 2013). Patriotism is when one contests the policies and practices that do not favour human rights or national good, and loves principles and institutions that promote the common good (Hoskins and Crick 2010). It demands that citizens champion unity, and demand social justice, political and economic accountability from policy makers responsibly. Sadly, in Zimbabwe the term has been misconstrued and any dissenting voice against government policies has been rendered "unpatriotic". Taruberekera (2017) condones the youth of Zimbabwe for lacking the sound patriotic virtues and writes that

*it seems that patriotism in Zimbabwe is erroneously equated with support of sympathising with the ruling party (ZANU PF). One can be forgiven for this view considering that, firstly the party has been in power for close to four decades and thus it has become difficult to distinguish between its apparatus and that of the state.*

This shows that citizenship education is informally passed on with a greater determination by the "power houses" to sway the youth to their political advantage. As such, this raises the need to facilitate a sound doctrine of patriotism through citizenship education.

Young people in Zimbabwe are also situated in the narrative of violence in the name of patriotism (Maringira and Gukurume 2020). For example, the National Youth Service in Zimbabwe is largely known for its deep connections with the youth militias who were perpetrating violence (Mhike 2017b). The Zimbabwe National Youth Service has been accused of perpetrating violence under the veneer of patriotism. According to McGovern (2010: page?), the programme was militaristic in nature, “a ruse for a youth militia program operated by the ruling party, the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF).” He condemned the acts of the graduates such as harassing, torturing, and murdering opposition party members and enforcing laws on ZANU-PF’s behalf in the name of patriotism. Though the programme was later abandoned, in 2021 the government made an announcement reintroducing the programme, and concerns are that ZANU-PF could be preparing for potentially bloody 2023 elections (Maringira and Gukurume 2020). As always, young people will be trapped in the processes, as per the assessment of Mude (2014).

However, Moyo (2017) went on to comment on the true form of patriotism and stated that

*Patriotism is bigger than political parties and civic society organisations. It is important to sum up by underlying the fact that contrary to the erroneous narrative peddled by ZANU PF that patriotism is the love for ZANU PF and its President, genuine and highest level of patriotism is instead loving Zimbabwe and protecting it from bad governance and state capture by the ruling elite.*

This contribution surpasses the subjective narrative of patriotism, which is divisive on political lines and causes political violence. True patriotism is not only loving your country, but also those who live in it and its resources (Kahne and Middaugh 2006). It restricts gross human rights violations, political intolerance and bad governance for peace, tolerance, and development of the state (Bar-Tal and Staub 1997). As such, these values cannot be disconnected from peacebuilding, and it is essential to ensure that they are embedded amongst young people.

Reorientation of young people in Zimbabwe is needed, so that they possess the virtue of patriotism, given the failure of the citizenship education in Zimbabwe (Chemhuru and Sizha 2011; Magudu 2012). Despite efforts made by the government to introduce citizenship education, particularly through the National Youth Service which was designed to inculcate patriotism among the youth (Solidarity-Peace-Trust 2003), youth in Zimbabwe still exhibit traits of violence contrary to the ethos of patriotism (Mhike 2017b). According to McGovern (2010), the citizenship education was politicised and patriotism was passed on as a selective and subjective value. Hence, it has failed to orient young people to be tolerant and patriotic.



## 2.4.2 Respect and Tolerance

Respect and tolerance are integral citizenship virtues in reducing violent conflicts in a society full of diversity. Citizens will need to be aware that they exist in a diverse and heterogeneous society where tolerance needs to be exercised with probity (Schiefer and Van-der-Noll 2017). In a liberal democratic society, citizens must be conditioned to appreciate difference of choice, speech, ideology, and affiliation. Sen (2011:45) writes that

*In probing deeper into the causal processes that generate violence and into the ways and means of overcoming them, we have to examine how distortions as well as genuine misunderstandings, such as having a sense of being isolated from the 'mainstream' community, can feed extremism and violence. In alleviating the conditions that give rise to a sense of grievance and isolation through civil rather than military initiatives...strengthening of respect (in a very broad sense) for each other must have a critically important place in any plausible agenda for promoting peace.*

This statement is imperative to understanding key issues around citizenship and violence, such as discrimination, civil wars and military initiatives. It argues respect as the path to recovery from discrimination that feeds extremism and violence. Respect is made a critical component of curbing civil wars and military violence. Currently, in Zimbabwe young people still feel marginalised, which Sen (2000) notes causes violent rebellion. According to Macheke and Masuku (2019: page?), "in Zimbabwe, although citizen participation ranks as a high priority for most development partners in the country, the youth have long suffered from marginalisation." This, in essence, has prompted young people to respond to this marginalisation aggressively through violent movements like #Tajamuka (Musarurwa 2016).

While Zimbabwe claims to be a republic and a democracy, violence has dominated homes and workplaces as gender-based violence, but most importantly has also tarnished Zimbabwean politics, which is largely characterised by disrespect for political diversity and eventually political violence (Mude 2014). In politics, citizens have failed to co-exist and participate in politics without using violence, and young people have been recorded as being at the forefront of violence in Zimbabwe (Oosterom and Pswarayi 2014; Solidarity-Peace-Trust 2020). In urban areas, young people, particularly those with access to the internet, have used social media to ventilate their anger against poor social service delivery in a violent way, using hate speech (Chatora 2012; Maringira and Gukurume 2020). Shwalb and Shwalb (2006: page?) are therefore of the view that "respect may indeed be the glue that binds people together and holds together one's self-concept."

Respect and tolerance are inseparable virtues. The idea of holding the people together does not entail the absence of differences, but the tolerance of diversity and respect for other people's views or ideologies without disrespecting yours. Sen (2000: 16) notes that "respecting people does not demand accepting their points of view, and a consensus to do something jointly, given the views that different people hold." There is therefore need for cultivation of respect and tolerance amongst citizens, so as to be able to tolerate diverging views.

The drama which led to the expulsion of Mnangagwa from power in 2017 by Mugabe, and the subsequent military intervention which deposed Mugabe and restored Mnangagwa as President was preceded by a series of youth interface rallies which were powered by hate speech, physical violence, and disrespect for people's opinions on leadership preferences (Asuelime 2018). The same issues rocked the MDC formations after the demise of Morgan Tsvangirai when the youthful Chamisa assumed power as a popular leader through violent means (Mwonzora and Hodzi 2021). Chamisa supporters defended his ascendancy to power through all means, including being violent to all who opposed the move. As noted in Mwonzora and Hodzi (2021: page?), youth comprised most of Chamisa's foot soldiers, "for instance, youths aligned to Chamisa (the 'vanguards') besieged Khupe and Mwonzora at Tsvangirai's funeral and threatened to burn the hut in which they were hiding." Even though the Constitutional Court ruled in favour of Khupe, as noted in Chifamba (2020), intolerance continued and all acts against Nelson Chamisa were rendered acts of selling-out the revolution, not of diversity in a democracy (Hodzi 2018).

Respect is also key in understanding conflicts which are demography-based, such as differences in culture, age and education. Sen (2011:47) notes that interculturally, respect means the "demand for rights and equal treatment...it is contrasted with disrespect, the experience of being picked upon, discriminated against, or treated in a demeaning way because...of one's race, colour or culture." Respect validates the discrimination factor which is central to citizenship, by which citizens must be treated equally, as noted by Baynes (2008) who talked of treating the "equals equally". Zimbabwe is currently in a serious generational conflict, where the youth feel marginalised and under-represented in government (Macheka and Masuku 2019). Zimbabwe's young people wish to see an overhaul of government, where the young replace the old – hence the MDC Alliance's mantra of "generational consensus" (Mwonzora and Hodzi 2021). In Zimbabwe, youth are disrespected and marginalised for lacking political experience to lead (Ndebele and Billing 2011).

Respect is key in ensuring conflicting societies do not turn to violence, but resort to peace. Tolerance can cause people to compromise and have what is deemed mutual interest (Shwalb and Shwalb 2006; Baynes 2008). Most political activists, especially the youth, are intolerant, and they lack dialoguing skills. Zimbabwean youth have failed to articulate their grievances or champion their ideas through dialogue, but often revert to violence (Oosterom and Pswarayi 2014; Chari 2017). Yet Sen (2011: 47-48) writes that

*Respect and understanding are values at the heart of what we might call the 'Commonwealth approach'. This approach involves a tradition of doing things through dialogue, where everyone has the right to speak, to be heard and to be consulted in coming to a common view. It involves a belief in a shared process and in the ability of people – all people, no matter how diverse – to make use of that process. In essence, it is about seeking a consensus and valuing the process that brought about coming to a common view.*

It is critical to instil this idea of a commonwealth amongst the citizens, particularly the youth, as a means to empower them to advocate their ideas and interests progressively in a democratic society. However, the idea of a commonwealth is controversially applicable in situations of conflict, where it requires both parties in a conflict to respect each other and come to a consensus about initiating a dialogue process. In Zimbabwe, efforts by young people to champion their ideas peacefully have been met with great resistance (Sachikonye 2011; Maringira and Gukurume 2020). The use of the plebiscite and other strategic engagements has not pleased the youth, prompting a radical approach (Hodgkinson 2013; Mude 2014). Often dialogue has succeeded extreme violence. For example, during the disputed 2008 elections, violence was first used before the talks for a Global Political Agreement. Though Zimbabwe's Global Political Agreement resembles a failed violent process of resolving conflicts (Chari 2017), it remains evidence that at times violence whips parties in conflict to a discussion.

The competition for power in critical situations can make people divert from the sound virtues of democracy such as dialogue, respect, and tolerance. Most young people in Zimbabwe and other African states do not trust political processes (Macheka and Masuku 2019; Solidarity-Peace-Trust 2020) including dialogue (Oosterom and Pswarayi 2014).

### **2.4.3 Trust**

Trust is a key virtue of citizenship that promotes peace. Active citizenship can promote trust and develop consensus between the service providers of the state and citizens (Myeong and Seo 2016). Rebuilding trust is necessary to underpin societal stability and peace, and improved social service delivery, improved standards of living and providing space for the dissent voice

are acknowledged as vital enablers of that trust (Roberts 2008). As a component of democracy, active citizenship therefore promotes the inclusion of citizens in decision making and in the affairs of the state through a bottom-up approach (Schierenbeck 2015).

In Zimbabwe, the processes of decision making, such as elections, budgets and bills, and public consultations have attracted animosity and violence (Chari 2017; Maringira and Gukurume 2020). Citizens have since lost trust in the state and its institutions. Reference can be made to the 2018 elections in which citizens were to self-determine their government. Even without sound evidence, as exhibited in the constitutional court, that elections were rigged, citizens, particularly the youth, were in the streets burning tyres and property and claiming that the elections were rigged (Solidarity-Peace-Trust 2020). This shows the great loss of trust in the decision-making processes and bodies like the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission.

According to Paffenholz (2014), mutual trust between the state and citizens, transparency and accountability are key tools for legitimising state policies and practices. This is relevant to the Zimbabwean political, social, and economic situation. The state leadership is compromised and untrustworthy because of its rise to power through the 2017 military coup and retaining power through the 2018 disputed elections (Matyszak 2019). Secondly, most leaders in government and the institutions they lead have been alleged to be involved in scandalous corrupt activities which attracted hatred from the people (Solidarity-Peace-Trust 2020). The July 31 2020 national demonstration against corruption, which the government responded to with a national crackdown resulting in the arrests, torture and abduction of political activists, is clear evidence of the impact of transparency and accountability on citizens' trust in government – and eventually peace. Makumbe (2011) talks of corruption causing citizenship inequalities and distrust.

According to Roberts (2015: 112) “distrust between citizens and the state contributes to intercommoned tensions and conflicts...and the practice of democracy with functioning and accountable institutions is necessary to achieve peace.” In Zimbabwe, the government has since shifted from conducting its business openly, particularly in the procurement departments in parastatals. The tender system has become notorious? and the Auditor General's Report of 2019 has unearthed many irregularities among the state parastatals (Auditor General Report 2019). Hope and Chikulo (2000) and Sibudubudu (2002) are of the view that the government is engaged in sovereignty politics with politicised bureaucracy and centralised decision-making. This is a bad attribute of governance which reduces citizens' trust in government and

marginalises them from the decision-making processes. Engaging citizens in the decision-making processes makes them feel accountable to the state policies and practices, instils trust in the leaders and encourages working together with the government to achieve the public good (Myeong and Seo 2016).

Active citizenship promotes peace through enabling trust between the citizens and government, allowing citizens to cooperate with government goals, thus facilitating improved social service delivery. Myeong and Seo (2016: page?) comment that, “when the level of trust in government is very low, government cannot effectively provide services since the policy goals and the processes of implementation are not fully understood by the people.” They further contend that opening the government to ensure transparency and inclusive decision making is a remedy for facilitating trust between citizens and government. This is called the transition from government to governance, and according to the European-Union (2012), governance is to facilitate the increase in a bottom-up approach in decision-making through growth of complex networks. It is this aspect of networks that evokes the notion of social capital, which is considered key in active citizenship. Social capital promotes mutual trust between citizens themselves and enhances their agency in community affairs (Putnam 2001). As such, it is pertinent to improve this virtue amongst the youth.

## **2.5 Citizenship Education**

Citizenship education remains one of the critical responses to poor citizenry among the youth (ref). And every society is as peaceful as its empowered and responsible citizens. Citizens who hold a strong sense of community belonging, agency, patriotism, and togetherness. These values are all products of societal teachings and interactions which are largely influenced by the proxies of socialisation more particularly education. Education is a more organised institution to effectively impart pupils with knowledge and skills for active citizenship (Akar, 2016). While the Zimbabwean government introduced citizenship education post-independence, young people still exhibit traits of poor citizenship virtues (Musarurwa, 2018). Young people are less engaged in the governance process. Instead, they participate in violence prompting the questions like, what is going wrong with the orientation of pupils into active citizenship? What is citizenship education and what needs to be done to make it more effective?

(Akar, 2016) noted that education for active citizenship is an instrumental response to conflict. It fosters social cohesion and inaugurate principles of human rights and democracy as basic norms within a society. Citizenship education is viewed as a process by which a more

responsible and peace-oriented person is created in a society. According to (Ngozwana, 2017) citizenship education can be formal or informal, where formal education is bureaucratic and teacher-centred, and informal education, more flexible and student-centred. Citizenship education, however, can also be influenced by the social and economic environment of the society.

### **2.5.1 Conceptualising Citizenship Education**

Citizenship education means different things to different scholars but there is a sense of commonality on its objectives. These objectives include equipping citizens with civic virtues, skills, attitude and knowledge to be more responsible in defending their rights, building a democratic society and promoting societal cohesion, (Brooke et al., 2016). Citizenship education is considered a proxy of socialisation which creates another person within a society apart from the natural man who is born free and assumes citizenship identity. According to (Westheimer and Kahne, 2004) it creates a law-abiding citizen who is more informed, responsible and able to volunteer in a crisis. Implied is that citizenship education is more concerned about instilling civic values and skills in citizens thus giving one the ability to translate that identity into responsible practice.

(Parker, 2014) defines active citizenship education as formal education focused on preparing the youth for participation in their political community. The assertion is supported by (Çakmaklı, 2015) who concedes that citizenship education prepares a political citizen to be active within the community, to have his or her voice heard and hold the government to account. It ensures that citizens are aware of their civic and political rights through learning. This affirms the recognition to cultivate a commitment to participate in community leadership and governance processes amongst the youth. Citizenship education teaches citizens about human rights and democracy as to make them realise their dutiful rights and responsibilities alongside the supporting democratic values like respect, tolerance, patriotism, and unity (Keyman and Icdygu, 2003). This is more crucial to young people in Zimbabwe who are largely disengaged in governance processes.

According to (Peterson and Bentley, 2017) citizenship education has a trifold product classification notably personally responsible citizen, participatory citizen and justice-oriented citizen. Participatory citizens do not retreat into apathy and obliviousness to give way for victory of self-centeredness (Hughes et al., 2009). They demonstrate a sense of community responsibility. Hence citizenship education has a role to awaken that sense of responsibility

through rigorous learning processes that enhance a responsible thinking and informs meaningful action. Though the type of education matters in influencing the sense of community belonging over self-centeredness. Imperative to this thinking is the idea that citizenship education is able to create a selfless citizen who can value the community better than his or her personal interests and able to volunteer, to take action towards community development. (Çakmaklı, 2015) notes that citizenship education can influence civic action, social cohesion and self-actualisation. Whereas self-actualisation denotes the ability for one to fulfil his function within a society, citizenship education ensure that marginalised and disadvantaged communities are able to realise their agency and take action (Ribiero et al., 2012).

A justice-oriented citizen adopts a critical stance to structural inequalities and processes and strive to ensure change (Peterson and Bentley, 2017). These citizens are more conversant with human rights which are underpinned on the doctrine of equality hence they strive to ensure egalitarianism. (Akar, 2016) inscribed that citizenship education involves “opportunities that allow students to engage in dialogic and collaborative practices that are informed by understandings of rights and institutions.” In other words, the justice-oriented citizen is aware of human rights and the duties of the state institutions hence they are able to hold state institutions to account. In observing this equality, they are not only aware of the law that outlines the doctrine of citizenship equality but institutions and practices that empowers the same. There is a difference between being treated equal and being treated as equals. Hence these citizens are sensitive to structural inequalities which undermines human and people’s rights.

In Zimbabwe, it is contestable as to whether the youth fit perfectly in the frame of (Peterson and Bentley, 2017) trifold citizenship or not. Young people in Zimbabwe reflects a fair educational stamina which correlates the knowledge of rights and democracy. (Musarurwa, 2018) argues that in Zimbabwe the youth are now voters but not yet citizens and (RAU, 2018) concurs that the youth are present but not yet engaged. This gives an idea that in Zimbabwe the young people perhaps are aware of their citizenship rights and responsibilities in a democracy. This is suggestive that the youth are more of participative citizens. However, (Chatora, 2012) argues that civic and political participation is more than voting as it involves the engagement of citizens in campaign, signing petitions, attending community meetings, and joining interest groups. The last two further exposes a critical issue on the trifold citizenship of (Peterson and Bentley, 2017) in which participatory citizens are characterised by joining civic or interest

groups which promotes the sense of community belonging, togetherness and social cohesion. This highlights how broad is citizenship education.

