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TOPIC

The use of Social Media in political Mobilization. Cases of Zanu Pf and Mdc T

By

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APPROVAL FORM

The undersigned certify that they have supervised the student **MOSES MUSANHU** dissertation entitled **The use of Social Media in political Mobilization. Cases of Zanu Pf and Mdc T**, submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements ofBachelor of Science in Politics and Public Management honours degree at
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DEDICATION

Special dedication to all Politicians in Zimbabwe.

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Abstract

The need for politicians to mobilize support for their endeavors has lacked an effective platform for this purpose prior to the introduction of Social media. The subsequent development of the internet and consequentially, the advent of Social Media, not only covered succored this lack, it ushered in a new wave of Political Mobilization. The use of Social media in Political Mobilization, therefore, is a very important subject to 21st Century politics. This paper deals solely with this advent. The relationship between social media and Political mobilization is carefully studied in the brightness of several scholarly work so as to come up with logical conclusions that prove the relevance of social media to this effect. This paper attempts to do this by using Zanu Pf and Mdc T, in Zimbabwe, as a way of deducting this relationship. The relative importance of Social media in Zimbabwe therefore is without bounds and an important study, as shall be presented by the proceeding work.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

The relentless boost in the popularity of social media has shiftedseveral scholars' attention. Studies on the effectiveness of social media on politicscan best be traced to the 2008 U.S. State house elections when social networking sites permitted citizens to affiliate with the candidate.Such social media platforms like Yookos, Facebook and Twitter have slowly increased in popularity and usage, and therefore have undoubtedly become some of the most effective platforms for Political Mobilization. In Zimbabwe, social media platforms have seized to be just elements of socialization but a network through which politicians are able to air out their views, intentions and ideologies. The purpose of this research is to shed more light on the correlation between social media and Political mobilization in Zimbabwe. The research will attempt to synthesize these by drawing the reader's attention to how, where and why social media platforms have been used by Zanupf and MDC-T for the purpose of gaining more political grounds.

1.1 Background

Since the Liberation struggle in Zimbabwe one major method for effective Political mobilization was the establishment of Cells. The guerrilla method of warfare that the Zimbabweans used to conquer the Rhodesian army meant that the masses were supposed to be mobilized in such a way that they assist the soldiers. Mass Mobilization therefore depended on the effectiveness of the means and method of communication that the guerrilla used. Even though this method proved to be effective as evident in the victory of the 2NDChimurenga the tables turned after independence. The subsequent ascension of Zanu PF into power, the absence of the threat of war and the initiation of a democratic government meant that newer methods of Political Mobilization were necessary. The aspect of Political mobilization transformed from its prior purpose of ensuring that the masses supported the liberation struggle, into platform for securing support for the ruling Party. As a result the Traditional media became the Primary means of Political mobilization through which Radio, Television and newspapers acted as the only primary means of linking politicians and the masses. However this was the only method by default of the absence of any other means of political mobilization. ZanuPf's monopoly over the use of Traditional media meant that the

opposition either had to establish its own form traditional media or suppress any hopes of using state owned Media platforms

In conjunction with the above, the post 2009 period saw Econet Wireless front lining the introduction of mobile broadband which provided cheap Internet Services to all its subscribers. By 2010 Telecel and Netone had also joined the movement in the establishment of cheaper and faster networks for all their subscribers. By 2009 the average Zimbabwean was able to buy a mobile cellphone that was capable of accessing the internet. The introduction of the Rand and US dollar further made it cheap for Zimbabweans to be able to access Smartphone in the period 2011 to date. Furthermore the increasing migration of Chinese traders into Zimbabwe made it possible for the every citizen to be able to access Smartphone. Techzim (2016) portrays that the country's internet usage boosted from 91.8% in the previous quarter to 96.4% by the end of 2015. This growth in the usage of the internet has slowly become a trend as an increasing percentage of Zimbabweans now has access to internet services. These have devalued the usage of Traditional Media and have pushed for ventures into the usage of Social media. The private ownership of social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Yookos and You tube meant that the Ruling Party could not maintain monopoly over the use of such platforms and therefore provide the most democratic platform for political mobilization.

In light of the above, the easy access to the internet led to the inauguration of more effective means of Political mobilization proved useful in mobilizing and convincing Zimbabwean citizens to focus on matters that are regarded as important and in shaping public opinion among many Zimbabweans to get involved in the political process of democratic governance. In the light of this, the subject of the effectiveness of the social media in political mobilization has been labeled as an important one. For instance every major known political party in Zimababwe has an official Facebook page. Such platforms as Whatsapp provide a platform that provides for the fast delivery of information to the masses. Such Platforms like YouTube have been used as platforms of sharing political advertisement and even denouncing gross miscarriages of justice. Consequentiallyimpact of Social Media in Political mobilization in Zimbabwe is without bounds and therefore an important study.

1.2 Statement.of.the.problem

Since time immemorial media has played a critical role in Political mobilization. Zimbabwean Politicians have continued to rely on traditional media and have ignored the

power of the internet as a modern mode of political mobilization. This has weakened the way in which political parties can be effective in their endeavors.

1.3.0 Research objectives

1. This research aims at obtaining data that proves the relevance of Social Media in Political mobilization in Zimbabwe.
2. This research aims at analyzing how the use specific social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook have had an impact on the political participation of social media users offline.

1.3.1 Research Questions

1. Are social media sites relevant in Political mobilization?
2. How has Social Media been used to impact on Political mobilization elsewhere and in Zimbabwe
3. Does the online participation of Zimbabweans on Social media influence on their offline political participation?

1.4 Justification of the study

Recent studies have shown that the advent of social media has an effect on the political activities within a nation, however, researchers failed dismally to find any nexus between the two functional areas**.** In addition Research in Political mobilization has centered on giving much importance to the role of traditional media. This research will draw one's attention to social media's importance in providing a more effective platform for Political mobilization and also synthesize the correlation between the two.

1.5 Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Dewing (2012) notes that Social media refers to a vast range of internet-based services that give users to engage in social exchange, contribute user generated content and affiliate with online communities. In other words social media is a type of electronic communication

platform through which users are able to create internet-based communities that anable sharing of information, ideas, personal messages, and other aspects. Edosomwan (2011) notes that in age of information systems, social media has been in the forefront in transforming Political mobilization. He alludes to the fact that the most effective way to boost a political organization is through massive engagement in social media activities. Most of the of the literature regarding Social Media portrays that by 2000, many social networking platformssurfaced to ease bring innovation in the interaction between people that that similar interest in education, music, and even movies. As a result Dewing (2012) notes that this also effected on how politicians engaged in their campaigns and political their intentions.

In relation to the subject of the impact of Social media in Political mobilization Kalyango, (2011) and Montero (2009) agree that the usefulnes of social media continues in mobilizing and attracting citizens to attention on matters that are viewed as crucial and in shaping public opinion amongst citizens to engage in the political processes of governance and democracy. Adu-Kumi (2011)notes that theincreasedboost in online services paralyzed the power of traditional media, namely newspapers, radio, television, among others.Smartphone technology, such as cell phones, haveextended to remote areas in Zimbabwe that are less to reachable with traditional media. This therefore means that online services have automatically become the grassroot support base for effective political interaction. Several scholars Baker (2001) have been able to focuson how the Internet has been utilized by certain personell, organizations, and states in representing their culture and in promotingnationalism. The commpetion to generate online content that promotes nationalism has overtime birthed cyber wars, which can be conceptualized as the use of the social media in attackingviews and ideologies of opposition parties or groups. Moyo (2009) opined that certaindemocracies in Africa, Zimbabwe for one, were unsettled with respect to the impact of social media and its power in priming the behavior and civic engagement of citizens in the nature of governance. The introduction of social media and its concretization has ushered a new age where social media creates an environment that is capable to overthrow repressive governments.