Citizenship education is key in addressing youth participation in political violence. According to (Hoskins 2014) any form of political participation should conform to the respect of one and other people's human rights. This extends the scrutiny on Zimbabwean citizenship education in creating responsible and justice-oriented youth. (Honwana, 2013) notes of a failed wait-hood period in Zimbabwe by which the youth did not get quality orientation for a just and fair transit into adulthood. While he notes of a broken-down socio-economic system (RAU, 2018) opines of illicit administration of policies and institutions to include that of education. This will be clarified in the debate on citizenship curriculum whereby the government of ZANU PF in Zimbabwe has made several attempts to manipulate the youth through the education system. This coincide with the assertion by (Nhapi and Mathende, 2019) that in the African jurisdiction the biggest challenge is the "enduring politics of patronage and neopatrimonialism in which elected leaders are more concerned of using state resource (education) to create and sustain clientelism and loyalty networks based on material benefits."

Still the arguments do not justify the poor involvement of the youth in the democratic movement to fight injustice, poor governance, and gross human rights violations. In Zimbabwe the youth have a record of participating in demonstrations and robust debates as a mechanism to fight injustice thus they somehow fit in the frame of (Peterson and Bentley, 2017) trifold citizenship as justice-oriented citizens. (Hodgkinson, 2013) records the lionised student revolutionary struggle characterised by aggressive debates which were championed by the University Bachelors Association during the time of Robert Mugabe. Contemporarily, the role being played by youthful journalists, student and political activist such as Joana Mamombe, Takudzwa Ngadzire and Namatai Kwekweza persuades one to accord the youth in Zimbabwe the title 'justice-oriented citizens. However, (Musarurwa, 2018) opined that, attempts to fight against injustice in Zimbabwe has often times been referred to as a political mischief to spearhead regime change and as such it has been met with great resistance characterised by abductions, arbitrary arrests and enforced disappearances.

Therefore, the youth in Zimbabwe are generally petrified from participating in politically related activities and gatherings. On the other hand, (Ndebele and Billing, 2011) argued that complex and shifting power dynamics have made it possible for the youth to penetrate the civic and political space, particularly the decision-making structures. However, young people still



lack the required attitude, skills and knowledge for active citizenship. This draws us back to the systems of citizenship education and its implications on active citizenship amongst the youth in Zimbabwe.

### **2.5.2 Typologies of Citizenship Education**

According to (Ngozwana, 2017) citizenship education can be formal or informal, where one is teacher centred whereas the other one is student centred respectively. The idea of student or teacher centeredness of citizenship education is key in determining the level of understanding and action taken by young people after learning. The two have distinct impact on the manner they instil and cultivate active citizenship amongst the citizens.

### **2.5.3 Formal education**

Formal education is often state designed and controlled, and it is facilitated by formal institutions such as primary, secondary and tertiary institutions (Usher and Edwards, 1994). Formal education has two critical components that determine its effectiveness notably its curriculum and classroom climate. Curriculum is a formal policy by which the state design what the subject of citizenship covers, its intended objectives and administration. Zimbabwe like any other states has its own citizenship education curriculum. In 1985 the study of citizenship education was introduction through the subject entitled “political economy studies” which was made compulsory at ZJC level and later replaced by the National and Strategic Studies (NASS) which is taught at every polytechnic (Mavhunga et al., 2012). Currently, citizenship education is largely taught through history and social studies. Classroom climate entails the condition and styles in which citizenship education is administered.

#### **2.5.3.1 Citizenship Curriculum**

According to (Mavhunga et al., 2012) citizenship curriculum in Zimbabwe was traditionally designed to foster unity and patriotism. Formal citizenship education in most cases is controlled by the state because of the government’s constitutional obligation to facilitate citizens’ access to education. Education is a proxy of socialisation; therefore citizenship curriculum is a critical instrument that shapes what pupils learn and eventually become. To Jean Jacques Rousseau, Education for children and their future should not be left in the hands of their parents alone rather be made part of a system of public education provided for by the state with definite rules and recognised teachers (Mavhunga et al., 2012). According to (Peterson and Bentley, 2017) formal citizenship curriculum in form of history and social studies subjects should be designed

in a manner that facilitates two things, a sense of agency in young people's political knowledge and bold actions.

This raises two critical issues on the citizenship curriculum in Zimbabwe in terms of its ability to facilitate quality political knowledge in young people and eventually their ability to translate the same knowledge into action. Citizenship education curriculums should content the study of rights, democracy, economics and peace, it is a central tool that enhances the accumulation and development of relevant knowledge, attitudes, and skills for active citizenship (Akar, 2016).". The Political Economy Studies which was introduced by the of Zimbabwe was purportedly designed to instil a sense of patriotism by developing young citizens to have a better understanding of state development, but the innovation was largely criticised by the church and western societies. (Mavhunga et al., 2012). The subject was condemned for spearheading government propaganda and communist interests. The curriculum placed much emphasis on the liberation war which glorified the ZANU PF government as the revolutionary and liberating party. (Jansen, 1991) concurred that though the government had a genuine intention to foster the values of patriotism and nationhood as noted in the Rousseauian philosophy, the initiative did not fit well in the minds, hearts and hands of other players in the education enterprise.

The church supported by the western capitalist often referred to as the neo-imperialists and colonialists saw the subject as a move to cripple the church and its influence, and to advance the communist ideologies which would limit the church activities (ref). Political actors also perceived the initiative as a way in which ZANU PF government wanted to indoctrinate citizens to be loyal to it through propaganda enshrined in the education curriculum. In general, it was rendered a power coercive move (Nyakudya, 2007). It is imperative to note that during this time there was a remnant tag of war between the communist USSR and capitalist USA (Cold War). The curriculum did not last long because it was eventually abandoned in 1985 due to? (ref). This confirms that citizenship education curriculums need an all-stakeholders approach in design as to ensure that they facilitate objective agendas of creating a more active citizen who is autonomous enough to scrutinise and make fair judgements of the state history, its conduct and make an informed action.

The study of history and social studies remains a critical component in Zimbabwe's education spectrum, where rights, democracy, and governance history are taught. In polytechnic colleges, the government even introduced the National Strategic Studies (NASS) as a citizenship education subject compulsory for students (Zembere, 2019). While the studies are argued to be

promote patriotism and deeper understanding of democracy through the study of the Zimbabwean liberation struggle or other democracies like the French Revolution, and European dictators such as Hitler and Mussolini. This I also believe has become instrumental in inculcating violent demonstrations against the government.

Such histories and studies make citizens be aware of their rights and agency in a democracy. According to (Russel and Quaynor, 2017) “civic ideas are woven throughout the fabric of schooling, but civic skills, attitudes and practice are explicitly taught through the subject of citizenship education.” They placed much emphasis on sound curriculums or policies of citizenship education. To them citizenship education is critical for building a strong democracy, promoting national unity and peacebuilding. In Zimbabwe, citizenship education curriculum tries to impact student with relevant knowledge. The liberation war is a bold story of rights, democracy, patriotism, and unity (Muwati et al., 2010). Hence to (Russel and Quaynor, 2017) citizenship education consists of a political dimension in which young people are equipped with the knowledge about rights and responsibilities for building an inclusive democracy. What makes an inclusive democracy is what (Parker, 2014) concurred as the attributes of respect, tolerance, and social cohesion. However, post-independence activities such as the racial and violent Fast Track Land Reform Policy, the fascist anti-Tekere campaign by ZANU PF, the Gukurahundi massacre and Operation Murambatsvina were contrary to this ethos of citizenship and still represent the dark age of bad influence.

Though the Zimbabwean curriculum has tried to evade and cleanse these narratives of violence, the stories have saturated the academic space. This had two effects, the first one being of championing a propagandist narrative of the ruling government of ZANU PF, one of a monstrous hero. The effect of passing a subjective narrative which creates what (Russel and Quaynor, 2017) called a passive or violent citizen who lives in fear or believe in using violence as a means to resolve conflict. (Russel and Quaynor, 2017) observed that in Rwanda citizenship education curriculum shun away from sensitive topic or issues such as the Rwandan genocide. They opined that, teachers and students consequently avoid discussing about the genocide. This highlights a central factor on affective learning for active citizenship whereby the students are not exposed to the realities of their communities, thwarting the opportunities for them to make honest and critical assessments of their lived communities. This is reflective of the Zimbabwean education curriculum which shuns sensitive yet crucial topics like the Gukurahundi Massacre, Electoral violence sagas and the Murambatsvina cases ().

This is evidenced by the trend of youth participation in Zimbabwean politics which for long has been characterised by high apathy and violence (Mude, 2014). Young people are still struggling to translate their learnt knowledge into action and (Ndebele and Billing, 2011) argued that young people in Zimbabwe lack knowledge and skills to engage in governance processes. On the other hand, young people are argued to be petrified to participate in politics, more particularly in challenging government policies and practices. citizenship curriculums must be designed to ensure that pupils are able to participate beyond class lessons. Zimbabwe's civic society groups have taken much credit through their incentivised youth empowerment programs (). On the other hand, youth violence is common in the passage of political history of Zimbabwe which does not really represent citizenship values such as respect, tolerance, patriotism and dialogue (Chari, 2017). Somehow, young people are also inspired by the liberation war which is largely glorified in the citizenship curriculum in Zimbabwe which record courageous youth who fought against the repressive colonial regime.

To (Russel and Quaynor, 2017) there is always and obvious tension between curriculums on citizenship education and the actual implementation. Commenting on citizenship education in South Africa, Malawi and Zimbabwe (what did they say about the three countries). They argue that, in South Africa the curricular denotes the study of human rights, social justice and democratic citizenship but does not offer tools for social transformation or active citizenship at the implementation level. In Malawi active citizenship is argued to be hindered by the lack of civic education as a standalone subject and student-centred learning environment though which democratic values are taught. In Zimbabwe, students are commented for knowing citizenship issues but lacking the political efficacy and empowerment for active engagement. This exudes the need to take a close look on the relationship between citizenship education and its administration. Russel and Quaynor posit that the study of citizenship education has three key issues namely? notably good citizenship, civic identity thus student's own patriotic identity, classroom climate which is the nature of openness in the classroom and civic engagement which is measured through active involvement in community or state activities.

This makes it not surprising that in Zimbabwe and other states Presidents are often leaders of Universities and Colleges, and the state is in absolute control of the education policies. Zimbabwe's President is the the chancellor of all universities. The President has the authority to appoint or terminate employment contracts for vice chancellors and the Presidential office has in the past been accused of making political employments for vice chancellor posts. is an appointing authority, who can give or terminate vice chancellors' employment. The current

Zimbabwe presents such power dynamics in the education curriculum whereby the Vice-Chancellors have a strong relationship with the ruling part and some have a serious liberation war credentials which are largely associated with the ruling ZANU PF party which often claims to be a revolutionary part.

### **2.5.3.2 Education Classroom Climate in Zimbabwe**

(Mapiasse, 2007) is of the view that classroom climate is the major determinant of citizenship education and active citizenship. The education climate tends to model citizenry to be critical thinkers and manage to par-take and participate in community development activities for sustainable development. The classroom climate plays a bigger role in the moulding of a citizenry who is averse to the reality of community activities. Classroom climate is a multi-faceted concept that includes the organization of the physical environment, the establishment of rules and routines, the development of effective relationships, and the prevention of violence and a response to misbehaviour. It is helpful to view classroom climate beliefs and practices on a continuum from teacher-centred to student-centered management styles. For example, (Willower, 1975) found that educators vary along a continuum of beliefs about the way children learn to behave and conceptualized this as one's pupil-control ideology. At one end of the continuum there is custodial (teacher-centred) educator, where at the other end is the humanistic (student-centred) educator.

According to (Finkel and Smith, 2011) classroom climate must promote active pedagogical learning which is student centred with participatory methods. Students or the youth must be involved in civic workshops that are learner-centred with a critical approach of constructing knowledge. This is critical in stimulating the sense of debate and tolerance instead of violence, which is critical to instil among the youth in Zimbabwe. Concurring with this notion, (Russel and Quaynor, 2017) commented that, "while the content on citizenship education is important, the transmission through student centred mode is crucial for conveying knowledge and developing skills." This brings to light an imperative facet of citizenship education thus the development of skills to participate. To (Osler and Starkey, 2003) active citizenship involves status, feeling and practice. Hence it is the classroom climate which facilitates the transition from status to feeling and practice and this is through the manner in which citizenship education is administered.

### **2.5.3.3 Custodial orientation in Zimbabwe?**

The teacher-centred climate is highly controlling, employing punitive sanctions, moralistic perceptions, highly impersonal relationships with students, attitudes of general mistrust and a major focus on the maintenance of order. In teacher-centred classrooms, control is of primary importance and “authority is transmitted hierarchically” (Dollard and Christensen, 1996). This literally means teachers exerts control over the students and often create passive students who only complies with the dictates of the teacher. The Zimbabwean’s citizenship education model depicts teacher-centeredness classroom climate (ref) which have been condemned for developing passive students who can also be referred to as by-standers (Ke and Starkey, 2014).

Chances that learners in Zimbabwean schools can grow into participatory or justice-oriented citizens are low because they will be oriented to obedience and at times docility. Zimbabwe has a gerontocratic culture which assumes that obeying the rules of the master which in terms of governance is the government, is the best form of citizenship (ref). Whereas (Peterson and Bentley, 2017) notes that active citizenship involves questioning the status quo and fight against the abuse or suppression of human rights in a democracy, and it involves holding the duty bearers to account.

According to (Edwards, 2004) instructional methods of administering citizenship education promotes more single-mindedness on the teacher through lectures, guided discussions, demonstrations, and “cookbook” labs. These forms of instruction often endorse a focus on the teacher and limits student activity that disrupts that focus and in turn make them less participatory citizens in community governance and development activities. In addition, (Freiberg, 1999) argued that teachers exert their control through a system of clearly defined rules, routines and punishments that are mandated rather than developed with the students. Hence, student’s sense of involvement in decision making or law-making processes can be either enhanced or crippled during their upbringing, thus facilitating a poor transition into adulthood. Active citizenship education therefore can shape the understanding and attitudes of citizens in participating in key citizenship activities such as attending the budget formulation meetings, public hearings of bills by parliament and community decision making activities which is very low among the youth in Zimbabwe.

In teacher-centred classroom climate, teachers may rely on extrinsic motivation to influence student behaviour, for instance completion of a task is seen as a prerequisite for obtaining something desirable (Chance, 1993). Based on the preceding submissions, the curriculum in

Zimbabwe represents an instructional management style that is authoritarian as it is designed by the state and politicised. The teacher influences the behaviour of the student to such an extent that, students become passive and docile to the realities of the community, and this has forced students to shun sensitive topics such as the Gukurahundi, short and long sleeve scenario, Murambatsvina. Because of the fear and intimidation instilled by the regime youths have become by-standers and some are used as pawns in state sponsored violence (Mude, 2014). The Zimbabwean environment tends to stifle citizenry activism through the heavy handedness of the state and its control on the designing of the citizenship education curriculum. (Waghid, 2009) warns of coerced loyalty and blind patriotism. In the teacher-centred environment compelling with the rules is the highest form of loyalty and patriotism. In Zimbabwe supporting the government of ZANU PF is regarded as the highest form of loyalty and patriotism (). To (Waghid, 2009) what is pernicious about this coerced and subjective thinking of patriotism is that it ignores the reality that loyalty to one party or ideology has nothing to do with building a democracy and peace. He said, both the totalitarian and democratic regimes desire patriotism. Hence, citizenship education must never undermine or deter the potential of citizens to learn critical thinking through subjective instructions. (Kahne et al., 2006) commented that, citizenship education administration should try to create active citizens not blind patriots who cannot reason to debate, who cannot act as engines of improvement but passive to analysis and critique. Who resort to violence when confronted by conflict instead of reasoning or dialogues as exuded by the youth in Zimbabwe who are largely blamed for violent demonstrations and hate speech on social media.

Through teacher-centred approach, in Zimbabwe citizens are oriented to be mere law-abiding citizens who obey the laws of the state to include the draconian laws (ref). The use of state machinery such as the police and army to thwart dissent voices is reflective of the classroom set-ups in which inhuman punishment or terror is exercised in teacher centred classroom climates. is bred in teacher-centred classroom climates, questioning the ZANU PF government policies and actions has often been referred to as an act of rebellion to the state and fronting the neo-colonialist agendas (Musarurwa, 2018). This further manifests in the efforts by the government in 2021 to regulate patriotism through the proposition to come up with the Patriotic Bill, a law that will incriminate dissent voice against the state.

The syndrome as a breed of teacher centred classroom is reflected even in opposition parties. This is for instance, in the Movement for Democratic Change – Alliance, members are

mandated to chant the ‘Chamisa chete chete’ and anything contrary to the dictates of their youthful leader Nelson Chamisa is tantamount to rebellion. The ascend to power by Nelson Chamisa through waging a violent reign of terror to her counterpart Thokozani Khupe is a clear example of lacking the tolerance of diversity in a democracy. This exudes the danger in teacher centred classroom climates because they often cripple citizens from engaging in progressive dialogues and debates. Successful citizenship education administration must inculcate the spirit of tolerance and respect. Citizens must be able to demonstrate and exercise their democratic rights and responsibilities cognizant of the fact that, loyalty is not resembled by being adamant to criticism and diversity.