Moyo (2009) and Kalyango (2011) further allude to the point that the desire by Zanu to sensor media spaces through statutory instruments has overtime succeeded by default that the party had an override on traditional media. The innovation of social media invented and developed social phenomena. On the grassroot level, this was, first, achieved through using cellphones to participate in certain radio programs and give opinion on state affairs on

television. Subsequently they reinvented the use the socialas a tool political mobilization. Social media has been used to advocate against corruption by providing tangible evidence through video. Social media platforms like*Facebook* and *Twitter* have now been used to mobilize the masses to participate in the politicsand affiliate themselves with political parties.

Kadongwe (2013) notes that the recent discovery by Zimbabwean politicians on the relevance of Social Media has revolutionized the manner in which political activities are engaged in. Social Networks platforms like Facebook and twitter have long permitted political parties to create groups or accounts. On this note MDC T and Zanu PF in Zimbabwe have also awakened to this importance of social media in political engagement and have now launched several projects to gain more grounds on these plartforms. This new wave of alignment with social media by Politicians is proof positive that Social Media is a dependable tool for Political mobilization. Breuer(2012) highlights that the question of how social media affects political processes at micro and macro levels need to be answered urgantl. Verba (1995) has given a logical linkage of the aspects of social media and political mobilization by alluding to the fact that a resource perspective can give us an understanding of the correlation. He notes that, there is positive correlation exists between individuals' exposure to and the use of social media and the extenttheir political participation. Platforms for social networking such as Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook have overtimedincreasedin the ability to retrieve and disseminate political information. This there affordssocial media users access to political information that comes at no cost as it does in traditional media.

The Network theory that's was brought forward Castells (1996) is instrumental to the understanding of the usefulness of social media in political mobilization in Zimbabwe. The theory focuses specifically on the effectiveness of social media in shaping society. The articles, *The Rise of the Network Society (1996*), *Communication, Power and Counter-power in the Network Society (2007), A Network Theory of Power (2011),* and more recently, *Communication Power (2013, that were written by Castel* have created a sure knowledge source for studies of this nature.As social media and their roles in political mobilisation in Zimbabwe has increased, several authors acredited Castells' theory as theory that best explains and aids to a better understandingof the change to Zimbabwean politics brought on by social media. The network theory evaluates the modern society and focuses on the ability of social media to mobilize citizens. One fundamental idea therefore is that social media has

developed into social platform where power and influence are brewed. This information is crucial in Zimbabwe, especially when view in retrospect of the recent #this flag campigns that launched social media as a sure platform for political mobilization Castells' writtings on the Network Society and particularly on how the technological advancements over the past decade have changed the world we live in

Castells has developed a grounded theoretical framework to understand the avenues of social and political change in our time through understanding the networks that connect our society. These networks have changed dramatically through the introduction of new communication technologies. Castells identifies the internet as "…a universal tool of interactive communication" (Castells, 2000: 9). Castells has applied Network Theory to the modern world. His theory highlights how society is connected through interconnected nodes and through the technological revolution it has become even more important to understand how these networks work to connect us in ways never experienced before. As a result therefore the Network theory identifies the aspect of social networking in very influential to political mobilization. Networks are a form of social organization that have existed for centuries.

1.6 Limitations

Due to the recent nature of the subject of social media and political mobilization, the scholarly and academicis still evolving, and therefore even though much has been said on the subject of social media, much has not been said about its relationship to political mobilization. There is limited data on Political mobilization Zimbabwe, and even more seriously on its use in Mdc T and Zanu Pf. However, it should be noted that this does not give the idea that there is no information but weakens the information is the nature of its source. This therefore has an impact on the set of conclusion that the research provides.

1.7 Delimitations

This research focuses solely on analyzing the relationship between social media and political mobilization. Even though the aspect of Media as an umbrella term is part of the research, this research not discus traditional media but only focus on online virtual social media platforms; Twitter and Facebook.

1.8 Research methodology

There are several distinct methods of carrying out a research on issues relating to social media. These are Interviews, Surveys, Content analysis and Data mining, among others. From this perspective it is important to note that every separate method has its own advantage and disadvantage depending on its scope of application. In this research, the research makes use of a quantitative research methodology whereby the social media activities of Zanu Pf and Mdc T are investigated through the use of distinct research instruments. The nature of the study of social media compels the researcher to make use of research instruments like questionnaires and content analysis. With respect to questionnaires the researcher makes use of the online platform called Google Forms. This platform enables the collection of questionnaires and the gathering of information online. This method has proved to be effective in studies relating to social media because it enables the researcher to reach the target population by just sending a link to the several respondents that he requires the information from.

Contents analysis is very instrumental in the procession of this research. Content analysis is described as a means of arrangingtext in different pillars according to prescribed criteria. This method is effective in analyzing political content on social media and organizing it in a nuclear and interpretable manner. The aim utilizing content analysis to evaluate social media content itself in the light of the hypothesis given about its relationship with political mobilization. It allows for a dependable evaluation of information. In order to conduct this content analysis, the researcher can collected 50 most recent posts, or tweets, from Politicians in Zimbabwe. The tweets were analyzed and gave an insight into the content that politicians are producing and its purpose.

1.9 Chapter Summary

Chapter 1

In this chapter, the researcher will give focus on giving preliminary information about the Social Media and political mobilization. A sneak preview of the methods, literature and theories will be given to give the reader insight into the subject matter.

Chapter 2

The chapter focuses on literature review and theoretical framework .The scholarly discourse surrounding the and theoretical framework surrounding the subject of Social media and political mobilization will be discussed in detail.

Chapter 3

This chapter consists of two broad pillars of this research. First the research methodology, design and research instrument, among other tactical issues, are discussed, and then the focus will shift to data presentation, analysis and interpretation.

Chapter 4

The researcher will be giving a summary, conclusions and recommendation with relation to the subject matter.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORATICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

The founder of Facebook Mark Zuckerberg officially announced that, "Facebook is now used by 1 billion people every month, or by one in every seven people in the world" (Kiss, 2012). Webb (2014) further expresses this by saying that, 'if Facebook were a country it would be the third largest country in the world after China and India.' Kiss (2012) explains this by saying that, "Facebook has recorded 1.13 trillion "Likes", 140.3 billion friend connections and 219 billion shared photos since it launched in February 2004. More than 300 million photos are uploaded every day and 62.6 million songs played" These figures represent how extensive the use of Social media has become in today's world. Castells (1996) explains that the internet, through Social Media has transformed society into a networked society where information exchange is instantaneous and global. Kaplan &Haenlein's (2010: 59) sentiments that, "Social media represents a revolutionary new trend" has now become an accepted fact especially when one looks at the impact social media has had in the international system. The estimated 14 million Zimbabwean population has also kept abreast with this development, with a sizeable number of the population having access to Social media. The growing impact of Social media in Political Mobilization in Zimbabwe has awakened political elites and the citizens alike to the dawn of a new techno-age in the country. It is therefore the core aim of this study to look into the impact of social media with intent of gaining a better understanding of the effects they have specifically on mobilizing support for the different political activities of Politicians in Zimbabwe.

2.1 The social media age

A better understanding of Social Media can be facilitated through the definition of Information Communication Technology (ICTs). ICT is defined by Castells (1996) as "the converging set of technologies in microelectronics, computing telecommunications/broadcasting, and optoelectronics." Jacka and Scott (2011:5) contend that it 'can be said that social media is the set of Web based broadcast technologies that enable the democratization of content, giving people the ability to emerge from consumers of content to publishers'. The Oxford Dictionary (2011a) further defines social media as 'websites and applications used for social networking'. In turn, social networking is defined as 'the use of dedicated websites and applications to communicate with other users, or to find people with similar interests to one's own' (Oxford Dictionary 2011b). The ABC Institute of

Technology (2011) summarizes that *'Social media encapsulates digital tools and activities that enable communication and sharing across the net…'*

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010:61) developed their own technical definition of social media: In their view Social Media 'Social Media is a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content.' In essence Kaplan and Haenlein (2010:61) define Web 2.0 'as a platform whereby content and applications are no longer created and published by individuals, but instead are continuously modified by all users in a participatory and collaborative fashion.' In other words Web 2.0 might be seen as the ideological and technological foundation of social media. User-generated content (UGC) describes the various forms of media content that are created by and available to users. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010:61) go further and adopt the view of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development that content must meet three basic requirements to qualify as UGC:

- It must be published to all Web users or to a select
- It should demonstrate some creative effort and not simply replicate the work of another. ·
- It must be created outside of professional routines and practices and not for a commercial market.

Bugalo (2014) gives a universal view on social by defining social media as a term used to refer to online based or electronic communication platforms. It includes web and mobile-based technologies which are used to turn communication into interactive dialogue among communities, and individuals. He notes that social media has rigorously exploded as an online discourse center where various people including the electorate and the candidate create content, share it, retweet it and network at an extraordinary rate.

Webb (2014) provides a practical definition of social media by hinting on its functionality. He notes that, 'Social media allows citizens to communicate, debate, share video and photographs across distances of both space and time.' The web is providing entirely new tools and resources to track and cover world politics. Web 2.0 is the base upon which social media were built and social media sites have provided a n According to Castells' the most significant communication transformation we have witnessed has been the shift of mass

communication to mass self-communication. He describes mass self-communication as the process of interactive communication that can potentially reach a mass audience. The major transformation of the communication system is the fact that "…the production of messages are self-generated, the retrieval of messages are self-directed and the reception and remixing of content from electronic communication networks is self-selected" (Castells, 2013: 14-15). The diffusion of internet access, mobile communication, and digital and social media, have driven the development of "horizontal networks of interactive communication" (Castells, 2007: 246).

The Network Theory presented by Castells can be used to explain how the characteristics of social media make them valuable tools for political mobilization. Social media have the ability to create weak ties, they have a high level of anonymity and online communication is egalitarian by nature. These inherent qualities in social media provide a space for citizens to mobilise. The work of Granovetterfocusses on the strength of weak ties which is their ability to introduce citizens to new ideas and new information, and the internet and particularly social media allow these ties to be forged over vast areas of space and time (Granovetter, 1983). Network Theory posits that the emergence of new media represents a major change to the political landscape. The conventional account on the maintenance of authoritarian rule has been put forward by several authors (Gandhi &Przeworski, 2007; Bellin, 2004; Slater, 2003;Svolik, 2009; Nathan, 2003).

The key differentiating factor in terms of these new media is their highly interactive quality. The original uses of the internet include the more traditional web page format which allows users to only access information. These are referred to as unidirectional platforms and they are similar to traditional media such as newspapers and television. Social media platforms on the other hand are multi-directional or interactive (Himelboim, Lariscy, Tinkham, &Sweetser, 2012: 95). Users can participate in debates and can share information.

The internet itself is a relatively new development which has revolutionised how people communicate, how businesses market themselves and do business and it has made large amounts of information more readily accessible to a greater demographic. Social media has taken these new developments to new heights by giving people the opportunity to generate and share information themselves. Social media sites are responsible for transforming the World Wide Web into a platform that facilitates information exchange between users (Kaplan &Haenlein, 2010: 60). "In the twenty-first century, the proliferation of electronic social

media portals, such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn, are new, powerful communication tools capable of influencing users' opinions in the realms of politics and policy" (Auer, 2011:709). Technological enhancements in media, communications and the internet have enabled us to reach this point and it is clear that social media are only going to play an even bigger role in people's lives in the future.

Hugill, (1999) notes that, the Internet society is less constrained by geographic location than previous societies and as a result proves to be more effective for Political Mobilization. Wellman, Haase, Witte, and Hampton (2001) are of the view that Social Media users make use of the Internet to extend their offline participation in various activities. The views echoed by Diani (2000), Wellman (2002), dellaPorta&Mosca (2005), Fisher and Boekkoi (2010) that Social media impacts civic engagement and social movement activity can be boiled down to the online activities of Politicians Zimbabwe. In light of the National Geographic Study as noted by Wellman, et. al. (2001) Social media supplements and increases Political Parties' organizational and political involvement. The findings of Shah, Kwak, &Holbert (2001) that the use of the internet for information exchange correlates to increased offline civic engagement further help in explaining the new methods of Political mobilization that are arising in Zimbabwean Political Parties. The use of Social Networking sites like Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp, among others, has intensified in Zimbabwe for several reason which will be dealt with in detail.

2.3 Politics and Social Media in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe's first internet service provider was established in 1994.The internet then became available to citizens who could afford to connection fees. The government was in charge of developing the back bone infrastructure for the internet in Zimbabwe .No private sector entities could do this because of the huge capital commitment that such a task entails. This process was performed by the government owned Post and Telecommunication Corporation (PTC), now telone. The Postal and Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe is in charge of regulating the internet in Zimbabwe. The authority grants prospective firms with licences so that they can provide internet services. Internet connectivity increased dramatically in Zimbabwe when cell phone companies begun to provide mobile connectivity

in the form of 2g and 3g networks(Techzim,2013). This was mostly because cell phones are cheaper than desktop and laptop computers.

Econet wireless is the leader amongst the Zimbabwean cell phone providers in terms of providing internet access. It was the first mobile network provider to enable mobile internet access in Zimbabwe. As of 2013, Econet wireless has begun to roll out the 4g speeds across its network(Techzim 2013). The 4g network provides very fast internet speeds on connected devices Ordinary Zimbabweans therefore became increasingly connected to the global village through the internet. The numbers of Zimbabweans accessing the internet has gradually increased over the past few years as illustrated by the table below;

Figure 1 Adapted from internetworldstats.com (2014)

Year	Users	Population	% pen	Usage source
2000	50000	14,712,000	0.3 %	ITU
2002	500000	13,874,610	3.6 %	ITU
2005	820000	12,247,589	6.7 %	ITU
2008	1351000	12,382,920	10.9 %	ITU
2011	1445717	12,619,600	11.5 %	ITU
2014	1577869	12,878,600	11.7%	ITU
2016	170005I	13,683,883	17.4%	ITU

This gradual increase in internet connectivity in Zimbabwe multiplies the rate at which people can access social media in Zimbabwe. This gradual increase in internet connectivity has not escaped the attention and scrutiny of the Zimbabwean authorities. Various measures have been introduced in the country as solutions in order to contain the pervasive nature of the internet in Zimbabwe.