#### **2.5.3.4 Humanistic orientation**

The student-centred approach provides a classroom climate in which active interaction and communication, close personal relationships with students, mutual respect, positive attitudes, and flexibility of rules, as well as student self-discipline, self-determination and independence are fostered (Chen and Schmidtke, 2017). A constructivist mentor is interested primarily in helping the students engage problems and issues, search below the surface, try out various possible solutions or explanations and finally construct their own meanings (Ryan and Patrick, 2001). In these classrooms, teaching methods or strategies include reflective thinking, inquiry, exploratory discussions, role-playing, demonstrations, projects and simulation games (Edwards, 2004). Humanistic environments are characterised by relinquishing hierarchical power structures and sharing control, resulting in a more manageable classroom where students are tolerant and engage in progressive discussions or dialogues.

The student-centred classroom environment encourages shared control, elicit student participation, shared responsibility and autonomy between the student and educator, resulting in students exploring sensitive topics like Gukurahundi or problems affecting their communities. Thus, humanistic classrooms create an active youth who is more engaged to the realities of communities, who is not a by-standers in problems affecting communities. A crucial skill that needs to be imparted among the youth in Zimbabwe who are less engaged in governance processes. Humanistic orientation moulds an individual who is critical and rational to community development needs and is less susceptible to par-take in violence but promotes values of dialogue, compromise, accommodativeness and will favour non-violent means in solving conflicts (Veugelers 2011).



The development of interpersonal relationships is an essential component of a student-centred approach since positive student-teacher relationships presumably lessen the need for control and become the foundation for all interaction in the classroom (Garrett, 2008). The most fascinating feature on humanistic orientation is the emphasis on the development of students' social skills through, classroom meetings, and community building activities. For a community to build strong citizenship education strategy, active citizenry activism needs to be inculcated in the youths or students for them to influence development in communities. The political system and the education system in Zimbabwe seem to be parallel to the humanistic orientation. The education system is state centric, promotes patriotism and nationalism as defined by the incumbent government. The government determines what, when and how to operationalize the curriculum. Zimbabwe need to adopt citizenship education that promote critical thinking in citizens, which must be accommodative and inclusive when comes to community development.

Humanistic orientation envisage that the teacher and learners must have an environment permitting of tolerance where they are not dismissive of each other but listens and appreciates one another, (Waghid, 2009). This implies that teachers must have a receptive character allowing free and safe expression for students to have their confidence, trust, values of tolerance and critical thinking flourish. (Waghid, 2009) and (Sherman, 1997) agree to the fact that teachers must be friends to learners and allow learners to be friends among themselves, to be progressive in debate and engagement. Citizens must be taught to care and respect one another, listen, and correct each other progressively without fear or prejudice. "Learners when they make arguments should not be afraid to be corrected by teachers or other students." (Waghid 2009:7). And to (Sherman 1997: 208) friendship involves people becoming mutually attuned to one another." In other words, they relax their boundaries and become stimulated by one another through progressive arguments that facilitate a sense and skill of democratic citizenship characterised by respect and tolerance.

The classroom climate therefore must be a safe space for expression which cultivates the values of engagement. A humanistic orientation is cautioned that, "nurturing the culture of dialogue should not happen at the expense of muting the voices of participants through what is referred to as irresponsible expression" (Waghid, 2009). Citizenship education should teach students to shun hate speech that victimises other citizens. This cement the perception of (Hoskins and Crick, 2010) who opined that citizenship involves responsible participation where one respects other people's human rights. (Gutman, 2003) argues that free expression must not be an unconstrained license to discriminate. In fact, citizenship education must not only teach citizens

that they have rights and freedoms but responsibilities too. In Zimbabwe, young people often reflect an emotional and violent trait of participation through use of hate speech against the elderly, participating in violent demonstration and elite sponsored electoral politics (Mude, 2014). However, caution must be made for confusing safe expression for responsible expression. Safe expression does not imply avoiding sensitive though relevant discussions (Waghid, 2009).

It is of importance to note that humanistic orientation, according to (Garrett, 2008) mould an individual who is critical and lucid to community development wants and is less prone to partake in violence but endorses values of dialogue, compromise, accommodativeness and will favour non-violent means in solving conflicts. (Benhabib, 2004) talks of democratic citizenship education, in which citizens are aware “of their right to political participation, the right to hold offices, perform certain tasks, and the right to deliberate and decide upon certain questions.” Hence a classroom climate must cultivate a culture of debate and tolerance and ensure that citizens that citizens are able to build consensus and understanding difference through active engagement. The establishment of the civil space is encouraged to ensure that learners realise these values.

#### **2.5.4 Informal Citizenship Education**

Farahani 2014 defines informal education as all educational activities which are done out of school and university formal education system with centralized aims. Informal education systems in the traditional African systems were aimed at, among other things, passing on cultural values, norms, and knowledge skills from one generation to the next. The youth were taught to preserve their cultural identity. To (Hoskins and Crick, 2010) such citizenship education would address the knowledge, skills and values needed in order to understand the differences in culture and identities to develop an egalitarian and inclusive approach to life. On various settings the youth were trained on how to engage within the state. In Zimbabwe the ‘*matare*’ system of a gathering between young men and their elderly male counterparts is a common practice. It provides a platform where young men are taught to be brave, to provide for the family and defend their communities. Though the practice is slowly diminishing it is rich in promoting social cohesion and a culture of dialogue. (Ngozwana, 2017) wrote that informal citizenship education “is flexible and uses various institutions as learning centres.

On the same footing, within the Shona culture the use of mature language was a common practice at the ‘*matare*’. The elderly people were observed to use proverbs to pass certain values

to the young people thus citizenship education. For instance, a proverb like *'chenga ose manhanga hapana risina modzi'* which translate to mean that you need to observe every pumpkin because all of them have seeds. The proverb implied the values of reciprocal respect and tolerance which are instrumental to dialogues and facilitates quality engagement and eventually citizenship. Proverbs like *'gudo guru peta muswe kuti vadiki vakutye'* which translate to mean the elderly baboon must roll down its tail to earn respect from its young ones. This implied that respect is reciprocal and discouraged teacher centred-ness manner of learning by encouraging the teachers or elders to administer advice or citizenship education with respect as to role model the young ones to do the same. According to (Ngozwana, 2017) informal education is therefore administered sometimes unconsciously through modelling, imitation, and mentoring and uses people's experiences, hence it is locally relevant and a lifelong learning process.

Despite this rich culture, the modern society and the dynamics of culture erosion and acculturation the practice started to slowly die. Owing to fundamental shifts in classical family systems and educational practices in Africa, countries such as Zimbabwe have come to recognise the need for including societal values and norms, ethics, morals, and responsibilities in the whole school curricula in order to inculcate value systems and maintain the national legacy and cultural heritage. One strategy for achieving the desired cultural ethos is implementing a deliberate citizenship education programme which would be incorporated into the formal education system. However, citizenship education remains invaluable to be inculcated through informal learning such as extra curricula activities like sport and civic meetings. Besides the transmission of the cultural norms and values, informal education incorporates humanitarian issues such as inclusion of people with disabilities in social processes thus expediting the formation of interest groups and civic organisations. In the same vein, the informal education programme is flexible to cater for the needs of learners with special needs.

While informal citizenship education has the capacity to improve the socio-political and economic advancement of a country, in Zimbabwe the government has hijacked the civic space and devised a politicised strategy to facilitate it. Through initiating the indoctrination programmes like National Youth Service commonly known as the Border Gezi youth training centres the ethos of citizenship education has been lost (Nyakudya, 2007). Even though (Mavhunga et al., 2012) notes that citizenship is the fourth pillar of democracy alongside the legislature, judiciary and executive, in Zimbabwe, for informal education to be able to improve

the quality of democracy in the country it must be de-politicised and re-aligned to the intended national ethos and ideals. The informal education strategy needs to inculcate values and norms that facilitate nation building and shun partisan political orientation. The government in Zimbabwe must disinvest concentration from troubleshooting problems and forestall them through quality citizenship education. Citizenship education is an interdisciplinary body of knowledge on civil roles within the political, economic, social, ecological and cultural context of a country.

Informal citizenship education is crucial in addressing the contextual needs for active citizens. According to (Ngozwana, 2017) “it is offered through part-time with short course and other organised and creative and rapid activities...it is locally relevant and a lifelong learning process.” This triggers the emergence of the civic and social groups in the discussion of citizenship education as they appear to compliment the formal education through providing civic education to various interest groups to exercise their citizenship rights and dutiful responsibilities. In Zimbabwe the civic organisation has been doing a tremendous job in mobilising and training the youth to exercise their citizenship rights such as voting, running for public office and holding the duty bearers to account. The organizations at the same time can be found wanting on two accounts notably, creating a better but still a passive citizen, and for facilitating the regime change agenda.

On first account, the observation made by (RAU, 2018, Musarurwa, 2018) that in Zimbabwe the youth are present and not yet engage, voters and not yet citizens reflects how the citizens are still in lack of other crucial citizenship values. The assumption is that while the civic organisations are doing a good job to draw the youth to the civic and political arena, they could be still employing teacher-centred approaches in their administration of citizenship education. (Kubow, 2007) warns that citizenship education must be contextual, but in most cases civic organizations tends to adopt western models that please their donors. Hence, often the regime of ZANU PF accuses them of the second thus of championing regime change to please the interests of their donors. Reflective is the later statement of (Musarurwa, 2018) that they are now voters and not yet citizens. In other words, while voting is a dutiful and citizenship right, but it must be exercised objectively. Other civic organizations are also challenged for partisan implementation of their programs through excluding ZANU PF youth thus triggering more tension and violence amongst the youth. Hence informal education can also be insufficient to produce a quality citizen.

From the above analyses an important debate arises on formal and informal civic education with scholarly work presenting the two as diverging and insufficient. This research established a converging ground for the two serving a complementary role and facilitating active citizenship.

## **2.6 Chapter Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed the development of active citizenship concepts and its critical virtues such as respect, tolerance, and patriotism. It further established the importance of studying citizenship virtues among the youth in the fraternity of peacebuilding. It discussed the nexus between discrimination against youth in democratic processes, unemployment or poverty, and poor social service delivery with youth involvement in violent processes like political violence, violent civic demonstrations, and social service protests. It ended by discussing how participatory action research is an alternative and a missing model in emancipating the youth in Gweru.

## **CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This research bands together theoretical insights of the social systems theory (Jackson 1985, Izadi *et al* 2020), social entrepreneurship behaviour theory (Ebrashi 2013, Tauber 2019) and the youth bulge theory (Beehner 2010, Hendrixon 2014, Tlou 2016) to frame the study towards understanding the challenges to and the solutions for improving citizenship virtues among youth in Gweru. The youth bulge theory is key in examining why young people engage in violence.

### **3.2 Youth Bulge Theory**

The youth bulge theory helps in framing an understanding why the increase in number of youth against their marginalisation in decision making and limited access to opportunities creates conflicts (Tlou 2019). According to Lin (2012: page?), “the youth bulge is a common phenomenon in many developing countries and it is often due to a stage of development where a country achieves success in reducing infant mortality but mothers still have a high fertility rate.” Generally, this entails the ballooning of the community of young adults, and Zimbabwe is a good case. However, Lin (2012: page?) notes that “if a large cohort of young people cannot find employment and earn satisfactory income, the youth bulge will become a demographic bomb, because a large mass of frustrated youth is likely to become a potential source of social and political instability.” As such, the theory is critical in understanding how such frustrations need to be managed through instilling citizenship values among young people so that they protest their anger in a peaceful way.

The massive engagement of young people in conflicts such as political violence, poor social service delivery protests and civil war is largely connected to the bulging youth dividend (Hendrixon 2003; Beehner 2010). The theory records numerous drivers of youth engagement in violence as a consequence of a youth bulge; these include rapid urbanisation, educational expansion, youth unemployment, marginalisation, and economic and political frustrations (Jagietto and Heijden 2011; Weber 2019). This makes the theory relevant in this this study, which seeks to examine youth participation in violence and how citizenship virtues are integral in managing such violent actions. This study was carried out in Gweru, an urban city growing

rapidly due to urbanisation, which is affecting social service delivery (Makunde *et al* 2018; Matsa, Mavugara and Dzawanda 2019).

Using the lens of the youth bulge theory, this study will frame an investigation aiming to explain why the youth participate in social service protests which often turn violent. According to Beehner (2010), rapid urbanisation is a critical factor that creates an environment in which the youth become entangled in social service protests because cities across the developing world lack the infrastructure, resources, or jobs to accommodate the influx of rural people. In Zimbabwe, rapid population growth and urbanisation in cities like Gweru has made the existing infrastructure and resources incapable of meeting the social service delivery needs of the people (Matsa, Mavugara and Dzawanda 2019). Marumahoho and Afolabi (2020) mention poor water supply, deteriorating road networks and poor healthcare as key challenges affecting the urban areas. In Gweru, the establishment of more than 6 new residential areas, such as Ascot Infill, Extension, Woodlands, and Charlton Park. among others, has exacerbated the water shortage problem (Matsa, Mavugara and Dzawanda 2019; Jachi et al. 2020). The Gweru Municipality did not expand its water bodies and supply systems but resorted to a water rationing system which has proved not to work (Matsa, Mavugara and Dzawanda 2019). This makes the area vulnerable to social service protests; Jagietto and Heijden (2011) say young people are likely to participate if the trigger for a protest is provided.

A high employment rate is another factor that drives youth engagement in violence as articulated in the youth bulge theory (Hendrixon 2003). In Zimbabwe there is a high unemployment rate amidst well-educated youth and a large volume of graduates. According to Maulani and Agwanda (2020: page?) there is statistical dispute regarding youth unemployment in Zimbabwe. The government states that unemployment has been “ranking below 10% in the last decade whereas economic analysts and the media commonly infer to unemployment rates as high as 80-85 percent and are heavily informal.” However, it is generally agreed that most youth in Zimbabwe are not formally employed. Consequently, citizens blame the government for failing to effectively administer the political economy (Resnick and Thurlow 2015; Oosterom and Gukurume 2019).

Youth unemployment and clientelism are central issues in the youth bulge theory, which explains youth participation in politically-motivated violence. When the youth are unemployed with failed entrepreneurship opportunities, they became vulnerable to manipulation in which their energy and numbers can be purchased as cheap political violence labour (Urdal 2006,

2012). In Zimbabwe, the youth are largely unemployed, and the government has a record of destabilising their entrepreneurship ventures such as vending (Musoni 2010; Mutami and Gambe 2015). On the other hand, Mude (2014: 113) writes that

*Urban youth out of work in Zimbabwe are at very high risk of political violence as they are targeted by political leaders who give them incentives to unleash political violence on the electorate. A build-up youth bulge in Zimbabwe has provided fertile ground for recruitment and conscription of youth militia that participate in politically motivated violence during election times.*

This has made the youth intolerant of others and caused them to victimise each other in elite-sponsored political violence. It also confirms how youth engage in governance process which do not represent their ideas and interests.

The theory suggests that this is further exacerbated by the increased post-primary education enrolment which consequently outpaces the labour market's capacity to absorb young graduates, and exposes young people to political literature which reinforces young people's agency in challenging failing governments (Urdal 2012; Matsumoto 2015). In Zimbabwe, most young people obtain secondary and tertiary education, but the industries are closed, making the labour market weak in meeting the demands and expectations of the youth cohort. Caruso and Schneider (2011) note that the decline in industries is a delicate issue in assessing youth engagement in violence. Educated but unemployed youth are sometimes exposed to politically-enlightening studies, like the liberation war history in Zimbabwe which glorifies youthful Zimbabweans (who are now the old guard) playing a pivotal role in fighting the colonial government. Some are even privileged to the French and American Revolution which inculcates the idea of confronting bad governments. This stimulates their quest to address their widespread grievances which can turn into political tension (Weber 2019).

The youth bulge theory even associates youth involvement in violent protests with their marginalisation from political leadership processes through autocracy (Hendrixon 2003; Tlou 2016). According to Jagietto and Heijden (2011: 33), "when large youth groups aspiring to political positions are excluded from participation in the political process, they may engage in violent conflict behavior in an attempt to force democratic reform." In Zimbabwe, young people are constantly expressing their dissatisfaction with the government through creating pressure groups such as Tajamuka, #ThisFlag Movement and Not Too Young to Run (Musarurwa 2016, 2018). Musarurwa argues that in Zimbabwe, the entitlement mentality in the ruling party has alienated the citizens who are thus harbouring resentment, anger and vengeance.



The theory is also important in understanding gender variances in youth participation in conflict and violence. It places male dominance in political violence as a factor influenced by patriarchy. According to Tlou (2016), the patriarchal mindset is not yet entirely eradicated from society. Political leaders continue to be treated as fathers stifling active youth participation, ruling through some sort of divine ordinance. Consequently, the ageing leadership is reluctant to give opportunities to younger, educated and energetic people (Ndebele and Billing 2011). Any gesture of self-determination is perceived as an act of rebellion, leading in some cases to incarceration, treason charges or worse (Sachikonye 2011; Musarurwa 2018). According to Sachikonye (2011), in situations where the state has ceased to provide services to its citizens, its authority has to rely on the strength of the army and police. On the other hand, male youth seek to exhibit courage and challenge the government through violent means (Bloom, Canning and Sevellia 2003). This is evident in Zimbabwe, where youth organisations that challenge the government are largely male-led, such as the Tajamuka and This Flag movement (Hodgkinson 2013; Musarurwa 2018).

However, the theory fails to explain the presence of bold female youth activists in challenging the government. In Zimbabwe one cannot ignore the work of Namatai Kwekweza, Johanna Mamombe, Cecilia Chimberi, Maurene Kademaunga and Fadzayi Mahere, among others. In addition, the theory does not sufficiently explain what really shapes youth citizenship virtues apart from their reactionary engagement in violence. On the other hand, the social system theory offers an explanation of what shapes youth virtues, knowledge, attitudes, and skills.