The Zimbabwean parliament introduced the interception of communications bill of 2006 in order to control the use of the internet in Zimbabwe. The bill requires internet service providers to be able to intercept the communications of their customers. The internet service providers are forced to install equipment capable of performing such feats at their own expense. The government should be able to eaves drop on any conversation that a Zimbabwean citizen engages in online.

According to O.P.I (2013):

According to Reporters without Borders, during the 2008 presidential elections, Government forces hacked into journalists" e-mail accounts; eight journalists were Fired for allegedly failing to support Mugabe and the ZANU-PF.45 Employees of the Reserve Bank are not allowed to receive e-mails containing the words "Morgan Tsvangirai" or "MDC"; the bank has had an e-mail content manager installed since 2006 that prevents e-mails with political content from reaching their intended Recipients

This clearly shows that the Zimbabwean government is aware of the power of the internet. Attempts have been made at controlling the content and nature of online conversations on theinternet. Social media therefore is not likely to escape the attention of the government.

According to Clingier, (2009) social media has transformed the manner in which the elite conduct political mobilization. It is therefore critical that one contextualizes the concept of Political Mobilization to social media. Kalyango and Adu-Kumi (2013) note that, 'As with all other measurable theoretical constructs, there are multiple ways ofdefining and conceptualizing mobilization. The definition of mobilization from a media orpolitical communication perspective depends on the subfield and framework of the study. Some scholars define it as "the process by which a passive collection ofIndividuals in a society is transformed into an active group in the pursuit of common goals or coerced into political participation by an authoritarian government"(Cox, 1998) . In economic terms, the concept of mobilization is used to describe the process of employing creative efforts that promote the use of local assets to gain support for an organization, to generate circulation, and to realize more assets or capital (World Bank, 2007; Walgrave&Verhulst, 2009). Goldstein and Ridout (2002) identified three main elements of mobilization in their work, which affects voter turnout among the citizens. These elements are aggregate rate of mobilization, effective mobilization contact, and change in targeting of mobilization. They determined that mobilization carries with it the power to promote individual participation and the more intense it is the more effective and convincing it is, the more it gets people to participate in a process or vote.

Another important distinction that Goldstein &Ridout (2002) made in terms of how mobilization operates in industrialized nations like the United States is that, it has become more sophisticated, as voter contact operations were often purchased off-the shelf from

consultants and phone banks that specialized in identifying and contacting voters for candidates and parties. A more scholarly argument for this phenomenon, according to Putnam (2000, p.39), is a shift from the use of social capital that is grassroots citizen network to financial capital where money becomes the driving force behind mass marketing of candidates and parties. In Africa today, the massive acquisition of social media tools and the establishment of new media technologies has set the platform for self-mobilization towards other networking groups for political as well as social mobilization (Fair et al, 2009). For example, the Mdc party in Zimbabwe was able to mobilize thousands of sympathizers to organize a demonstration to press for the release of ItayiDzamara from Abduction through Social Media.

Berman (1997), Feltey&Susel (1998), Walters and colleagues (2000) argued that citizen involvement in government decision-making improves government performance, decision legitimacy, citizen responsiveness, and trust in direct democracy. At the same time, with effective mass mobilization, citizens become contributors to governance and shareholders in government due to their mediated involvement in the decisions of the state (Roberts, 2004,p 192). Citizen participation, according to Langton (1978), includes four types: citizen action such as lobbying and protest, citizen involvement such as public hearings and citizen surveys, electoral participation such as voting and campaigning for political candidates, and obligatory participation such as paying taxes and performing jury duty. Langton (1978, p.21) defined citizen involvement through mass mobilization as "initiated and controlled by government to improve and or to gain support for decisions, programs, or services." Citizen involvement activities relate to techniques or mechanisms such as public hearings, citizen advisory councils, citizen panels, neighborhood meetings, and citizen surveys (King et al., 1998; Wang2001, p194). This context social media becomes a platform for spreading the awareness of a particular program. For instance the 2013 referendum awareness of Facebook was used by the government to spread the awareness of what the referendum was for.

Throughout the 1960s, 70s, and 80s, some of the major organizers and mass mobilizers of communities for political engagements included churches, artists, for the decline (in turn-out) were institutional: "a decline in mobilization by parties, candidates, and groups such as labor unions." Another important distinction that Goldstein &Ridout (2002) made in terms of how mobilization operates in industrialized nations like the United States is that, it had become more sophisticated, as voter contact operations were often purchased off-the shelf from

consultants and phone banks that specialized in identifying and contacting voters for candidates and parties. A more scholarly argument for this phenomenon, according to Putnam (2000, p.39), is a shift from the use of social capital that is grassroots citizen network to financial capital where money becomes the driving force behind mass marketing of candidates and parties. In Africa today, the massive acquisition of social media tools and the establishment of new media technologies has set the platform for self-mobilization towards other networking groups for political as well as social mobilization (Fair et al, 2009). For example, the Committee for Joint Action (CJA) in Ghana was able to mobilize thousands of sympathizers to organize a demonstration to press for the reduction of fuel prices in 2008.

Norris (2000) notes that, Almond & Powell's (1966) definition of Political mobilization as the "the process by which citizens are selected for involvement in politics", is quite general and can probably be seen as more or less a "common denominator" of past conceptualizations of this term. Verba, Schlozman& Brady (1995, 133) attempt to level down this conceptual issue by pointing out that mobilization "has multiple meanings and, therefore, might lead to misunderstanding depending on the context in which the subject is discussed". They therefore note that "Mobilization" can mean at least three quite different social phenomena;

- First, in the social economic sense, mobilization, according to the "social mobilization theory", refers to a process of "considerable social and economic development whereby numbers of individuals have been urbanized, have become literate, and have been exposed to differentiated economic enterprises" (Almond & Powell 1966, 284) and to "the media of communication" (Almond, Powell &Mundt 1996, 184).
- Second, "mobilization" also means the sweeping effort by the totalitarian regime as portrayed in the "mobilization model". Chadema (1962, 31), for example, presented the following picture of the Zanu Pf regime in Zimbabwe: The Party believes in, and is a practitioner of "totalism", involving maximum control and supervision of ordinary people's lives, maximum involvement of the entire Zimbabwean population in state-directed activities, maximum control over people's thoughts and behavior, and maximum mobilization of the Zimbabwean Population to serve the purpose of the nation's vision.

- Third, and in the context of this discussion, "mobilization" can also refer to the selective process to involve citizens in politics.

For the research discussed in this thesis, the third meaning of "mobilization" is relevant. In essence the Oxford Dictionary's (2014) definition of Political mobilization as the actors' attempt to influence the existing distribution of power through introductions of directional variables that aim at defining more precisely the type of relationship which develops between individuals and parties, is the fundamental to the understanding of the term Political Mobilization.

2.3 Motivation for Social Media use in Zimbabwean Politics

Webb (2016) notes that several countries, like Zimbabwe, across the international system have instituted censorship and control of social media sites as political rulers began to feel threatened by the inherent power of social media. The Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) and the Public Order and Security Act (POSA) are two laws introduced by government under the Zanu Pf that have been regarded as a media censorship. Mukasa (2003) notes that these two laws, which are remarkably similar to laws passed by the colonial regime of Ian Smith, lend credence to the characterization of the Zimbabwe Government as a dictatorship, undemocratic and neo-colonialist. According to AIPPA, "Any published statement, which is intentionally, unreasonably, recklessly, maliciously or fraudulently false and either (1) threatens the interest of defence, public safety, public order, the economic interests of the state, public morality or public health or, (2) is injurious to the reputation, rights and freedoms of other persons, will be punished." The Media Institute of Southern Africa argues that the law is too vague and gives limitless powers to the government-appointed Media and Information Council a regulatory regime that will act as an information policeman in style Zimbabwe. Mukasa (2003) however notes that even though media laws were put in place, the government failed to take into cognisance that social media does not have a territorial boundary. Webb (2016) therefore notes that this adds greater emphasis to the importance and power of social media.

According to Calingaert, (2009: 64) "…the internet has increased citizens freedom of expression in countries where traditional broadcast and print media are often controlled and censored. It has increased opportunities to enrich public discourse, expose abuses of power,

and facilitate citizen activism. This view is a true representation of the nature of opposition parties in Zimbabwe who have started using social media to facilitate activism. The MDC T, for one, has relentlessly used social media to complement its inability to use state owned media houses. Webb (2016) notes that the open nature of the internet challenges the ability of repressive regimes to thwart expressions of dissent and political oppositions". Since this was written, in 2009, social media websites have increased in terms of their distribution and membership and the recent example of the uprisings and protests across the Arab region have shown how social media and the internet can be used to challenge the power of authoritarian regimes. In the light of this, with respect to opposition parties in Zimbabwe, one major reason for the use of social media in Zimbabwean Politics is the need to curb the repressive media laws in Zimbabwe.

Mukusa (2014) notes that social media have changed the way citizens participate politically. He notes that it is imperative that this new media and its effect on politics is analysed in order to better understand social media's new role in politics. Zanu Pf in Zimbabwe demonstrated the understanding of the usefulness of social media in Political Mobilization. By 2011 Zanu Pf had already joined the social media movement in a counter-counter attack on the use of social media by opposition Political parties like MDC T other activists like Evan Mawarira. The proliferation of social media and the impact it is having on political mobilization and political change in nations like Zimbabwe. Makusa (2016) notes that, 'social media is evidently a new way in which people can participate in politics.' Bugalo (2015) notes that there are several areas of specific interest in terms of addressing the phenomenon in Zimbabwe. The understanding of many opposition parties in Zimbabwe is that these new media platforms can be a new way to bring freedom to oppressed people by giving them the means to communicate and. The ubiquitous nature of social media means that they are difficult to control and monitor. The emergence of social media has challenged the traditional model of how authoritarian regimes remain in power.

Drigger(2015) notes that social media are a very valuable platform for users to mobilise support, voice certain opinions and engage in healthy debate and discussion. There is the opportunity to spread information through the channels of social media (Morozov, 2011b). Even though social media relies on User Generated Content where there are no fact-checkers to ensure all information is reliable and correct social media is an effective platform to spread party ideology and socialization. Social media have strong influences in Zimbabwe and it is

this power that presents a crucial subject area that needs further investigation and analysis (Mukusa 2016). According to Drigger (2015) social media can also be used by repressive regimes to further control and watch their citizens. The same can be said concerning the Zanupf regime in Zimbabwe. By monitoring social media sites and posting false information these new forms may present authoritarian regimes with an additional avenue to control their citizens. For example an incident that took place in Sudan in early 2011, shows how Facebook can be used to deceive citizens. In this specific example the authorities used Facebook and text messages to encourage protestors to gather at a particular place in Khartoum. The authorities proceeded to arrest them on arrival (Seib, 2012: 62).

Webb,(2016) however, postulates that there is a tendency amongst scholars to over emphasise the use of social media with regards to the toppling of authoritarian rulers. Especially in light of the excitement which has followed the role of social media in the recent This Flag protests. It is now viewed by some as the tool to bring democratic change to the most repressive regimes. Many policy makers have made it their goal to spread media freedom across the world especially to the most repressive regimes. Howard adds an important caveat to this point of view 'Technology alone does not cause political change…but it does provide new capacities and impose new constraints on political actors. New information technologies do not topple dictators they are used to catch dictators off-guard" (Howard, 2011: 12). However, one cannot therefore ignore that role of social media in assist political mobilization in Zimbabwe.

2.4 Zimbabwean politicians and social media

Zimbabwean politicians have taken to social media with enthusiasm and excitement. This is because of the reach of social media. A politician is able to reach a vast number of people, and hopefully convert them to his political ideology. According to Newsday (2013):

> *Speaking at the same event, Minister of Youth, Indigenisation and Empowerment, Saviour Kasukuwere said social media had provided a platform for him to interact with young people as he is aiming to push an indigenisation and youth empowerment agenda."I have to reach the youths wherever they are, even when they are travelling, they still have their phones and can access Twitter," said Kasukuwere. Another*

panelist, Deputy Minister of Women"s Affairs, Gender and Community Development, Jessie Majome, said since she did not have a constituency office, she used social media to reach out to people. "Social media because it is direct, there are limits, no Hassles, I tweet stuff straight from my head into the „tweeter sphere"," she said.

The above quotation explicitly shows two Zimbabwean politicians attempting to reach the masses through social media. Minister Kasukuwere deliberately uses Twitter to offer political opinions. Minister Kasukuwere being on the Zanupf side would obviously have a different political message from the Mdc's Minister Majome. This shows that politicians are using social media to reach out to the people and deliver political messages. Various politicians from across the political divide set up Twitter and Facebook accounts during the 2013 election period. From Zanupf heavy social media users were Saviour Kasukuwere, Psychology Maziwisa, Walter Mzembi and Zanupf itself. From MDC-T prominent users includedMorgan Tsvangirai, Nelson Chamisa, TendaiBiti and Roy Bennet. From MDC –N heavy hitters included Welshman Ncube and David Coltart.

An interesting point to note is the mention of the youth demographic by minister Kasukuwere. Zimbabwe"s population is made up of mostly youths. These youths are affected by the Zimbabwe"s many societal and social ills. These same problems are the same problems that were faced by the youths of the Arab spring. Bouazizi torched himself after a police officer had confiscated his vegetable cart, his only method of income. The youths in Zimbabwe are thus affected by the same troubles that the Arab youths faced. Too be able to reach this demographic, that also comprises registered voters, is the ultimate goal of the politician who uses social media. Twitter and Facebook, when they are used by politicians, become numbers games. This is because to be effective, the message has to reach the largest possible audience. The model of mass communication is the model that best suits social media.

2.5 Elections and social media in Zimbabwe

The period leading up to the 2013 harmonised elections in Zimbabwe was marked by various Mobilisation campaigns on social media (Africa.com,2013). Civic organisations were at the fore front of encouraging Zimbabweans to register to vote and turn up for the elections in droves. First time voters were a particular target for the Non-Governmental Organisations on

Twitter. This was because the first time voters needed encouragement to register because there was a perceived reluctance observed from them. Also, these youths who had just reached the age of majority, were also heavy social media users. Social media therefore became central in the battle to win the young minds over.

The Zimbabwean media has been labelled as repressive, to say the least, social media provided an alternative debate forum. Opinions could be expressed freely on social media without fear of repercussions. There is also safety in numbers on social media. It would be difficult for any government agency to single out one user, out of a Facebook group with 300000 users. The opinions that were expressed on social media ranged from political party banter, to predictions of the July 31 election results. In this regard, social media acted as an alternative press just like during the Arab spring protests.