### **3.3 Social Systems**

The social systems theory was propounded by Luhmann (1987) as a hypothesis designed to understand human behaviour, organisational evolution and, most importantly, social order. The theory is crucial in complementing the youth bulge theory because it implies that human and organisational behaviour cannot be analysed in isolation of their environment (Görke and Schol 2006). According to Luhmann (1995), human beings act according to situations. He implies a sociological analysis of human actions and further articulates the importance of observing the process of attribution. This is critical in this research to understand what influences youth knowledge, attitudes, and actions such as engaging in political violence, violent civic demonstrations, and social service protests.

To Luhmann (1995), a social system is comprised of communications and their attributions as actions. This gives a presumption that young people's actions are influenced by the message

they get from environmental proceedings such as education, economy and politics. Mattheis (2012: page?) concurs with this line of thinking and asserts that “the social systems theory communicate about the environment such as the legal system and observes changes of the political, educational or economic system.” This guides this study through informing the need to understand the influence of the social, economic, and political climate in Zimbabwe and its influence on youth vulnerability to political clientelism, participation in violence and social service protests. It ultimately facilitates the understanding of the development of civic virtues through social interactions.

The social systems theory claims that human beings do not exist “on an island”; rather, their development is a product of interactions with other systems (Shaffer and Kipper 2009). This entails that young people who participate in violence with poor citizenship virtues are a product of societal systems. The study has learnt that a number of factors contribute to influencing youth behaviour, attitudes and knowledge. These influences include proxies of socialisation, most importantly education. Ngozwana (2017) argues that the education curriculum, together with the classroom climate, can determine the development of citizenship virtues amongst the youth. For instance, the citizenship curriculum in Zimbabwe glorifies ZANU-PF and its revolutionary record, creating a biased perspective of patriotism among the youth to the extent of believing that loving ZANU-PF is the highest of patriotism, whereas challenging it proves otherwise (Taruberekera 2017). Hence, youth affiliated to ZANU-PF are intolerant of other political outfits in a democracy, thus creating disunity amongst young people.

According to Izadi *et al* (2020), every system or subsystem has its own goals, and for systems to achieve these goals it is implied that they have components that facilitate the achievement of these set goals. This research has examined the socio-economic and political environment in Zimbabwe and its ultimate effect on youth engagement in violence. This has been done alongside an analysis of the citizenship education programmes like the National Youth Service, Political Economy and National Strategic Studies (McGovern 2010; Mhike 2017). This environment and type of citizenship education has influenced or influences the development of civic knowledge, values, skills, attitudes, and behaviour in young people. For example, the deteriorating social and economic situation in Zimbabwe, alongside corruption, has influenced young people to believe that the political elite do not care about their social welfare (Oosterom and Pswarayi 2014; Maringira and Gukurume 2020). Consequently, some have joined violent protest movements, to exercise their constitutional and democratic right to demand accountability from the political leadership (Musarurwa 2016). However, in most cases these

demonstrations and protest have exhibited criminal elements such as destruction of property, looting and other crimes. At the same time, the perennial political violence in Zimbabwe has constantly internalised the attribute of violence across the political divide (Mude 2014; Mwonzora and Hodzi 2021).

The social systems theory regards human beings as basic elements of a system which is determined by a set of relationships (Hall and Fagen 1956: 18). This entails that human social behaviour is influenced by relationships. For example, in the political setup of Zimbabwe, youth are found to be influenced by their political leaders to engage in violence (Mude 2014). Schlippe and Hermann (2013: 388) discussed the actor-centred view within social systems theory and noted that the behaviour of a system is influenced by its elements. It also argues that people, like pieces on a chess board, can be moved around according to their status. For example, in Zimbabwe young people are victims of unemployment, poverty and clientelism. Their economic status has made it easier for the political elite to purchase their energy to perpetrate political violence. Mude (2014: 117) wrote

*[that] young people during elections ...are forced to participate in political violence has been observed in Zimbabwe. They have been used to target other youths and their fellow Zimbabweans. Instead of the politicians guiding the young to be embodiments of positive energy, morality and diligence for national development, these misguided blood thirsty power-mongers turn them into political thugs for narrow political agendas.*

This confirms that young people are weaker players in a system because of their poor economic muscle; and hence, like little pawns on the chess board, are traded to protect the king who represents the political elites.

The theory annotates that the environment in which elements of a system exist is instrumental in influencing reality by means of what is generally taught or communicated. According to Luhmann (1995), social systems share an important aspect that young people depend on: meaning construction. The meaning construction hypothesis is where people gain understanding through practical experience rather than what they are taught, for example in class (Luhmann 1987). For instance, in Zimbabwe what is learnt in school and what young people experience in the process of becoming adults is sometimes conflicting. In Zimbabwe, the ideal democracy young people learn when they are in school is far different from the reality they experience from a highly militarised state, where appraising the government is equated to an act of treason, and elections are held without meaning, (Chari 2017; Musarurwa 2018).

The social systems theory promotes a clear examination of the Zimbabwean political and economic environment through which citizenship values are influenced, such as social cohesion, patriotism and community belongingness (Jackson 1985). According to Çakmaklı (2015 and Peterson and Bentley (2017), the theory is employable in analysing communities, agencies, institutions, and movements in any form. The social systems theory concedes the existence of community influencers and their functions and diversity, thus making it more relevant to this study in understanding the influencers of youth civic values or their engagement in violence. (Golob and Makarovic 2017) are of the view that societies are a blend of relatively autonomous but mutually interdependent units which are functional, such as politics, education and the economy. For example, the militarisation of the civic space and the use of violence by the government has made the youth believe that violence is the only means to challenge the government incompetence after a series of undemocratic elections (Hove and Harris 2015; Chigora and Chilunjika 2016).

On the other hand, youth disengagement from the governance and development processes, such as national and municipal budget consultative processes, has been further exacerbated by the economic meltdown characterised by the high unemployment rate. According to Chirisa and Muchini (2011:2), “unemployment in youth is therefore a form of deprivation which robs youth of the benefit of work and represents a dark era in personal and social development of the youth.” It has caused detrimental behaviour such as non-attendance at community meetings in pursuit of self-enriching business ventures and at times practising tax evasion because of unregistered informal businesses such as vending (Macheka and Masuku 2019). In Gweru, the youth’s failure to own houses has made it reasonable for them to avoid council meetings where pertinent issues like rates are discussed (Chikerema 2013). This growing individualism, poor patriotism, and poor social capital amongst young people is a cause of concern.

The theory further suggests that the improvement of systems is critical in order to obtain change of product, and in this study one can refer to the violent behaviour of the youth. Burnham (2012) wrote that social systems theory “looks at problems within the systems of relationship in which they occur and aims to promote change by intervening in the broader system [rather] than in the individual one.” This means youth behaviour, attitudes, and skills should not be examined in the broader sense of their influencers. This also entails that the endeavour to improve their citizenship virtues should be holistic, thus taking cognisance of their enablers and inhibitors.

However, the theory does not give sufficient strategies on how a complex system of socialisation can be changed to improve youth citizenship virtues that can deter them from engaging in violence. For instance, in Zimbabwe, the education system has some shortfalls and it remains under the control of the authoritarian government, which is also failing to revive the economy and taking advantage of young people's economic status to use them as weapons of political violence (Mude 2014). At the same time, elections have proved not to work to change the government system and replace it with a better one, which is also not guaranteed (Chigora and Chilunjika 2016). Hence, the social entrepreneurship theory is read together with the social systems theory to guide this study in soliciting solutions to youth engagement in violence.

### **3.4 Social Entrepreneurship Behaviour Theory**

This research is further guided by the social entrepreneurship behaviour theory of Ebrashi (2013), which maintains the effectiveness of social enterprises in improving citizenship values among the youth such as patriotism, unity, respect and tolerance. The theory focuses on the behavioural factors that define and lead an individual into contributing to the common good. The social entrepreneurship behaviour theory helps to understand how young people can be assisted to improve their citizenship values in a more peaceful or progressive way, particularly in an authoritarian environment (Tauber 2019). According to Fındıklı and Yozgat (2018), the theory has its roots in the work of Bowen in 1953, when he argued that social entrepreneurs need to deal with social responsibility issues that overlap with the values of society. The theory champions? the nexus of social innovations in creating social change and social relationships or collaborations (Phipps 2012; Fındıklı and Yozgat 2018). The theory emphasises adopting the social entrepreneur behaviour in initiating social change, either by learning from the enterprise model itself or traits such as collaborations, thought-based action and love for community.

According to Tauber (2019: 2), a social enterprise is a “small scalable business that will lead to economic empowerment and political participation in the target population.” Economic empowerment and political participation are key issues that need to be revived among the youth in Gweru, Zimbabwe. This research has noted that in Zimbabwe there is a strong relationship between youth unemployment or poverty and political violence (Mude 2014; Maringira and Gukurume 2020). Unemployed youth are vulnerable to clientelism, and political violence (Weber 2019). And their selfish entrepreneurship ventures have led them to disengage from community governance processes such as attending municipal budget consultative processes

or public hearings on national bills (Maringira and Gukurume 2020). To Tueber (2019), social enterprises are helpful in creating employment for the youth while serving their community needs. When the youth have a source of income, they can resist manipulation by the political elites, which causes them to participate in violence. This will eventually boost their patriotic skills through a deeper connection with the community.

While most youth in Gweru have limited access to capital to start their enterprises, the social entrepreneurship behaviour theory encourages youth to leverage on social capital. The theory perceives social entrepreneurs as agents of change in society, who are relentless in pursuing missions that create and sustain social values without being limited by resources (Dees 2001; Martin and Osberg 2007). In other words, social entrepreneurs thrive on social capital in creating social values, and one of their goals includes social cohesion. Amidst the failing economy, with embedded individualism through self-centred entrepreneurship businesses by the youth, the theory suggests how the youth can translate their efforts for survival in a more collective and community-rooted way (Kujur 2020). This will subsequently stimulate their sense of unity and tolerance. It validates the assumption that young people can still commit themselves to state or community development while simultaneously pursuing their economic goals.

Through their deep innovations, they can be active citizens employing business models to address social ills. Tracey (2010) concurs with this assessment, and notes that social entrepreneurship might not be a standalone discipline but is capable of creating a social value, which helps local people to resolve social problems. Social ills are not limited to immoral acts such as drugs and prostitution, but can also include poor social service delivery such as poor road network systems and limited water supply (Ebrashi 2013). In Gweru, limited water supply and poor road networks are among the challenges that affect the city and young people have been part of the dissenting voice against the Gweru City Municipalities over their consistent failure to resolve the challenges (Matsa, Mavugara and Dzawanda 2019). Instead of young people continuing as dissenting voices lamenting the social ills, social entrepreneurship behaviour theory implores young people to be solution-bearers through innovative enterprises to address social ills, for example road pothole fillings using waste materials from industries and getting financial and other resource support from the community.

The idea of social capital in social entrepreneurship promotes collective responsibility and unity among the youth through making them partners in community development and

governance (Kujur 2020). When youth are able to combine their energy in working for the common good, they will create friendships that build up the spirit of respect and tolerance, they will be able to work together, and this will influence them not to fight each other in political violence. According to ESCAP (2018), “social enterprises favor inclusion of the most vulnerable and marginalized and provide an avenue for those left behind a platform for voice and economic participation.” Social entrepreneurship allows a wider stakeholder engagement to address social ills, and this can include creating a space for dialogue between the youth and policy makers, thus mending relationships. When youth are coming on board, for example with an innovative social enterprise to office bearers, this validates their importance as equal stakeholders in a democracy, rather than coming as complainants. This has been critical in this research, which involved young people in Gweru disengaged from community development and governance processes.

In Zimbabwe, youth have grown tired of interventions that do not last forever. (Tauber 2019) commends the theory for “creative destruction” principle, which entails scrutinising the existing resistors of change and championing social innovation. Championing social innovation can be referred to as a space that facilitates a sense of democracy and volunteerism (Tauber 2019). The theory views young people as optimistic, emotionally resilient and having mental energy; they are hard workers, show intense commitment and perseverance, thrive on competitive desire to excel and win, tend to be dissatisfied with the status quo (like poor social service delivery) and desire improvement (Ebrashi 2013). Young people as entrepreneurs are also transformational in nature, are lifelong learners and use failure as a tool and a springboard. In other words, the theory suggests redirecting youth energy towards more progressive things than political violence (Simpeh 2011). The research strives to make young people realise their role as game changers and engage themselves in activities that improve the community and promote social change. When youth realign their energy to social change, their sense of patriotism will be developed.

The theory regards social entrepreneurship as a viable intervention that promotes active citizenship in an authoritarian environment in which civic society activities are restricted (Barari 2015; Tauber 2019). Social enterprises are therefore recommended as the best alternatives to engage young people in community development, governance, and leadership activities through their minimal political connotations (Tauber 2019). In this research it has been observed that in Zimbabwe the government has a bad relationship with some civic society organisations. The National Association of Youth Organizations (2021) has stated that

*We note with concern the continued shrinking of civic space in Zimbabwe, in form of arrests, detention, harassment of youth activists and student leaders. The continued detention of Student Leader Allan Moyo remains a cause for concern in a constitutionally guided democratic country. The lack of involvement, lack of dialogue between the government and Youth CSOs on the strategy to contain the virus need urgent attention.*

Hence, empowering youth through social enterprises has been considered most viable because there are fewer political constraints. This is critical in Zimbabwe, where the youth are afraid to engage with civic society organisations because of their history of victimisation.

The theory is cognisant of Ferreira's view that meaningful engagement with people requires mutual respect, where people are treated as equals and as subjects rather than objects (Ferreira 1970: 72). Hence it is crucial in understanding and informing action research, which strengthens citizenship traits like tolerance and respect. The sociological elements of the theory are of importance in the refocusing of citizenship education and stimulation of youth activism, since they focus on the social context and the level of analysis in the society (Simpheh 2011). Reynolds (1971) has identified four social contexts that relate to entrepreneurial opportunity. The first one is social networks: here, the focus is on building social relationships and bonds that promote trust and not opportunism. In other words, the entrepreneur should not take undue advantage of the situation in the community so as to be successful; rather, success comes as a result of keeping faith with the people. This alone is an expression of patriotism. The second he called "the life course stage context", which involves analysing the life situations and characteristics of individuals who have decided to become entrepreneurs. The experiences of people could influence their thoughts and actions, so that they want to do something meaningful with their lives. This is imperative, given that the research engages youth with different experiences, some which have been retrogressive and contrary to their expectations, forcing them to retreat from participating in key governance and community development activities, and at times engaging in violence.

The third context given by Reynolds (1991) is ethnic identification. One's sociological background is one of the decisive "push" factors to becoming an entrepreneur. For example, the social background of a person determines how far he/she can go. Marginalised groups may violate all obstacles and strive for success, spurred on by their disadvantaged background to make life better. This, in other words, explains the variation in determination by the youth to influence the democratic space. For example, youth who never had an opportunity to be engaged in Gweru, would be more interested in participating in social enterprises that are



meaningful. The fourth social context is called population ecology. The idea is that environmental factors play an important role in the survival of businesses. The political system, government legislation, customers, employees and competition are some of the environmental factors that may have an impact on the survival of a new venture or the success of the entrepreneur. The same thinking is applicable in studying active citizenship, in which the environment which might be the economic and civic space influences the youth differently in becoming active citizens.

According to Tracey (2010), social entrepreneurship helps community members, especially the youth, to be involved in the local community decision-making and governance of the social enterprise. These youth are active citizens who can engage progressively using stamina and dialogical skills to manoeuvre within the constrained space and influence social change. For example, in Gweru, when youth are involved in social enterprises they are likely to be motivated to participate in community decision-making processes such as municipality budgets and legislators' feedback meetings, to influence the decisions that are in line with their enterprises. This creates social value and peace by fostering community engagement through active participation and dialogue. Hence, social entrepreneurship behaviour theory is critical in improving citizenship virtues among the youth.

### **3.5 Chapter Conclusion**

In summary, the chapter has outlined which theories were used and how they guided the research. The youth bulge theory has guided the understanding of the effects of increased youth population vis-à-vis the resources and opportunities available. It has been critical in flagging up how this is central in conflicts and youth involvement in violence. The social systems theory aided in understanding the effects of socialisation and systems such as citizenship education and programmes like NYS on the youth. Lastly, the social entrepreneurship behaviour theory presented guidance on how to improve citizenship virtues among the youth in an autocratic state.

## **CHAPTER 4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **4. 1 Introduction**

This chapter contains a discussion on the research methodology which was employed in this study. It discusses the research design adopted, including the study population, sampling method, data collection tools, reliability, and analysis. It will discuss the motivation behind the adoption of this research design and outline the limitations and ethical considerations that were observed. In order to meet the set research objectives, this study has used the qualitative research approach to gather accurate data with regards to the knowledge, feelings, and attitudes of youth in Gweru concerning active citizenship and violence. It used focus group discussions and in-depth interviews to gather information about active citizenship among the youth in Gweru.

### **4. 2 Study Design**

According to Durrheim (2004), a research design is a strategic framework for action that assists the researcher to answer research questions through informing the execution strategy. In other words, a research design concentrates primarily on the aim, purpose, intention, strategies and practical limitations of the study (Henn, Weinstein and Foard 2009). Therefore, this study is designed as qualitative study in the form of a participatory action research which is anchored on improving active citizenship virtues among the youth in Gweru. Participatory action research is a dynamic educative process, an approach to social investigation, and an approach to engage in a socio-political action (Reason and Bradbury 2001; Baldwin 2012). This makes it suitable, because literature has informed the study that active citizenship is a concept that is largely influenced by socio-political processes.

Since the research goal is to improve citizenship virtues and, ultimately, active citizenship among the youth, qualitative research becomes more applicable because it reveals the nature of certain situations, settings, processes, relationships, systems, and people (Leedy and Ormrod 2001). It has therefore assisted in unearthing the causes of poor and good active citizenship among the youth in Gweru, and the possible socio-political actions to improve it. As also noted by Leedy and Ormrod (2001), qualitative research methodology enables a researcher to gain insights about the nature of a particular phenomenon and to develop new concepts. The

participatory action research adopted has been aimed at empowering the youth in Gweru to realise their agency and peacefully engage in social, economic, and political activities of their community.

Wittmayer and Schöpke (2014) note that participatory action research facilitates progressive learning processes, initiating short-term actions and networking, motivating, and enabling participants to address local challenges. This made it suitable for this study because it has the capacity to facilitate the youth's accrual or realisation of some of the critical civic virtues pertinent to the active citizenship exercise. It has the ability to create a space to motivate the youth in Gweru to peacefully participate in community development activities with the goal of activating the sense of responsibility and unity. In other words, participatory action research is not only qualitative, but democratic, equitable, and liberating, thus making it the most appropriate for this research (Freire 1985; Balakrishnan and Claiborne 2016).

### **4.3 Study Population**

The study engaged 14 youth in Gweru for the action research, who have resided in the area for the past five years. The participants engaged had an experience of living in Gweru and were thus conversant with the socio-economic and political dynamics of the research geography. I considered gender balance (male and female) and location (high- and low-density suburbs) in sample selection to ensure a fair representation of the Gweru youth community. The youth group considered in this study is young people between the ages of 18 and 35 years. This is despite the Constitutional provisions which restrict the youth group to young people between 15 and 35 years (Constitution of Zimbabwe 2013). The reason why youth below the age of 18 were not included is that the youth within this range are minors and for ethical reasons they were not involved.

### **4.4 Sampling Procedure**

Purposive sampling was used to select youth who hold Zimbabwean citizenship and have stayed in Gweru for five years in either the high- or low-density suburbs. According to Mason (2002:124), purposive sampling entails “selecting groups or categories to study on the basis of their relevance to your research questions, your theoretical position and analytical framework, your analytical practice, and most importantly the argument or explanation that you are developing”. This concurs with the assertion of Elder (2009) that purposive sampling is embedded in the idea of who is in the group and where that person is located within the group;

hence, this research targeted young people who are Zimbabwean citizens because they hold the right to vote. The requirement that one should have lived in Gweru for at least five years is premised on the assumption that youth are mobile, and the five years coincides with the time since Zimbabwe had last held a general election. The sample consisted of 7 males and 7 females with a fair representation of the above-mentioned locations. Participants were not discriminated against for their gender, religious views, political affiliation or any social classification (Downes *et al* 2015; Islamia and Delhi 2016).

Participants were targeted through churches, student bodies and youth organisations. The plan was to identify participants who represented a diverse group of people and who all had “tacit knowledge of the rules, conventions and stocks of knowledge that they use and draw on in everyday life” (Atkinson and Pugsley 2005: page?). I employed the referral strategy of engaging leaders of these institutions, and outlined the study purpose and expected participant requirements as per the sample study design (Islamia and Delhi 2016). Thereafter, after referrals, I distributed the recruitment forms.

#### **4.5 Data Collection**

I used qualitative data collection tools, focus group discussions and interviews (Ram 2010). The tools were administered in English to gather information about the experiences (enhancements, hindrances and avenues) and understanding (what they perceive it should be like) of active citizenship among the youth in Gweru (Ram 2010). The tools were appropriate in soliciting youth thoughts and feelings on what affected their behaviour, more particularly their participation in political violence and civic protests (Sutton and Austin 2019). Since the study pursued the participatory action research course, the structure adopted was set to guide the active participation of the youth discussion of their challenges and give recommendations for the same, in line with the objectives of this study.

Nyumba *et al* (2018) defines a focus group discussion as an assembly of individuals who discuss a specific topic, aiming to draw from the complex personal experiences, beliefs, perceptions and attitudes through a moderated interaction. This was a critical guide for this study, since it was premised on understanding the complex personal experiences of the youth in Gweru in exercising their citizenship rights and what has motivated the growth of intolerance, disrespect, disunity, a low sense of patriotism and ultimately their engagement in violent processes (Mude 2014; Mhike 2017a). As noted by Nyumba *et al* (2018), focus group discussions help to understand human attitudes; thus the research saw fit to employ focus group

discussions to endeavour to gain a fair understanding of what was shaping the diminishing of citizenship values among the youth. I also explored their thoughts using the focus group discussion about the best course of action in designing an alternative to youth involvement in political violence as informed by Freire (1985) and Morgan (1996).

The focus group discussions were deemed more strategic in this research because they best mainstream participatory action research. According to Hohenthal *et al* (2015: page?), in focus group discussions, “unlike interviews, the researcher takes a peripheral, rather than a center-stage role.” This means that participants are given enough room to assume leadership and ultimately activate their decision-making power. This was deemed appropriate in this research, since I wanted to gain more insight into the youth knowledge of their challenges and subsequently give them room to decide on an alternative solution. Berkes (2004: page?) further articulates that “people’s perceptions and their socio- cultural situation is critical to decision-making...since most people derive their notions, mental constructions and interpretations from their immediate surroundings.” He went on to assert that focus group discussions help participants to discuss from that socio-cultural situation. In this research the socio-cultural situation can be seen as the socio-economic and political experience and status quo that influences youth attitudes and behaviour.

However, I noted that focus group discussions alone are limiting, in the sense that some interesting stories cannot be pursued in a group because they can be sensitive (Durrheim 2004). Complementarily, I also used interviews to gather in-depth experiences on causes and hindrances of active citizenship amongst the youth in Gweru. In interviews I focused more on individual experiences in practical situations such as public meetings, community-organised demonstration or influenced political action. I guided the participants to share their ideas, thoughts and memories as suggested in Reinhardt (1996).

## **4.6 Data Analysis**

The research employed coding, as suggested by DeSantis and Ugarriza (2000), to analyse qualitative data gathered through focus group discussions and interviews. The coding system allows the identification of key ideas, patterns and themes. Therefore, data was grouped together with regards to situations such as key drivers of youth engagement in violent activities, their thoughts on citizenship virtues, and alternatives to improve their civic values. According to DeSantis and Ugarriza (2000), themes act as an abstract entity that brings meaning and identity to a recurrent experience and variant manifestations. The themes include five aspects:

overall experience, basis of experience, function of experience, variability of manifestations of experience and recurrence of experience.

Charmaz (2006: 20-21) concurs with this data analysis strategy and further describes coding as imperative in analysing qualitative data as it notes “emerging ideas, draw[s] relationship diagrams and identifies keywords used by respondents frequently as indicators of important themes.” To this end, coding was chosen as the most appropriate data analysis method and the researcher considered coming up with a visual display of data through a table or graph. The researcher explored data through observing levels of agreement or disagreement amongst the research participants on the key questions asked. The themes were drawn from the range of issues, such as drivers of youth participation in violence, their understanding of citizenship virtues and how to improve them.

#### **4.7 Delimitations**

The research was done in Gweru and only involved youth who had stayed in Gweru for the past five years, that is from 2018, and who were between the ages of 18 and 35 years with respect to gender and suburb. Gweru is a city located in the midlands region of Zimbabwe; hence, it has both Shona and Ndebele people. It is currently considered a stronghold of the main opposition, with the record of having all councillors of the Gweru city council not from the ruling ZANU-PF party, and 3 out of 4 legislators of the city (ZEC 2018). This explains why the city is a target for state-engineered political violence, as witnessed in the post-2018 elections when many youths and two legislators from MDC-A were arbitrarily arrested in Gweru during the January shut-down protests (Solidarity Peace Trust 2019). Hence, I had it in mind that there could be high levels of fear and youth disengagement from public activities. Gweru is largely urban and its biggest industry, Zim-Alloys, is non-functional. Gweru is essentially a university town with four tertiary institutions that produce thousands of graduates every year. The presence of learning institutions is, however, paralleled with very few employment opportunities. As a result, young people engage in self-enriching activities, and are unregistered small businesses (Masvaure 2016).

#### **4.8 Limitations**

The study was designed to engage a very small population; therefore, the results cannot be generalised. However, the theoretical insights might be of use for communities in similar contexts.

## **4.9 Reliability and Validity**

To ensure validity and reliability of the researched data, purposive sampling was employed in selecting participants with regards to the study prerequisites, such as living in Gweru for five years, gender and location within Gweru. To ensure content reliability, evaluation of research instruments was exercised with the assistance of the research supervisor to ensure accurate and ethical data collection (Dwivedi 2005). The research also employed a tools complementarity strategy of pursuing unique individual stories via in-depth interviews as a mechanism to counter the weakness of each method, to get a better understanding of active citizenship (Huck 2007).

## **4.10 Ethical Considerations, Anonymity and Confidentiality**

Anonymity and confidentiality were ensured through advising participants before the study commenced that they could use pseudonyms during interviews and focus group discussions. Participants were also requested to keep the research information confidential through signing the consent form. No actual names are mentioned in the data presentation and analysis. Collected data was stored in a secure folder in a computer with passwords and copies shared with the department as a back-up. The data will be only used for the purposes of the study and deleted after 5 years, in accordance with the University Guidelines.

Ethical considerations refer to the expected and appropriate manner in which research is conducted (Nyumba *et al* 2018). Ethical considerations dictate that the research should not cause any harm to the research participants. In this research participants were notified of their rights and responsibilities as volunteers, no child was involved and all the DUT ethical considerations were followed.

## **4. 11 Participatory Action Research**

It is important to unpack participatory action research (PAR) as a concept, in terms of its meaning and objectives in the development of communities, particularly in improving societal values in people. Reason and Bradbury (2001b) define participatory action research as a procedure which rectifies pragmatic learning, and attempts to value effective human goals. Action, critical thinking, theory and practice are incorporated in the process of participatory action research. The concept has gained much traction in improving societies, but nothing has been done in the youth discipline in Gweru. Baldwin (2012) stated that participatory action research is a process which causes a marked modification, rather than a procedure which is

explanatory and instructional. It is worth noting that knowledge production is a community-based process which is generated through constructivist and consultative approaches. Dewey (1997) stated that in a participatory action research context, instructors should acquire knowledge or new skills in accordance with their teaching; for these to happen, they should promote a cooperation-based learning context that is beneficial for both teachers and students.

Reason and Bradbury (2001b) assert that participatory action research is a type of research in which researchers' immediate behaviours influence the knowledge implementation in a cooperative context. This entails an inclusive process of investigation. Furthermore, Wadsworth (1998) stated the importance of probing the issues which are concerned with the recent behaviour for establishing development. In a participatory action research, participants are involved in all the stages of the enquiry, instead of being treated as subjects or consumers of the study. Its procedure offers analytic comprehension and reflection on community problems, and because of this, participants can become more aware, independent and empowered, as stated by Bland and Atweh (2017). This is critical in the Zimbabwean context, as the challenges faced by young people with regards to citizenship education and lived realities are contextual and best known by them, and require their systematic engagement in transforming their attitudes, skills and knowledge.

As stated by Williams and Brydon (2004), consciousness-raising, critical examination, society-associated research and following actions for a community modification are different features which relate to participatory action research. Participatory action research gives special value to cooperation in communities which are ill-treated or repressed, such as the youth. It looks for solutions for unexpressed sources of social injustice in particular community issues (Bondy 2001). Hence, engendering knowledge and action which is channelled through inquiry and education is one of participatory action research's objectives. This is imperative in this study, since young people in Gweru should progressively realise their agency, accumulate civic virtues, and exercise their rights and responsibilities. According to Pain *et al* (2011), PAR is preferable over other participatory procedures because it is participation-based, and allows the youth to be autonomous and cooperate and modify the issue under investigation. For Zimbabwe to harness the benefits of citizenship education, participatory action research on active citizenship can be employed because it promotes critical thinking, exploration, and the scrutiny of social strata and the development of community-based modifications.



#### **4.11.1 PAR in Promoting Youth Citizenship Virtues**

According to Akin, Calik and Engin-Demir (2017: 38), “citizenship education must shift the focus from raising good citizens into equipping students with participation, collaboration, reflection and critical thinking skills.” While the general focus of any educational system is to strengthen the consciousness of the citizens in a society, it is imperative that states employ educational systems that advance critical thinking, life enhancement of individuals and modification of relationships and communities (Brydon-Miller, Greenwood and Maguire 2003). Participatory action research can be employed in community projects and educational settings to facilitate community change. Zimbabwe, in its education refocus agenda, needs to introduce participatory action research as the mainstay of citizenship education in community development programmes. Civic society groups can employ participatory action research in their youth empowerment programmes that intend to expedite active citizenship.

Generally, involvement in participatory action research processes make young people voice their opinions about the citizenship discontents, community problems and opportunities which they encounter in their lives and become more responsible in their own learning (Chandler and Torbert 2003). Understandably, employing participatory action research in citizenship education produces a warm environment for the youth to debate and dispute their findings, and this aids them to improve their cohesion skills. This naturally develops their civic skills to resolve conflicts without using violence (Bosin 2020). For instance, in Zimbabwe, when young people are empowered with democratic virtues like respect, tolerance and debate during participatory action research, they resolve their challenges amicably without using violence. The research conducted by Rubin and Jones (2007) established that participatory action research stimulates the construction of important engagement skills amongst disenfranchised youth. Hence, participatory action research motivates deprived youth to be more involved in transformation of themselves and their community, and is employable in Gweru.

According to Moore and Gayle (2010), learners’ involvement in participatory action research and their cooperation with the researcher establish a close and harmonic bond among them and help participants to have better collaboration skills and devotion to others. This is a critical component of participatory action research in developing patriotic virtues. This has the direct benefit of improved social capital and a sense of belonging. Roberts (2015) concurs that participatory action research enhances cooperation-based techniques and consequently generates participation and partnership between participants and researcher. In this instance, youth in Gweru were taught to value community interests over their personal interests so that

eventually the traits of patriotism will be developed. They will participate in other state activities such as elections, community decision-making forums like budgets, and voluntary clean up campaigns, among other issues.

It is important for a country to have vibrant citizenship educational programmes and systems that mould youths with high standards of critical thinking who are well-versed in the realities of community needs and problems (White 1996; Arthur 2020). It is worth noting that countries need to hinge their educational policy and strategy for citizenship education on participatory action research. The participatory action research educational model helps citizens to generate knowledge and change and develop settings for change instead of just being the victims of change (Morrell 2006). In a participatory action research learning environment, learners and instructors express their difficulties and issues and distinguish procedures for discovering solutions. This indirectly induces cooperation skills and social cohesion.

A study by Bland and Atweh (2017), concluded that a participatory action research-induced citizenship education framework helps in smoothing comprehension of community realities by the learners. This is essential among the youth in Gweru, whose experience is much-divorced from what they learnt in school. Participatory action research principles and strategies normally result in an improvement in consciousness about local community issues and spearheading informed action plans (Bosin 2020). According to Fine *et al* (2001), the youth can identify problems that usually go unnoticed by community leaders because they have different perspectives on issues and concerns. Young people can devise innovative suggestions for municipal advancement and encourage more youth participation. Participatory action research projects involving the youth help government and civic society organisations to utilise youth skills to their advantage.

Banks, Herrington and Carter (2017) provide a learner co-researcher model, which involves learners who plan and undertake research to investigate educational concerns in their communities. This way learners contribute to efforts for community development and assist the researchers to improve the learning environment. In terms of Zimbabwe, the redesign of citizenship education strategy, especially the curricula for the youth, needs to be informed by PAR principles that lead to stronger community partnership and encourage collaborative spirit and curiosity. These types of collaborative alliances can connect people so they can express their feelings and experiences in the community, hence leading to more progressive conversations. Subsequently, a participatory action research paradigm promotes interaction

between community stakeholders and allows stakeholders to implement reforms that are required for community well-being and to become more accountable for their actions.

#### **4.11.2 Youth Action**

This research has adopted the six-step problem solving model of Akin *et al* (2017), which is very instrumental in facilitating participatory action research (PAR) to improve active citizenship amongst the youth. This involves working with the youth in a group using the steps highlighted below.

##### **Step 1: Problem Identification**

The youth had to identify a real problem related to democracy and human rights in their community through brain storming, voting, and small group discussions to determine priorities in their group. They selected the problem of limited access to public budget formulation and review processes. Young people agreed that the Gweru city council was doing its budget process without conducting holistic public consultations where young people could meaningfully contribute to the process. They argued that at times the council would speed up the process, giving little time for the public to scrutinise the documents which are full of technical terms. Hence, they agreed to take advantage of the council budget review process by researching the proper technical requirements in reviewing a budget, the key budget components, and attending and meaningfully contributing to the process.

What was central to this process was to promote the culture of active citizenship, making young people realise their agency in democratic processes and exercise their rights. Subsequently, the same process enhances citizenship virtues such as dialogue, unity, respect for diversity, tolerance, and patriotism. Though it took a long time for the group to agree on one problem to tackle, because of the diversity in priorities, the voting system aided the team in reaching a consensus amicably.

##### **Step 2: Problem Analysis**

The youth embarked on a fact-finding process to gather more information on the selected problem to understand its root cause and impact. According to Akin *et al's* (2017) model it is imperative to collect data from different sources, such as books, journals, or interviews with experts to gain more insight into causes and the consequences of the selected issue or problem. This was one of the most difficult processes, since young people were not fully committed to spending their time on something which had non-monetary benefits for them. However, I

shared the contacts of the residents' associations with the group for easy online referral. We engaged with the Gweru Residents and Rate Payers Association (GRRRA), Gweru Residents Forum (GRF) and the Gweru United and Progressive Residents and Development Association (GUPRADA). The group was assisted with information on some of the technicalities regarding the council budget review process and the role of the public in the process.