Another role social media played during the elections was that of providing information. Users on Election Day tweeted and updated Facebook with information about their Election Day experiences. This was usually motivational content meant to encourage other registered voters to turn up at the election booths. Information on the location of voting centres was shared on social media to help others find their voting stations. Any mishaps or irregularities were reported by users. Senator David Coltart of the MDC-N was particularly active on his Twitter account during the election. The senator posted updates on hot topics like ghost names on the voter's role and people being turned away from the voting booths.

2.6.0 Social media use by Zanu Pf and its opposition

2.6.1 Baba Jukwa case

In the midst of the raging debate on social media in Zimbabwe and politics, there arrived the mysterious figure of Baba Jukwa on Facebook. Baba Jukwa is a shadowy Facebook character on Facebook who posts the nation's political secrets online(globalvoices.org,2013). The major drawing point of Baba Jukwa is that he posts sensitive political information that the mainstream media have no access to. Baba Jukwa attracted international attention with foreign media drawing comparisons to other whistle blowers like Julian Assange, Bradley Manning and Edward Snowden. There is disagreement amongst government officials and social media followers as to the true identity of Baba Jukwa. It has been argued that he is not

a single individual but rather a group of people who collectively post to the Facebook page. One reason for this line of thought is that a single individual could not possibly have access to so many varied sources of information. Further, this information seems to be emanating from hundreds of locations across Zimbabwe.

The pattern that emerges therefore is one of people in various government departments submitting information to the Facebook page. Baba Jukwa claims to be a member of the ruling Zanupf party. The majority of his posts however are aimed at exposing top Zanupf officials. The major infractions that Baba Jukwa has taken a liking to exposing include corruption, assassination plots and exposing under cover intelligence operatives. Private mobile phone numbers of people involved in the stories are also exposed by Baba Jukwa. President Robert Mugabe‟s private cell phone number was also exposed on the page (Newsdzezimbabwe, 2013).

Baba Jukwa powers of prediction have proved to be insightful and astonishingly accurate. According to Think Africa press (2013), "Most notably, Baba has warned ZANU-PF's political targets when they enter the party‟s crosshairs. L, he declared that top officials were „planning to sink Edward ChindoriChininga and replace him with their puppet‟. Chininga, a Member of Parliament who had released a damning report on corruption in the country‟s diamond mines, died nine days later in 3y suspicious car accident". This accurate prediction and other verifiable stories that baba Jukwa has posted have led to Facebook users being impressed and mesmerised by this character. The number of people who subscribe to the page has exceeded the 300000 mark (telegraph.co.uk, 2013). This surpasses all other local politicians‟ follower numbers by a wide margin.

The official response to Baba Jukwa has been lukewarm the president has offered a $300000 reward to anybody who can unmask Baba Jukwa(africa.com,2013). Officials from the ruling Zanupf have dismissed Baba Jukwa with contempt and have labelled him as an ineffective rabble rouser. Baba Jukwa has played the role of a whistle blower rather a revolutionary figure like Khaled Said or Mohamed Bouazizi. The information dispensed by Baba Jukwa has been informative. There have been no directives for people to protest or defy the government (Telegraph.co.uk,2013). The page is akin to a tabloid publication that is scandalous for the purpose of pushing volumes. The commercial aspect of Baba Jukwa's page has not gone unnoticed .Baba Jukwa consistently asks page members for donations.

These donations are meant to reach him or them through PayPal. This financial ethos on the page has stripped it of some of its revolutionary ethos. This comparison has established the use of social media in the North African protest environment and the Zimbabwean election environment. Both of these time periods were pregnant with political activity and as such, the influence of social media in political activity could easily be witnessed. This paper, having articulated the state of affairs, now seeks to draw conclusions and recommendations from these findings.

2.6.2 This flag Campaigns

Tagonda (2016) notes that he recent campaigns protests in Zimbabwe are proof positive that Social media has an impact in motivating citizens for political engagement. He notes Zimbabweans protested government repression, poor public services, high unemployment, widespread corruption and delays in civil servants receiving their salaries. The national strike, named "stay-away day," began on 6 July and subsequent protests took place across the country and diaspora. The Zimbabwean government blamed Western governments for the protests and has been accused of blocking social media such as WhatsApp from 9am until 11am on 6 July 2016 to prevent people from gathering to protest.

In essence therefore, social Media platforms like WhatsApp, Twitter and Facebook enablethe mobilization of youths (*#ZimShutDown2016*, *#Tajamuka* and *#ThisFlag* hashtags). These were organised by the **#ThisFlag** movement, the **Tajamuka/Sesjikile** campaign and other groups. On 7 July 2016, Zimbabwean authorities arrested dozens of protesters as anti-government protests spread across the country. In the capital, Harare, the protests forced the closure of banks and shops.

2.6.3 The Million March

Undoubtedly, at the hype of ZanuPf's social media use in political mobilization, the Million march was one of the most successful attempts in using social media to gather support. Bugalo (2016) notes that WhatsApp Messaging platform proved its effectiveness in organising, coordinating and mobilizing the Million march that was organized in solidarity of Robert Mugabe. The social media platform allowed Zanu Pf to gather support across all Zimbabwe through the formation WhatsApp Groups who were administered by key leaders

within the political party. These groups were mainly aimed at fulfilling two fundamental goals. The first and most important goal was the motivation for the masses to attend the march itself. This was accomplished through retrospective messages that drove the memories of the Zimbabweans to the key landmark achievements of Robert Mugabe. The second goal, as important, was the coordination of transport pick up points. This is whereby the WhatsApp social media platform was used to give out information on bus pick up points and also to hear suggestions of the masses on the most conducive pick up points. This therefore proves the efficacy of Social media Zimbabwean Politics.

2.7 The network theory of Social Media use in Zimbabwe.

The Network theory that was developed by Manual Castells is very instrumental to the understanding of the use of social media in political mobilization in Zimbabwe. His research enables one to deduce the potential of new media to shape society. The articles, *The Rise of the Network Society (1996*), *Communication, Power and Counter-power in the Network Society (2007), A Network Theory of Power (2011),* and more recently, *Communication Power (2013, that were written by Castel have created a sure knowledge source for studies of this nature.* As social media and their role in political mobilisation in Zimbabwe has increased in popularity several authors have tur`ned to Castells' theory to explain and better understand the change to Zimbabwean politics brought on by the technological revolution of the 21st century.

Webb (2016) notes that the Network theory as applied to modern society focuses on the suitability of the internet and social media to mobilize citizens. According to Castells "the media have become the social space where power is decided" (Castells, 2007: 238). This information is crucial in Zimbabwe, especially when view in retrospect of the recent #this flag campaigns that launched social media as a sure platform for political mobilization. Castells' writings on the Network Society and particularly on how the technological advancements over the past decade have changed the world we live in. "…the revolution in communication technologies has intensified in recent years therefore it is logically the realm in which society has been most profoundly modified" (Castells, 2010: 1974).

Castells has developed a grounded theoretical framework to understand the avenues of social and political change in our time through understanding the networks that connect our society.