The youth learnt that the public has the right to demand the budget for review, attend the public consultations, accept, or reject the budget proposal. They were also informed of their right to demand a standard and progressive process which meet the public expectations and generally acceptable technical procedures. Through engagements and research, they also learnt that at times the councillors, who are the stewards of the public, lack the technical skills to influence the progressive budget formulation and review by the council management. The council also would leverage public apathy and lack of technical expertise to continue with their corrupt activities. The Auditor General's Report of 2019 flagged a lot of corrupt activities by the Gweru City Council which the public never challenged. Dr Chakunda, from the Midlands State University Department of Local Governance, who is also on the board of GRRRA, played a pivotal role in sharing this important information. This challenged the youth to take the endeavour very seriously. This process was imperative in enhancing citizenship virtues such as consultation and informed engagement, which are key alternatives to violent protests.

### Step 3: Brainstorming Solutions

As per the articulation of Akin *et al* (2017), the group went on to discuss the possible solutions to the problem they had identified. They realised the magnitude of the problem with its various contributions. Hence, they agreed on advocating for the Gweru City Council to meet the generally acceptable standards in making public consultations, which include inviting the public to budget consultations, sharing the agenda and all other relevant information, and respecting the will of the people during the public hearings. The group designed an action plan in which they all agreed to attend the council budget review meeting in July 2022.

### Step 4: Solution Execution Plan

The youth made necessary preparations to implement their action plan with my guidance and some of the information they had gathered from the residents' associations. At this stage we engaged a councillor from another ward (name withheld) so as to know the possible dates of the council budget review public consultation. They organised their strategy to observe the

adherence of the council to the generally acceptable standards of public hearings, and they designated their lead speakers.

#### Step 5: Plan Execution

The youth followed “alternative pathways to the solution of the problems by implementing their plans and taking actions in their community to convey their messages to the people and to raise their awareness about those problems.” (Akin *et al* 2017: page?). On the 5<sup>th</sup> of July 2022 they succeeded in demanding that the Gweru City Council provide them with copies of the draft budget before the public consultations proceeded. Through a peaceful inhouse protest, the budget review consultation meeting was postponed. (See the article: <http://thesunnews.co.zw/residents-reject-budget-review-meeting/>)

#### Step 6: Solution Evaluation

Due to limited resources, the youth had to do a virtual progress review meeting using WhatsApp. This was simply to assess the impact of their intervention. They all agreed that their strategy worked, but also appreciated the efforts by civic society organisations, residents’ associations and general members of the public. While they played a pivotal role in flagging out the anomalies, it is the solidarity they received from the public that stopped the process . The group resolved that if more informed youth attended such processes, they would achieve their endeavours without using violence.

### **4.12 Chapter Conclusion**

In summary, this chapter has indicated how this research employed a qualitative research design through focus group discussions, interviews and observations in seeking interventions to improve citizenship virtues among the youth in Zimbabwe. Through the said research tool key themes were discussed, notably youth understanding of citizenship, citizenship virtues, their participation in violence and the alternatives. The chapter also shared the action research which was co-created and carried out with the youth in Gweru, which culminated in a peaceful rejection of a flawed Gweru Municipality budget review process.

## CHAPTER 5: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter contains the key findings which were gathered from the focus group discussions and in-depth interviews which were done in Gweru. The interviews and focus group discussions were done with the youth who had been living in Gweru for the previous five years, as stated in the research methodology. The findings are presented using the following themes: youth understanding of citizenship virtues, causes of youth participation in violence, consequences of youth participation in violence, and strategies to improve active citizenship among the youth. The chapter also contains an analysis of the data collected. The researcher has blended data presentation and analysis together to ensure easy comprehension for the reader. The research interviews were digitally recorded for reference and post-interview analysis purposes.

### 5.2 Demographic Data of Participants

Table 1 Demographic data of participants

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Years Living in Gweru	Location
R1	Female	32	21	Mkoba- High Density Suburb
R2	Female	27	8	Mkoba- High Density Suburb
R3	Female	31	6	Riverside- Low Density Suburb
R4	Female	24	13	Southdowns- Low Density Suburb
R5	Female	26	19	Ascot- High Density Suburb
R6	Female	29	29	Mkoba- High Density Suburb
R7	Male	34	6	Mambo- High Density Suburb
R8	Male	26	17	Mtapa- High Density Suburb
R9	Male	28	15	Ivene- Medium Density Suburb

The table above represents the demographic data of the research participants. The researcher engaged participants who had been staying in Gweru for the previous five years, counting from the research date. This was deliberate, for the researcher to engage young people who have witnessed key social, economic and political developments in Gweru such as the elections of 2018 and the subsequent violence. Gender equality was observed and from the targeted 9 participants, 4 were males, 4 females and 1 female absconded.

### 5.3 Research Objectives and Interview Questions

Table 2 below outlines the questions that were asked against the set research objectives.

Research Objectives	Interview Questions
1. To examine active citizenship and virtues among the young people in Gweru.	1. What do you understand by the term active citizenship? 2. What are some of the rights and freedoms that you know? 3. What are some of the citizenship virtues or values that you know?
2. To investigate the factors influencing citizenship-related violence in Gweru.	4. What causes youth to participate in violent activities?
3. To investigate the barriers faced by youth in Gweru in exercising active citizenship virtues.	5. What limits young people from developing citizenship virtues and resist being involved in violence? 6. Is violence the best solution to solve conflicts or for youth to share their grievances?
4. To find ways and improve active citizenship among youth in Gweru	7. What can be done to help young people to stop being involved in violence?

As shown in the table above, the researcher had to systematically ask questions that responded to the research objectives to ensure that the data collected met the research goal. Hence, questions asked were building on each other in a systematic manner for easier presentation and analysis. Below is the data collected and the analysis made by the researcher.

## 5.4 Youth Understanding of Citizenship Virtues

Youth in Gweru demonstrated a good understanding of the definition of active citizenship. When they were asked what the term “active citizenship” means, they shared the following responses:

*It is whereby the people or citizens of a country enjoy their rights, participate in decision-making processes, they know their constitution and willing to participate in every decision-making processes. So active citizenship is whereby ‘us’ enjoying our rights. R8*

*Active citizenship is where citizens are getting involved in their communities in terms of leadership structures, democracy, and governance... R4*

*Active citizenship is when citizens fully participate and recognise their constitutional mandate and obligations. R5*

These responses, which indicate that active citizenship involves citizens taking responsibility for what happens in their communities, participating in decision-making processes, and exercising their rights, proves that the youth understand what active citizenship is. Their responses echo those of Çakmaklı (2015), Peterson and Bentley (2017) and Mattijssen *et al* (2019), who discussed active citizenship as a process in which citizens enjoy their rights and freedoms. This entails participation in the socio-economic and political processes of their state.

The youth are quite cognisant that the enjoyment of these rights is both horizontal (social, economic, and political) and vertical (local to national level). Some of their responses were as follows:

*Active citizenship is whereby we are having the people at the centre of each and every decision-making process, and at every level of decision-making processes. Is where citizens take responsibility of the environment, workplace...at community level or local level. R1*

*What I understand by the term active citizenship is whereby a citizen actively participate in a number of processes. Be it social, economic, and political processes. R2*

This appreciation is critical because Çakmaklı (2015) notes that the extent to which citizenship is exercised is largely determined by how it is learnt and conceptualised. He talks of citizenship in dimensions such as access to social services and participation in decision-making forums. Rights and freedoms are part of citizenship and must be enjoyed and exercised.

The youth even mentioned that active citizenship entails involvement in the social, economic and political affairs of their communities. They indicated that it involves exercise of rights and



freedoms through taking part in the community development processes. One participant even went on to indicate that citizens should realise their constitutional rights, which include voting, accessing justice, accessing information and protesting. Participants indicated that participation should be enjoyed without any infringement. Odhiambo (2015) even postulated that, in a democratic society, the rights and freedoms of the citizens remain inherent and any limitation must be reasonable and justifiable.

Some of the participants indicated that their rights are not being recognised well and are being infringed. Concerns shared were around electoral fraud, exorbitant school fees and access to decision-making forums. They suggested that in the case of these shortcomings, they have a right to protest.

*We also have the right to freedom, the right to say yes and the right to say no. It is our constitutional right. Right now, we have very expensive school fees, and it is our right to get into the streets and protest peacefully and say no without being intimidated. R3*

*We also have the right to access to information, like right now, there is a lot of noise going around with regards to the voters roll. We are in the election mode and we have to know what is going on with the voters roll as young people...so if certain information is not given to us it affects our participation...it affects active citizenship. R7*

It is in this regard that one can confirm that young people in Zimbabwe have access to citizenship education and have a basic understanding of active citizenship or democracy. They understand their rights and freedoms as citizens. Zimbabwe's citizenship education as noted in Chemhuru and Sizha (2011) covers these key issues, such as rights and democracy. Young people are attuned to airing their grievances, as noted in their response to the question of their understanding of the term active citizenship.

They did not hesitate to go further in citing their current grievances and noted that they have a right to protest when their rights are being violated (such as lack of access to education). One participant even used a term that shows anger and discontent among the youth: he mentioned that “*young people are being taken for granted.*” In a more nuanced response one of the participants said the following:

*We have also the right to make our own decisions. As we can see, as youths we are being deprived the right to make our own decisions. We are not being given the platform. Every time we try to raise an issue which affects our future, we are taken for granted...R6*

This is confirmed with the series of protests in Zimbabwe which were orchestrated by young people, with protest movements being created. Musarurwa (2016) cited youthful protest movements such as “*Tajamuka*” whose name loosely translates to “we have rebelled” or “we say no!” Young people also indirectly raised a sentiment of being infringed in exercising their rights or being active citizens. Another participant mentioned that they should exercise their rights without being intimidated. Again, a popular and youthful protest movement dubbed #ThisFlag, which was led by Pastor Evan, featured the phrase “*hatichadi and hatichatya*” which translates to mean “we do no longer want and we are not afraid”. This, significantly, shows that somehow young people are being intimidated in exercising their rights.

### **Citizenship Virtues**

When the young people were asked about citizenship virtues, they demonstrated fair understanding of civic values. They managed to list some of the citizenship virtues, such as transparency, accountability, abiding by the law, voting, honesty and *ubuntu*. While these virtues are key, virtues like tolerance, respect for diversity, social cohesion and patriotism were not mentioned, although these virtues are central to community peacebuilding. Below are some of the responses that were given by the participants:

*It is important to note that transparency and accountability are the bedrock of good citizenship...we go to budget consultations, and it is good to tell people in leadership that we want transparency and accountability. R3*

*Paying tax, being responsible, avoiding committing crimes and ubuntu in the context of Zimbabwe. Having high moral standard. R5*

*Talking of values of a good citizen, we can talk about obeying the rules and laws of the nation, practising your right to vote in elections, trustworthiness, and integrity. R6*

Some mentioned inclusivity and non-discrimination, and they were referring to disability, community, gender, and race. Some, mentioned high moral standards, observing *ubuntu* and doing no harm to others.

*Inclusivity, including every group of people such as people with disabilities, marginalised groups, youth and women. R1*

*Active participation in public life is one of the virtues of a good citizen. We can also talk about non-discrimination in terms of gender, race, age group or ethnicity. R4*

The full glossary of virtues that were mentioned are represented in the word mesh below.



*Figure 1*

The participant who shared on transparency and accountability as civic virtues further stated that when young people attend crucial democratic processes like budget consultations, they should make it a point to demand transparency and accountability from the office bearers. This shows a sense of citizenship agency among the youth, as they can show that it is their responsibility to hold office bearers to account. This is not a surprise, as Mavhunga *et al* (2012) noted that the education system in Zimbabwe has the ability to inculcate the knowledge of rights and responsibilities among the pupils. However, the access to these democratic processes has been made difficult by the government, as postulated by Masuku & Macheke (2020). They argue that the political will to promote youth participation is missing in Zimbabwe, as shown through the absence of responsive legislation like the Youth Act and inaccessibility to information and venues for public consultations. The statement also shows some abdicated sense of agency by the youth to the elder generation. Transparency and accountability are universal civic virtues of all citizens in a democracy, not only for citizens in positions of authority.

Youth mentioned that a good citizen is the one who obeys laws. This is another deficiency of citizenship education in Zimbabwe in the sense that it has been designed to make passive citizens who cannot contest bad laws but rather just obey them (Mavhunga, Moyo and Chinyayi 2012; Moyo 2017). This is contrary to the philosophy of Locke and Montesquieu, who encouraged citizens to have the moral value of patriotism, one which supports laws that prosper the community rather than those that favour the rulers (Bellamy 2015). This is not surprising, since previous attempts to challenge the government in Zimbabwe have often been met with the price of security sector brutality (Musarurwa 2018). This indirectly coerced people to believe that a good citizen is one that obeys the laws of the state, whether they are good or bad.

The non-mentioning of citizenship virtues like patriotism, respect for diversity, tolerance and unity is somewhat worrisome in the context of Zimbabwe. In a society full of political violence and violent demonstrations, one would expect the participants to mention these values (Mude, 2014). Only one participant mentioned the principle of doing no harm to others. The participant had the following to say:

*Safeguarding, where we work we need to ensure that we do no harm to others. R2*

This suggests that young people do not have a clear understanding and conviction of citizenship virtues that are directly connected to peacebuilding. This can further explain why there is so much violence among the youth, especially on political fronts and on social media. Young people are often found using hate speech on social media, they do not tolerate diversity of political affiliations and often physically fight on political grounds (Mude 2014).

## **5.5 Reasons For Youth Involvement In Violence**

I asked the participants why young people participate in violence, and from the responses that were shared by the youth it is evident that young people are not self-motivated to participate in violence. Young people are vulnerable and responsive to socio-economic and political ills. Research participants indicated that they are economically vulnerable to being lured into political violence by political elites, their human rights are being abused and they have tried to pursue peaceful means to air their grievances to no avail.

### **5.5.1 Poor Social Service Delivery and Abuse of Human Rights**

Young people attributed violent protests to poor social service delivery and abuse of human rights. To them poor social service delivery includes lack of access to basic amenities like

running water, employment, and food. Below are the response they gave when they were asked about the drivers of youth participation in violence.

*At times youth participate in violent demonstration[s] because the authorities will be failing to govern the city well. People will be struggling to get water and electricity. This is for example in our area we can go for two weeks or more without running water. But you will hear that the mayor has bought a luxury car using our money. It becomes frustrating and trigger[s] the anger to demonstrate among the residents. R2*

*People do not demonstrate out of nowhere; they are pushed to react. Imagine what has been said by [R2] that we go for two or three weeks without water, and it is us the youth who bear the burden of fetching water during the night with long queues. So we get angry and every chance we get to protest we join the protests. R1*

*Access to resources and power cuts are a serious challenge which are making young people to engage in violence. The violence we see are just people responding to instability. R3*

*On the water challenge, I agree with others. The girl child is now the most victim. Kune vakomana vakutozviita varidzi vezvibhorani [there are young men who now act as owners of the boreholes] they control the lines and demand sexual favours from girls for assistance. R2*

*Corruption in government is another cause of violence or protest especially when people are struggling to get social services or to enjoy their rights. So young people join the protests against the government. R5*

The responses above indicate that in Gweru the water crisis is a topical social service delivery issue that has frustrated many citizens. Three of the respondents emphasised it, demonstrating a high level of agreement about it. However, the problem shares equal blame with challenges like power cuts and fees hikes. Another participant indicated that young people have witnessed a lot of poor social service delivery amidst allegations of corruption by government officials. She said this continues to build anger in young people and at times young people they for the opportunity of a mob to air their anger. She cited the looting that happened in 2017, when there were riots against President Mugabe, and how the Choppies Shop, which belongs to the former deputy president, was politically attacked and looted. She said the following:

*There are many reasons why students or youth engage in violence, such as abuse of human rights like high increase of fees in the middle of an economic crisis. So, to defend our rights: we join protests but many times they are not violent. However, we also join politically-motivated ones which are violent like the one which led to the burning of shops like Choppies [which is alleged to belong to the former vice-president Mphoko]. R4*

Another participant argued that poor social service delivery is a violation of our human rights. He mentioned how the lack of running water in homes was a thorn in the flesh of young people.

In such instances, young people think of demonstrating or join politically-motivated riots to amplify their anger.

These sentiments fit the arguments of Ismail and Olonisakin (2021) who place the rapid urbanisation argument at the epicentre of violence discussion in Africa. They postulate that rapid urbanisation is a new and underappreciated driver of state fragility. They further stated social service grievance as a product of the bulging youth populations. They cite heightened insecurity, lawlessness, crime and urban violence as key products of rapid urbanisation. Their argument makes sense in the case of Gweru, where there is evidence of rapid urbanisation which culminated in a water shortage crisis. Post-1990 Gweru experienced a rapid expansion in terms of residential areas, but little has been done to expand the water supply system. Consequently, water supply started to fail to meet the increased number of homesteads. Thus, the water crisis has then facilitated citizens' disgruntlement against the local authority, from whom they expect solutions to the existing social ills. Therefore, an antagonistic environment or a fragile state has been created which is prone to violent youth protests.

During the discussion the youth raised poor access to education as another social service contention issue which is largely tied to violent protests and political crisis. One participant pointed out that

*Fees hikes amidst high unemployment and deteriorating economy with hyperinflation is not only unfair to struggling parents but young people whose future continues to be blurry under the current leadership. R4*

Participants agreed that access to education is a crisis. They explained that the increase in school fees has made basic education inaccessible to most people in Zimbabwe. This explains the involvement of students in protests which are sometimes violent. Bratton and Masunungure (2011) record revolutionarised protests under the Zimbabwe National Students Union (ZINASU) which became part of the formation of a political party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). To Bratton and Masunungure (2011), the burden of poor social service delivery under the government of Robert Mugabe facilitated the resistance movement from the labour and student fronts. The current trajectory in Gweru presents the narrative of students at Midlands State University in Gweru, such as Archibold Madida and Ashley Pfunye, participating in #FeesMustFall protests. However, despite their arrest and suspension from school by the authorities, there is no evidence that their protests were violent.

However, another participant also shared that young people at times wait for the opportunity to join a politically motivated protest and amplify their anger.