These networks have changed dramatically through the introduction of new communication technologies. Castells identifies the internet as "…a universal tool of interactive communication" (Castells, 2000: 9). Castells has applied Network Theory to the modern world. His theory highlights how society is connected through interconnected nodes and through the technological revolution it has become even more important to understand how these networks work to connect us in ways never experienced before. According to Castells, "We have entered a new technological paradigm, centred on micro-electronics based, and information/communication technologies" (Castells, 2000: 9). Network theory identifies a network as a set of interconnected nodes. Networks are a form of social organization that have existed for centuries. But they have taken on a new meaning in the Information Age by becoming information networks, powered by new information technologies (Castells, 2007).

In terms of network theory, social relationships are made up of nodes. These nodes represent individual actors within the network, and the ties that connect them represent the relationships between the individuals. In today's society networks are identified as communicative structures. Communication networks are the patterns of contact that are created by the flow of messages among individuals through time and space. Networks process streams of information between nodes (Castells, 2013: 63). Castells' work discovered a new social structure which he identified as the network society because it is made up of networks in all the key dimensions of social organization and social practice (Castells, 2010).
According to Castells' the most significant communication transformation we have witnessed has been the shift of mass communication to mass self-communication. He describes mass self-communication as the process of interactive communication that can potentially reach a mass audience. The major transformation of the communication system is the fact that "…the production of messages are self-generated, the retrieval of messages are self-directed and the reception and remixing of content from electronic communication networks is self-selected" (Castells, 2013: 14-15). The diffusion of internet access, mobile communication, and digital and social media, have driven the development of "horizontal networks of interactive communication" (Castells, 2007: 246).
The Network Theory presented by Castells can be used to explain how the characteristics of social media make them valuable tools for political mobilization. Social media have the ability to create weak ties, they have a high level of anonymity and online communication is egalitarian by nature. These inherent qualities in social media provide a space for citizens to mobilise. The work of Granovetterfocusses on the strength of weak ties which is their ability

to introduce citizens to new ideas and new information, and the internet and particularly social media allow these ties to be forged over vast areas of space and time (Granovetter, 1983). Network Theory posits that the emergence of new media represents a major change to the political landscape. The conventional account on the maintenance of authoritarian rule has been put forward by several authors (Gandhi &Przeworski, 2007; Bellin, 2004; Slater, 2003; Svolik, 2009; Nathan, 2003).

This research project will examine draws its objectives from the Network theory. The core purposes of Social Media as presented by Castel, which are Spreading Party Ideology, Events and Campaigns Publicity, opposition politics and dirty politics, will be inherently be used to prove this hypothesis. In essence the core precise of the following chapter is to portray the research methodologies presented by Castell in the Network theory and further go on to present an analysis of the findings based on the network theory. Webb(2016) notes that one cannot deny the role that social media is playing in terms of providing a space where members of society can participate in political discussion and debate, share links to political articles or cartoons and receive relevant political information. The research project will analyse the online activities of two political parties; Zanu Pf and MDC T: how they have made use of social media for political mobilization. This project will indicate and describe the ways in which social media have been used for political purposes and it will also enable a preliminary examination of the effectiveness of social media as a platform for mobilising political protest.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA PRESENTATION

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is divided into two broad functional areas. On the one hand this section encapsulates the base on which the research is conducted and discusses the overall components of the research design and methods. Focus will shift into the research methodology, and data analysis. The data collection tools to be used in this research, the population of the study, as well as the data analysis techniques employed will be dealt with in detail. On the other hand, in this chapter, the results of the data analysis are presented. The data which was collected is then processed in response to the problems posed in chapter 1 of this dissertation. One fundamental goal drove the collection of the data and the subsequent data analysis. This goal is to deduce the correlation between online political participation and offline political engagement. This objective was accomplished hence the findings, also, presented in this chapter demonstrate the potential for merging theory and practice.

3.2Research Methodology

Krippendorff (2004a, p.xxi) notes that, 'the purpose of methodology is to enable researchers to plan and examine critically the logic, composition and protocols of research methods; to evaluate the performance of individual techniques; and to estimate the likelihood of particular research designs to contribute to knowledge.' The core essence of this chapter is to examine the philosophies which underpin research strategies and in doing so will contextualize the methods considered for this project and offer justification for the specific tools selected. In Essence researchers distinguish between two major types of approaches that drive the logic of a study: deductive and inductive theories. This research follows a deductive approach, which is regarded as the most used view of the nature of the relationship between theory and social research (Bryman, 2011: 11). This implies that hypotheses are deduced based on what is known about political mobilization and on theoretical considerations in relation to this domain. Within the hypotheses, there are concepts that must be translated into researchable entities (Bryman, 2011: 11 Each researchable entity is explained in the course of this chapter and it is measured based on the work of other researchers, so that the hypotheses can be tested and then confirmed or rejected.

In addition to the above, research strategies are mainly categorised as quantitative, qualitative and mixed-methods methods. This research is conducted based on a quantitative approach.

Creswell (2009) defines quantitative research as a way of testing objective theories by scrutinizing the relationship among variables. These variables can be measured, in order to statistically analyse numbered data. Researchers who use the quantitative approach test theories deductively, based on assumptions, control for other explanations, and are capable of generalising and replicating the findings (Creswell, 2009: 4). As this research paper takes its point of departure in deductive theory and the purpose is to test the hypotheses developed from the literature review, collecting and analysing data quantitatively is a prerequisite.

Besides selecting a qualitative, quantitative or mixed-methods approach, it is important to decide on a type of study within these three choices. Strategies of inquiry are types of quantitative, qualitative and mixed-methods designs that give a specific direction for the research (Cresswell, 2009: 11). Two of the most common strategies of inquiry associated with quantitative research design are represented by survey research and experimental research. In survey research, a sample of the population is studied, in order to provide a quantitative description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of that population (Cresswell, 2009: 12). It includes cross-sectional or longitudinal studies, using questionnaires or structured interviews for data collection, with the aim of generalizing from a sample to a population (Creswell, 2009: 12).

3.2.1Content analysis

Content analysis has been used to describe the information published on Social Networks by Politicians. Content analysis can be used in either a qualitative or quantitative context. In this project, the quantitative method is employed. The section below outlines the characteristics and suitability of this, and its implementation, drawing on other research projects as well as methodology texts for guidance and examples of successful approaches.

'Content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the context of their use'
(Krippendorff 2004, p18)

Clayton (2010) notes that Krippendorff (1980, 2004) is one of the most widely cited content analysis experts. His guidance forms the foundation for the approach taken in this project. Krippendorff (2004) notes that content analysis is used to understand communication, and one of the most distinctive features of communications is that they inform their recipients,

invoke feelings or cause behavioural changes. He rejects the notion that content analysis must by definition be quantitative. He also objects to the idea that the meaning is manifest and maintains that texts have no objective qualities. In other words, there is nothing inherent in a text; someone brings the meanings of a text to it. There is no assumption that the message itself is a container for the meaning;

> *Ordinary readers and content analysts merely read differently.*
> *(Krippendorff 2004, p23)*

Content analysis of texts has two advantages as a research method. Firstly, it can be unobtrusive. Analysis of a text does not change what is being measured by the act of measuring it. This is in contrast to interviews, for example, which can introduce bias via the researcher, or experiments that can change the outcome by influencing the expectations of the participants. Secondly, pragmatically, it is a tool suited to desk research within a limited budget. *Krippendorff (2004, p43)* notes that websites and other online tools are a key source of data: The exponentially growing Internet is an unimaginably large but for the most part unmined source of content analysis data. As a prerequisite for this research project, 50 posts were taken from the Zanu Pf and Mdc T social media platforms and they are carefully studied in accordance to the guideline proposed by Krippendorff (2004).