*Pamwe pachotinotojoina maprotests [sometimes we join protests] to also demonstrate our anger against the bad leaders. R3*

This echoes the Arab Spring story and other stories of revolutions, like the French revolution in which the masses waited for the opportunity of a riot, and joined the protests (Khalili, Schwedler and Zartman 2011). The argument premised around violent protests is that in many cases citizens are frustrated about social service delivery but are scared to confront the authoritarian regimes until an opportunity arises and they take advantage of it.

### **5.5.2 Unemployment and Vulnerability**

Participants shared that there is a link between the economic condition of the youth and their subsequent participation in political violence. Young people are unemployed, living in poverty and with limited access to sources of livelihood. Below are some of the responses they shared.

*I would say as youths in this economic situation that we are in, we have become so vulnerable. Anyone can use us for anything to achieve their political goals. So we have nothing tangible to show for ourselves. We are not empowered, and we just go where the wind is going. If they say go and beat so and so of that political party, you are forced to go because you want something to put on the table such as data or drugs. R2*

The statement above shows that young people agree to be used by the political elites to perpetrate violence, especially in politics. Their subsequent compliance, as they shared, is linked to their poor economic status. This is shown by their responses, that show that the youth do this expecting some material benefits in return.

*Young people can engage in violence for fun reasons like beer and money for drugs. Politicians buy these things for the youth and command them to attack their political opponents through hate speech or physical violence. R4*

This indicates that the economic situation in Zimbabwe makes young people vulnerable through being in a state of dependence. Young people are desperate to survive in harsh economic situations and at times political elites purchase their numbers and energy to champion political violence for material gain.

*Young people are given money, drugs and weapons...to cause riots, disrupt electoral processes and to buy their vote. R2*

This echoes the assertion of Mude (2014), who wrote that socio-economic meltdown in Zimbabwe has a dire effect on political violence in Zimbabwe.

In Zimbabwe young people join politics, and often young people do not represent their ideas. Elitist politics predominate in the political space and young people are used as pawns. In 2017, prior to the military coup that removed President Mugabe from power, the ZANU-PF youth wing, under the leadership of Kudzai Chipanga, was alleged to have received funds from people like Saviour Kasukuwere to express hate speech against Emmerson Mnangagwa (Noyes 2020, Gebremichael 2018). In the same year, the MDC Alliance youth wing was also alleged to have been used by Nelson Chamisa to attack Thokozani Khupe as a way of paving way for Chamisa to come to power (Noyes 2020). The social system theory articulates the interdependency of units within a system, depending on function (Schilippe and Hermann 2013). In this case, young people who are in need of money and other livelihood gains can easily depend on the rich political elites and champion their agenda in exchange for material gains. This explains why the looming youth bulge is constantly involved in political violence and other protests which are politically-motivated.

### 5.5.3 Coercion

The idea of vulnerability is further expressed in coercion. Coercion entails being forced to engage in a particular activity. Participants also shared that at times young people participate in violence against their will. Below are some of the reasons pertaining to youth involvement in violence through coercion.

*Young people are coerced into violence by the political elite. This is for example the youth who were part of the Border Gezi Training (National Youth Service), [they] were recruited using coercion under the instruction that they would only get jobs if they had received the training. The training camps were later reported as indoctrination and militia camps. Young people were used to perpetrate political violence. R2*

*The reason why young people participate in violence is because of force. A prevalent example is of rallies. You can see that these young people are being taken by buses and being ordered to go to a certain place. R3*

*I agree with the first speaker, you see, youth who went to the National Youth Service or the green bombers [nickname] most of them became ZANU-PF leaders in the youth wing and were involved in violence activities during maElections a2008. R4*

*In Zimbabwe it is difficult to separate the army and police from the ruling party. When the President is around for a rally or other meeting, vendors are forced to close their business to attend the president's address. R1*

The statements show how coercion is central to youth participation in political violence. The thought accords with those of Solidarity-Peace-Trust (2003), McGovern (2010) and Mhike (2017b), who argue extensively that the National Youth Service was a programme which was



employed by the government to indoctrinate the youth and train them to participate in political violence between 2001 and 2007.

This indoctrination falls in the social systems school of thought, which acknowledges that human behaviour is not an independent unit, but a product of socialisation (Golob and Makarovic 2017). This strategy of coercion was heightened post-2000 when the ruling party of ZANU-PF started losing support. (Maringira and Gukurume (2020) note that when ZANU-PF started to lose support it then commenced to incentivise and deploy the youth to force market stall owners and taxi drivers to attend its political meetings and commemoration gatherings such as Independence Day. This supports the position by the research participants that young people are coerced into violent processes.

This socialisation can also be indirect: young people can learn violence through observing. Participants shared that, in Zimbabwe, young people have witnessed a lot of violence as a means to express grievances and as such also resort to violence.

*Young people learn violence through coercion and being used, and in turn they also want to champion for their causes using violence. R3*

*Young people have tried using non-violent means and they feel like non-violence means do not work anymore. If you look at the 2018 elections, young people felt like voting is not enough ...and every chance they get they use violence such as destruction of property. R1*

These two statements articulate how the youth have received the message of violence indirectly through the use of violence to push for political ideas, and how non-violence has not worked so much for them. This again is integral under social systems theory, which entails that interactions within the system communicate a message that can be learnt. In Zimbabwe political elites have used violence, in many cases, to settle political scores. Evidence can be tracked from the 2008 elections and the fast-track land reform programme, where violence was used to push for political and economic benefits (Bratton and Masunungure 2011; Mude 2014). In that case young people have seen how the 2008 election violence culminated in a Global Political Agreement and the formation of the Government of National Unity. They also witnessed how the war veterans, together with the ZANU-PF political elites, benefitted from grabbing land by force. In turn, they also want to thrive on violence to pursue their interests.

Research participants also shared that young people's socialisation to violence is coupled with a lack of information and skills to utilise other non-violent means to address their concerns. Young people they do not have skills to even draft petitions. One of the participants shared that

*Petitions are a bit technical and not every young person would understand them. I know young people constitute about 67% of the total population but not every one of them has the capacity to understand other means that can be used...hence they resort to violence. R5*

It is in that sense that the youth resort to the only available option which they have learnt, that is, violence. This entails that, if young people do not know other progressive means to engage the office bearers and policy-makers in terms of pushing for their interests, there will always be a potential for violence. Inasmuch as there is evidence of youth exploring non-violent means to champion their cause in Zimbabwe, such as the #ThisFlag movement, according to Musarurwa (2018) these youth still lack organisation and unity to amplify their cause. He writes that, “Improving the strategic performance of leaders in nonviolent action improves the efficiency and effectiveness of the technique.” (Musarurwa 2018: page?) This then validates the opinion by the research participants that young people do not have the capacity and knowledge to utilise other non-violent means.

However, one of the participants also articulated an opinion that suggest that young people might be aware of the progressive non-violent means to air their grievances, but that the political environment is not conducive. She argued that in Zimbabwe all protests have been classified as violent, but that is a poor understanding of the constitution.

*I think as a country we have failed to define what violence really is because, if the constitution gives us the right to demonstrate and if we demonstrate, if we demonstrate we are arrested saying we are causing violence. It becomes a problem, because maybe we are protesting for poor service delivery and the next thing you are arrested that you are causing violence. R6*

In Zimbabwe, the use of influential non-violent means to challenge the authorities or express democratic and social concerns has a record of attracting state brutality. In many cases organised groupings that lead protests or demonstrations are victimised by the state through its security agencies, such as the police and members of the intelligence services. Musarurwa (2016) notes that the government has set conditions which make it close to impossible to hold progressive demonstrations. He cites laws like the Public Order and Security Act, which has since been revised to the Maintenance of Peace and Order (MOPO) Act. The law in its old and new form instructs all groups with the intention of holding a demonstration to notify the police, which has given the police power to sanction and partially restricts such demonstrations. This then tempts the demonstrators to operate outside the law and fall into the government trap of having illegal gatherings and getting arrested or brutally dispersed.

#### 5.5.4 Exclusion from Decision Making

Participants believe that the exclusion of youth from key decision-making processes is another driver of youth engagement in violence. They perceive their lack of representation in decision-making forums as a cause to protest. Below are some of the ideas that were raised on exclusion from decision making.

*As youth it hurts us to be treated as second class citizens. We are not even considered in [the] leadership process. R1*

*I think we are experiencing a tension between the elderly and the young generation. It's an issue of differences in leadership expectations. The youth feel like the elderly leadership is failing and they want a chance. Subsequently, they try to challenge their failure with demonstrations. R7*

*What we have seen over time is the little political will of the government to engage the youth. Their promises are not true. Imagine, public hearings are done in areas where the youth have no access to. During the Constitutional Amendment No 2 Bill public hearings the youth ended up demonstrating when the process was done in COVID-19 period with limited freedom of access and assembly. R2*

*Young people want to participate but when issues are political the government want to do things alone. Increase the taxes without consulting the people. R8*

As shown above, the participants have expressed their concern regarding underrepresentation in decision-making forums and how they try to use demonstrations as alternative means to share their thoughts on key decision-making processes. They expressed the growing desire by the youth to participate in key decision-making processes as a democratic right, but to no avail. Resultantly, young people get frustrated and resort to violence as an alternative to air their concerns. According to Ismail and Olonisakin (2021: page?), the grievance-based logic of youth and violence, “non-representation, under-representation and outright exclusion and marginalization in decision-making processes...leads to frustrations and aggression.” This supports the opinions of the youth in Gweru that they are concerned about the youth’s exclusion from decision-making processes. This concern is also reflected in the current Council of the Gweru Municipality, with only one youth among the eighteen councillors.

Exclusion from decision-making can be linked to group inequalities and social injustice protests. Stewart (2008: page?) writes on group inequalities and postulates that “youth political violence is a direct and rational response to marginality: youth’s rationalization and motivation transcends the economic gains of rational choice to include the sense of belonging, participation and empowerment.” This suggests that youth marginalisation in key decision-making processes amplifies their sense of disempowerment, prompting a strong desire to be

heard through the use of violence. The Marxist school of thought also presents a good analogy on the aggression between the “haves” and the “have nots”. It is Marxism which asserts that the youth who are part of the rejected and oppressed masses also feel angered, with much determination to fight for their emancipation. In these cases, the youth exhibit features of a frustrated community with great passion to fight for their inclusion, at times through the use of violence.

## **5.6 Alternatives to Youth Violence**

### **5.6.1 Civic Awareness and Depoliticisation of Programmes**

The participants indicated that awareness-raising is critical in addressing youth engagement in violence. This awareness-raising was said to be on civic virtues and to meet the civic education needs of the heterogeneous youth community.

Young people indicated that peer-to peer-education is critical in addressing the gap. Wray-Lake and Graduate (2012) researched social inequalities in civic education and engagement and agree with this sentiment. In their research findings they attribute this disparity to changes in education systems and access. They indicate that youth with varying backgrounds are less likely to gain equal exposure to civic education and preparation for life.

*It is a matter of adequate awareness-raising for young people by young people as well. You understand that there are those dynamics among young people, there are those who are a bit enlightened that you can actually demonstrate peacefully. There are those who are exposed to know that there are other means to demonstrate without using violence... R8*

Moreover, the youth are acquainted with peer-to-peer education and the designing of community-responsive programmes. The youth indicated that youth must be at the forefront of educating other youth, because they share many things in common. This is crucial in addressing the challenge of adultism in civic education, where the adults design civic education for the youth which at times fails to resonate with youth interests and aspirations.

It also appears that young people believe that civic society work is preaching to the converted; hence, they need to refocus on who their targeted beneficiaries are. Differently put, participants suggested that youth from under-resourced neighbourhoods are less likely to get interventions, yet they are most vulnerable.

*So somehow, we have a group of young people whom we are not reaching... CSOs are always interacting with [the] same youth groups, failing to engage youth in hard-to-get areas and those with limited exposure to civic education. R3*

This argument is true in the context of Gweru, where civic clubs such as Interact, Toastmasters and Lions are more found in Group A schools, which largely enrol children from privileged families. These clubs generally help young people to accumulate civic skills such as dialogue, community engagement and social capital. On the other hand, young people who come from less privileged schools are prone to economic abuse (clientelism) and have limited exposure to civic engagement and processes. In return, patterns of violent demonstrations have shown that violence is more prevalent in high-density suburbs where most young people are not exposed to civic engagements. Hence, there is a need for civic knowledge and skills orientation among the youth.

These contributions indicate the disparities among the youth in terms of enlightenment to civic virtues and processes. They seem to believe that if the youth are aware of the civic virtues like respect and tolerance, they are less likely to engage in violence.

*I agree with [R8] there is also [a] need to raise awareness around peaceful demonstrations or peaceful means to engage, diplomatic means to engage with the government when we want change or when we want certain things to improve. (R?)*

From the youth responses it is clear that the youth are aware of their differences in terms of having access to civic education.

The youth also indicated that violence is also promoted by divisive civic education. They shared the following concerns,

*In Zimbabwe, we have two or three groups who push political violence. We have violence among political parties and violence between the ruling government and the NGOs. When all these institutions do their civic programmes, they promote antagonism through indoctrination. R2*

*Yes, it is very difficult to hear NGOs praising the government and many youths who are trained by civic society organisations on social accountability only think attacking the government is progressive, In turn, the government clamps down these NGOs and arrests the youth. R8*

*I agree with the other speakers, I want to say that programmes like the Herbert Chitepo School of Ideology should not be partisan. We can have a national ideology that can guide our national development as a united people. Instead, they are schools of partisan education or indoctrination as said by [R2]. R3*

These submissions also indicated the challenges in administering civic education by interested parties. It generally confirms the debate by Mavhunga *et al* (2014) on citizenship education in

Zimbabwe. They give an analogy of the contestation of civic education in Zimbabwe with an argument that when citizenship education was introduced in Zimbabwe as the political economy subject, it was largely criticised by the civic society organisations (CSOs) as a propaganda scheme of ZANU-PF. The same happened with the National Youth Service, which was later argued to be a partisan school of propaganda by ZANU-PF government to train youth militia in the name of teaching patriotism. Both schemes were abandoned by the government after the loud cry against these programmes.

On the other hand, the government has also criticised the CSOs, especially through the state media and the Patriot Newspaper. CSOs like ZIMCODD and Crisis Coalition in Zimbabwe have been viewed as proxies of the West pushing for regime change. In actual fact, these CSOs have been playing a crucial role in enlightening the citizens to exercise their citizenship agency and hold office bearers to account. Sadly, on many occasions they have been found criticising the government which gave the impression that they are against the state. Youth who have participated in the programmes of such CSOs have become loud critical voices against the state. Hence, an impression has been created that there is antagonism between the CSOs and the state. Therefore, the youth are of the opinion that civic education must be holistic and non-partisan, lest it fuel more tension and violence.

### **5.6.2 Entrepreneurship Skills Development**

The young believe that the solution to youth violence could be empowering youth with business or entrepreneurship skills. This is their response to the challenge they raised of youth energy being purchased for political violence by the political elite. Below are some of the responses by the participants,

*There is a saying that a hungry man is an angry man. You know, some of this violence is caused by poverty. What if we channel our energy towards entrepreneurship skills? When young people are able to fend for themselves they will not be used by politicians or participate in this violence. R2*

*I think the CSOs should start to train youth on livelihood skills and entrepreneurship instead on focusing on rights and democracy. We have seen a number of youths becoming activists for economic gains. R8*

*It is very rare to hear of the youth in business being involved in violence to get beer. So, if youth have businesses and are self-reliant, they will buy their own beer instead of relying on politicians who first instruct them to commit violence. R1*

This suggests that there is a need to empower the youth economically so that they do not depend on the political elite or get abused to conduct political violence for them. As noted in Mude

(2014), young people who are economically disempowered are vulnerable to manipulation. The youth in this case see entrepreneurship skills training as an opportunity to strengthen the power of resistance to clientelism. It gives them the power to shun the material persuasion to engage in all sorts of violence, especially political violence.

However, some youth did not believe that entrepreneurship training offers an end to youth involvement in violence. One of the participants had the following to say:

*I somehow do not agree with the idea of business. I think the youth with money are leaders in doing political violence on social media using hate speech. Some with businesses, like Kudzai Chipanga, were at the front of insulting vice-president Mnangagwa in 2017. R5*

This means that even youth who are in business, with a better means of livelihood, can engage in violence, and there is a need to enhance their citizenship virtues.

### **5.6.3 Skills Training**

Young people said that skills training on dialogue and creative advocacy was needed. They mentioned that most young people are not able to utilise other creative means to engage the gate keepers and policy makers, such as the local authorities. One example they mentioned was a training on petition writing and signature mobilisation. Young people do not have technical skills and experiences in petition writing. Another participant mentioned that

*We need trainings on such things like petition writing because it is a hard process which needs skills on how to write one. Again, I understand that petitions do not end with drafting, but we need signatures and young people struggle to unite for a common cause. So, there is need for a training on how to engage other young people to sign the petition and then submit to relevant leaders. R2*

The statement above indicates the need for skills development among the youth. While young people are exposed to basic knowledge on rights and freedoms in school, such as the right to demonstrate and petition, young people have less exposure to practical processes which help them to translate their knowledge to practical action. Maravanyika and Ndawi (2011), in their citizenship education and its building blocks writings, argue that Zimbabwe's citizenship curriculum is inadequate because it does not expose pupils to practical experiences so that they know how to translate their knowledge into action. This is true in most schools, where young people only learn some civic processes in theory. Another participant had this to say:

*As youth we need training to do petitions. We think it is for lawyers to do petitions. So, if we are not trained to do petitions and innovative demonstrations which are not violent, we will always use and do what is [at] our earliest disposal. It is also*

*difficult to engage and have discussion with the MPs at times. So, I agree with my friend that we need training. R8*

This also indicates how young people then engage in violence as an alternative because they do not have skills to employ peaceful means to push for their ideas. It is to this end that young people propose to have skills training on how to strategically air their concerns. However, another youth shared that it also depends on the gate keepers' political will to listen to the cause of young people. He argued that peaceful demonstrations and petitions only work if the authorities have a genuine intention to serve the people. This is what he said:

*I think politicians or government authorities should also be trained to be receptive to people's ideas and have a political will to address their concerns. We have had many peaceful protests being done by people like Pastor Evan but in turn he was arrested. So, for me, it's also about servant leadership and political will by the gatekeepers. R4*

This statement also exhibits another critical factor to be considered in a bid to empower young people to stop engaging in violent processes and have improved citizenship virtues. In Zimbabwe the government seems so determined to pursue its political-economy course, even without a buy-in from the citizens. This is exhibited in the failure of peaceful movements like #ThisGown and #ThisFlag, which were taking the government to task in addressing unemployment and other economic ills like inflation. Instead of the government seeing an audience with the peaceful protesters, it went on to unleash terror on the citizens. Sadly, no research participant had an alternative to such a problem.

## **5.7 Chapter Conclusion**

It is quite evident from the discussion above that structural socio-economic and political grievances are drivers of youth involvement in violence. This is coupled with the lack of sufficient skills and knowledge development models on citizenship virtues. particularly those linked to peacebuilding such as tolerance, respect for diversity, dialogue, and patriotism.



# **CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

## **6.1 Chapter Introduction**

This research was aimed at improving the citizenship virtues among the youth in Gweru as a strategy to mitigate their participation in civic and political violence. Through the adoption of a qualitative research methodology in the form of focus group discussions and interviews, the study managed to meet the research objectives. The study reached out to nine young people, five females and four males. Through structured and semi-structured questions, fair data was obtained and presented in Chapter 5. After the analysis, three themes and seven sub-themes were realised. This chapter discusses the overall research findings, conclusion, and recommendations.

## **6.2 Summary of Key Findings**

This research has realised three key findings on youth exercise of citizenship and their subsequent involvement in violence. This section summarises the findings under the following themes: scoping of citizenship virtues, youth participation in violence, and alternatives to violence. These findings are briefly explained below.

### **6.2.1 Scoping of Citizenship Virtues**

Young people in Gweru have a fair, though not holistic, understanding of citizenship virtues. They demonstrated understanding of many citizenship virtues, such as obeying the laws of the state, and exercising their democratic and constitutional rights such as voting, protesting, and attending public meetings. But there was little evidence of understanding citizenship virtues that underpin community peacebuilding, such as respect for diversity, tolerance, patriotism, dialogue and unity. Whereas most violence emanates from the lack of these fundamental citizenship virtues, only one participant talked about the principle of doing no harm to others. This suggests that there is a limited scoping of citizenship virtues among the youth and there is a need for more deliberate programmes to enhance these citizenship virtues that are linked to peacebuilding.

### **6.2.2 Youth Participation in Violence**

It has been learnt that most youth are not self-motivated to participate in both political violence and social service protests. Youth noted numerous drivers of youth participation in violence, such as coercion, frustrations over poor social service delivery, abuse of human rights, exclusion from decision-making processes, and clientelism. These put young people in a state of having no option but to employ or engage in violence. The youth mentioned that at times they are coerced into violence in militaristic ways, such as being frog marched to a political rally where violence normally erupts. Some are economically vulnerable; they have no means of livelihood due to the high rate of unemployment in the country, and their engagement in violence is funded by the political elite for monetary and non-monetary benefits.

However, from all the causes the youth mentioned there is an exhibition of limited understanding, appreciation or exercise of citizenship virtues that are anchored in community peacebuilding. For instance, when young people are frustrated by the limitations of democratic rights, instead of finding other means to pursue their motive of sharing their grievances, they resort to violent demonstrations. In the event that young people had a conviction of respect for diversity and tolerance, they would still have a choice of not attacking each other violently. Though it is understandable that they are economically vulnerable, some of the incentives they receive from the political elites, such as beer and money for drugs, defeat the claim of economic vulnerability because these are not basic needs. Moreover, their engagement in violent social service protests can be contested: protests are a democratic right, but violence is an exhibition of lack of citizenship virtues such patriotism and respect, which need to be enhanced.

### **6.2.3 Alternatives to Violence**

Young people believe that violence is not the best way to resolve their challenges and is not an end in itself. They believe that several strategies can be employed to reduce youth participation in violence. Young people agree to the fact that there is a need for more civic awareness to enhance the youth understanding of the constitutional exercise of civic rights, like protesting in a peaceful way, and for inculcating citizenship virtues among them. Citizenship virtues such as tolerance, respect and dialogue need to be provided through civic education in communities with limited access to programmes that enhance these virtues. Young people from high-density suburbs were said to be more involved in violence as compared to their counterparts from low-density suburbs. This can be linked to standards of living and the level of vulnerability and exposure to civic programmes.

Young people believe that their economic vulnerability needs to be addressed as a mechanism to protect them from the abuse by political elites. This means that the current economic situation in Zimbabwe, which is characterised by rate of unemployment, cannot be dismissed from the discussion of peacebuilding. Young people have limited means of livelihood and some will have to rely on incentives from the political elites. As such, young people believe in entrepreneurship skills training as a way of empowering them to start commercially viable livelihood initiatives that can give them income for self-reliance. This is a noble idea, but it fails to also address or justify why rich young people are engaged in violence.

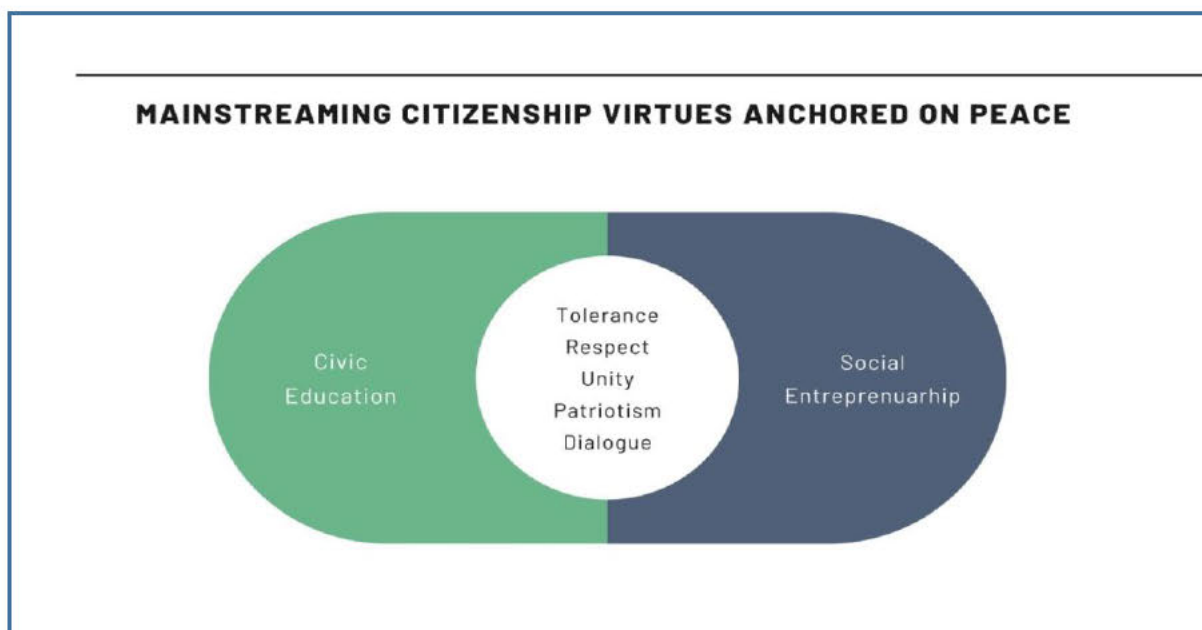
### 6.3 Recommendations

This research has noted that youth participation in violence has multiple contributing factors that need a holistic approach in meeting youth challenges that push them to participate in violence. Therefore, this research has come up with the following four recommendations.

#### 6.3.1 Youth Empowerment Ecosystem Design

Taking into account the key findings above, it is prudent to design a holistic youth empowerment model which can produce what one can call a “whole youth”, a youth who is acquainted with all citizenship virtues and skills, and economically empowered to resist clientelism to commit violence. Regarding citizenship education and programmes, there should be a deliberate effort to mainstream peace-anchored citizenship virtues such as tolerance, respect, trust, unity, dialogue, and patriotism. These virtues are imperative in stimulating the willpower to resist violence and to progressively engage in civic and political processes. This would be complemented by socio-economic empowerment in the form of social entrepreneurship training.

**Figure 2 Holistic Youth Empowerment Model**



## **Fig. 2 Holistic Youth Empowerment Model**

### **6.3.2 Recommendation to Government**

There is a need to make deliberate efforts in mainstreaming citizenship virtues education, particularly that anchored on peace, in the overall primary and secondary education curriculum. Young people should realise virtues beyond those of transparency, accountability, voting and loyalty, to peace virtues like patriotism, unity, dialogue, respect, and tolerance of diversity. This is key in conflict resolution, particularly in civic, political and social service grievances.

### **6.3.3 Recommendation to CSOs**

They should complement government efforts at providing civic education which inculcates the progressive realisation of citizenship virtues that are anchored in peace. In the event that the government does not honour the obligation on political grounds and resorts to suppressing civic groups who are providing the alternative civic education, civic society organisations can adopt the social entrepreneurship model. This is viable in an authoritarian state where civic and political work can be criminalised, for example, where CSOs are going to be clamped down on through the Private Voluntary Organization Amendment Bill if it is passed into law. Thus, the social entrepreneurship model will allow them to empower youth economically, while at the same time facilitating the realisation of citizenship virtues.

### **6.3.4 Recommendation to Academics**

There is a need to further explore the concept of the youth empowerment ecosystem model in promoting community peacebuilding, especially using the social entrepreneurship pillar and mainstreaming of peace-anchored citizenship virtues. The model needs to be examined in various contexts for holistic development.

## **6.4 Chapter Conclusion**

This chapter has summed up the key findings of the research on youth understanding of citizenship education and virtues, their reasons for engagement in violence, and their proposed alternatives. Young people have an understanding of citizenship virtues, but do not have a deeper understanding of peace-anchored virtues. Their participation in violence is not voluntary but is coerced by economic, civic and political factors such as poverty, frustration due to poor social service delivery and abuse of human rights, and armed coercion. Fortunately,

young people are willing to shun violence, but the research has observed that a holistic model is needed that will empower the youth both economically, and with civic and political power.

# APPENDICES

## Appendix A

Name of interviewer:

Sex:

Pseudonym or Interviewee code:

Date:

Time:

Unstructured Interviews (Personal interviews)

Questions will be centred on participant's experiences with regards to active citizenship:

- What they have been taught about active citizenship when growing up
- Their ways and levels of participation in community activities
- Their experiences in working with groups within the community
- The challenges they have encountered and how they affected their participation
- What they think should be done to resolve the challenge

Structured Interviews (Focus Group Discussion)

1. Can you describe your participation in the socio-economic and political activities of Gweru?
2. Do you know your rights and responsibilities with regards to the developments that happens in Gweru?
3. Are you satisfied with the way you engage in the socio-economic and political activities of Gweru?
4. What challenges are you facing that inhibits you from participating in socio-economic and political activities of Gweru?
5. Do you think young people have the capacity to participate and lead in the socio-economic and political activities in Gweru?

6. What do you think should be done to improve active citizenship among the youth?

## **Appendix B**

### Observation Guide

- Attitude of participants when discussing the issues
- Level of agreement or disagreement when discussing (common factors)
- Use of technical language when discussing issues
- The ability to point out avenues of participation
- The ability to reference using national laws and policies
- The ability to propose an action plan
- The level of agreement in deciding the action plan (attitudes towards each other)



## Appendix C

Gweru Urban Parliamentary Office  
Gweru Theatre  
Zimbabwe

10 February 2020

Dear Honourable. Brian Dube

### **RE: PERMISSION TO UNDERTAKE RESEARCH IN GWERU**

My name is Takaedza Tafirei, a Master of Technology in Management Science (Peace-building) student at the Durban University of Technology, South Africa. I am currently doing a research under the supervision of Dr Innocent Tinashe Mutero. I write to you seeking permission to conduct my research titled, **Improving active citizenship among the youth in Gweru using an action research**. I will be employing a Participatory Action Research (PAR) with the goal of promoting youth participation in socio-economic and political activities of Gweru, and to promote inclusive development and social solidarity.

The research will engage thirty-four youths as participants, who are between the age of 18 and 35 years, tertiary education graduates. Participants in this research will help to unearth the understanding and experiences of the youth with regards to active citizenship in Gweru, their challenges. These youths will propose and do an activity which is related to active citizenship such as (but not limited to) clean-up campaigns, engaging duty bearers and attending public community meetings.

I have stayed in Gweru since birth and I have been working with various civic society groups within and outside Gweru. My key observation is that very few youths participate in voluntary community activities, and those who do are at times engaged in political violence activities and some lack the necessary skills to influence the processes. It is against this background that I wish to improve social capital and responsibility amongst the youth in Gweru using an action research. It is my hope that the research will help them to realise their rights and responsibilities, stimulate their interest to exercise their agency in community development processes and to work as a collective.

Participants will be given the letter of information and consent forms which will express in detail the research process and what is expected of them. In addition, their participation will be voluntary. Should you wish to discuss the study further, please contact us through the details provided below.

Yours faithfully

.....

#### **Takaedza Tafirei**

Student No. 21959533  
Phone: +263 775 879 947  
Email: [tafireitakaedza@gmail.com](mailto:tafireitakaedza@gmail.com)

#### **Supervisor: Innocent Tinashe Mutero**

Peacebuilding Programme, Durban University of Technology  
Phone: +263 773 265 406  
Email: [muteroinnocent@gmail.com](mailto:muteroinnocent@gmail.com)

## Appendix D



### LETTER OF INFORMATION

**Title of the Research Study:** Improving active citizenship among the youth in Gweru, Zimbabwe using action research.

**Principal Investigator/s/researcher:** Takaedza Tafirei, Bachelor of Science in Politics and Public Management.

**Co-Investigator/s/supervisor/s:** Innocent Tinashe Mutero, PhD in Peace Studies

**Brief Introduction and Purpose of the Study:** This study endeavors to improve active citizenship amongst the youth in Gweru as a strategy for peace-building. It will be part of the academic work of the researcher towards achieving a Master of Peace Studies degree.

**Outline of the Procedures:** The researcher will employ purposive sampling to identify participants and the catchment area of participants is Gweru. Participants will participate in the research to share their experiences and thoughts with regards to active citizenship in Gweru. They will be respondents in the focus group discussions, interviews and questionnaires. The designed research tools will be examined by the supervisor before use. Interviews and focus group discussions will be done at the America Space (Gweru Memorial Library). Interviews are expected to take 15 to 20 minutes and focus group discussions will take an hour.

**Risks or Discomforts to the Participant:** Fear to disclose their experiences because of high record of militarization of the civil space in the country.

**Benefits:** The participants will be helped through the research to identify their rights and responsibilities, avenues of participation and alternatives to violent protests. In general, they will be helped with skills and knowledge on active citizenship.

**Reason/s why the Participant May Be Withdrawn from the Study:** Participants may withdraw from the process at any stage. (Non-compliance, illness, adverse reactions, etc. Need to state that there will be no adverse consequences for the participant should they choose to withdraw)

**Remuneration:** There will be no remuneration, the researcher will only cater for their transport and refreshments.

**Costs of the Study:** No

**Confidentiality:** Participants will use pseudo names during the research. Interview (audio) recordings will not be published.

**Research-related Injury:** There is no injury which is expected or will be associated with the research.

**Persons to Contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries:** Researcher: Takedza Tafirei +263 775 879 947. Supervisor I. T Mutero +27785877933 or the Institutional Research Ethics administrator on 031 373 2900. Complaints can be reported to the DVC: TIP, Prof F. Otieno on 031 373 2382 or [dvctip@dut.ac.za](mailto:dvctip@dut.ac.za).

## Appendix E

**General:** Potential participants will sign a consent form that the participation is voluntary. The consent form will be assessed by the supervisor before use.



### Statement of Agreement to Participate in the Research Study:

- I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, \_\_\_\_\_ (name of researcher), about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of this study - Research Ethics Clearance Number: \_\_\_\_\_,
- I have also received, read and understood the above written information (Participant Letter of Information) regarding the study.
- I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details regarding my sex, age, date of birth, initials and diagnosis will be anonymously processed into a study report.
- In view of the requirements of research, I agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a computerised system by the researcher.
- I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study.
- I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study.
- I understand that significant new findings developed during the course of this research which may relate to my participation will be made available to me.

<b>Full Name of Participant Thumbprint</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Signature / Right</b>

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (name of researcher) herewith confirm that the above participant has been fully informed about the nature, conduct and risks of the above study.

<b>Full Name of Researcher</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Signature</b>

<b>Full Name of Witness (If applicable)</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Signature</b>

<b>Full Name of Legal Guardian (If applicable)</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Signature</b>

## Appendix F



Parliament of Zimbabwe  
Gweru Urban Constituency

Hon Brian Dube | Member of Parliament  
Parliament Information Centre  
Gweru Theatre, Town House  
Gweru, Zimbabwe

Email: [dubebrian2000@gmail.com](mailto:dubebrian2000@gmail.com)  
Cell: +263 773 978 897  
+263 719 078 897

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### PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH IN GWERU

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24 August 2021

Dear Mr T. Tafirei  
Durban University of Technology Durban  
South Africa

Reference is made to the above subject and I write to notify you that you have been granted permission to conduct a research in Gweru, Zimbabwe.

Your research is titled: **Improving citizenship virtues among youth in Gweru, Zimbabwe.** My office is aware that you will engage the youths in Gweru as participants in your research.

Please be advised that, if there are going to be any changes with regards to your research topic and participants, kindly notify my office.

For and On Behalf Of Gweru Urban Constituency

.....

**HON BRIAN DUBE (MP)**

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