3.2.3 A case study

A case study is an in-depth study of a particular research problem. Alacuustari et al (2008: 34) defines a case study as "…the empirical investigation of specific or bounded phenomenon". Jeanne (1995) laments that, a case study research design is often used to constrict down a very broad field of research into one or a few easily researchable examples. The case study research design as referred above, is also useful for testing whether a specific theory and model actually applies to phenomena in the real world. In this instance, a case study refers to Zanu Pf and Mdc T. In this instance general social media users were selected in relation to their knowlowledge of the political parties in question. Thus with respect to this research a case study refers individuals, groups, communities, instances, episodes and eventsstudied on social media with respect to the nature of their participation on these networks (Kumar (2011:7). The case of Zanu Pf and Mdc T was a very instrumental case study since these are the two major political parties in Zimbabwe.

3.3 Research Instruments

Annum (2014) notes that the validity and reliability of any research project depends largely on the appropriateness of instruments. He states that research instruments include questionnaires and interviews. Gilbert (2002) defined research instruments as the tools or instruments used to gather data during research. The nature of researches conducted in social media or internet in general requires that online apparatus be utilized, hence, questionnaires and interviews will be used in collecting data. As the respondents will be answering online questions in their own words, there is room for the researcher to probe for more related questions which might not be necessarily on the interview guide, and as such, this invokes the provision of more relevant information about Questionnaires and interviews to be used as primary tools of gathering data.

3.3.1 Questionnaires

Kumar (2011:145) defines a questionnaire as "…a written list of questions, the answers to which is recorded by the respondents. In a questionnaire, respondents read the questions, interpret what is expected and then write down answers." This research will use a combination of open ended and closed ended questions in the conducting of questionnaires. As a prerequisite for researches encompassing social media online templates were designed in the form of questioners. The online survey encompasses questions referring to the variables of interest (use of social media for news, use of social media for political activities, political knowledge, political efficacy, discussions, and different forms of political participation). The questionnaire design was created based on the twelve guidelines proposed by Leedy and Ormrod (2010). First, the questionnaire was as brief (guideline 1) and as simple (guideline 2) as possible (only close-ended questions), so that only the necessary information to the research project was required, and clear instructions on how to answer were provided for the respondents (guideline 3). In addition, the language used was simple, ambiguous terms were avoided (guideline 4), and the purpose of the questionnaire was clearly stated (guideline 5). Moreover, the respondents were given the possibility to choose a "none of the above"/"I don"t know" option, so that unwarranted assumptions were avoided. For example, the question "Please select any of the following political activities you engaged using Social Media?" had a "none of the above" answer choice, in order to avoid the assumption that a respondent engaged in social media political activities (guideline 6).

The questions were worded so that no clues about potential more desirable responses were given (guideline 7). As it was planned that the data will be computed in the SPSS software, careful consideration was given as to how the answers will be coded into numerical data that can be statistically analysed (guideline 8). Considering that the questionnaire's length was kept relatively short (average duration of completion 43 minutes), there was no need to check for consistency with "countercheck" questions (guideline 9). A pilot test was run, so that the clarity of the questions could be tested; the questionnaire was initially given to three people who gave feedback on the language, question-construction, and questionnaire length (guideline 10). Lastly, a final analysis of the questionnaire was made, in order to make sure that all questions make sense and that they require the precise piece of information needed for the research; the final instrument was designed in clean lines and appealing design, based on a professional layout and it was made available for different electronic devices (guidelines 11-12) (Leedy and Ormrod, 2010: 194-197).

The first questions were concerned with socio-demographic variables: gender, age, education, occupation and monthly income level. The next questions referred to respondents‟ general use of social media. The next two questions referred to the frequency of using Facebook and Twitter with the specific purpose of collecting information about news, events or politics. The next questions were concerned with respondents‟ frequency of discussing political issues with their friends, family, acquaintances and strangers. The questionnaire continued with questions measuring respondents‟ political knowledge and efficacy. Afterwards, respondents were asked to choose the political activities they performed on social media between 2010 to 2016, on any social media platform. The last questions of the survey were related to respondents‟ political participation (offline and online). Considering the fact that an online questionnaire was used, the advantages and disadvantages of this method must be (briefly) discussed.

First of all, an online questionnaire is more cost-effective than a mailed questionnaire. In addition, the implementation of logic jumps was easily adapted, so that respondents were forwarded to other questions (or to the end of the questionnaire), based on their answers. Logic jumps were established for two situations, so that based on a respondent‟s answers, a jump to the end of the questionnaire was performed: (1) if a respondent did not fit the age group or (2) if a respondent did not use any of the two social media platforms. In order to avoid a large amount of missing data, all the questions of the survey were created as

mandatory, so that a respondent can submit the questionnaire, only if all the questions were answered. In addition, there is evidence supporting the fact that online surveys produce similar results to the ones obtained through face-to-face contact (Gosling et al., 2004 in Leedy and Ormrod, 2010: 203). Lastly, as there was an option to create all the questions as mandatory, the data had fewer missing data compared to mailed questionnaires (Bryman, 2011: 668). Keeping this in mind, participants were informed about the general purpose of the study, they were assured that their responses will remain confidential.

3.3.2 Pilot testing

In order to assess the content validity of the questionnaire a pilot test was run (also in accordance with guideline suggested by Leedy and Ormrod, 2010: 196). Content validity represents a systematic, yet subjective method of assessing a scale's ability to measure what it is supposed to measure (Hair, 2011: 238). For the pilot test, three participants were asked to complete the survey (face-to-face). Their remarks and comments were noted and the questionnaire was enhanced based on these statements. It is therefore important to note that pilot testing enable overall feedback to be constructive.

3.3.3 Sampling of respondents

The survey was specifically intended to Zimbabwean citizens, aged 18-60 years old who use social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp, among others. The reason why the lower limit of age is 18 is selected is that it represents the stage where most people become legally politically active (Bugalo 2016). The upper age limit was established to 60, at this age group was comfortably accepted as the politically active. In addition, a snowball sample technique was used. This method is a non-probability sampling technique for gathering research subjects through the identification of an initial subject who is used to provide the names of other actors (Lewis, Bryman, 2004). Simply put, with this approach to sampling the respondents, the researcher contacts a small group of people relevant for the research project, and then uses these to create contact with others (through referral) (Bryman, 2011: 192). In this case, the author of the paper personally contacted 100 people who respected the criteria of the target population of the research, and afterwards they distributed the questionnaire to their network.

3.3.4 Data collection

The survey platform used for designing this questionnaire is the online tool Googleforms.com, which allowed an unlimited number of questions, and unlimited number of respondents, the possibility to insert logic jumps, and an interactive visual design. Using this service, the questionnaire was designed quickly, based on a predetermined template. After the designing step was completed, a link was obtained, which was afterwards distributed online. The questionnaire was available on various devices (computers, tables or smartphones), which made it easy for respondents to participate. When the questionnaire was closed, Googleforms generated results as descriptive statistics, which were downloaded into an Excel spread-sheet.

3.3.5 Data analysis

The data analysis was achieved using Microsoft Excel and the predictive analytics software Google spreadsheets. As the questions were created as mandatory, issues of missing data were not a concern. However, the cases which did not fit the requirements of age (18-60) and social media use (the respondent has an account on Facebook or Twitter) were discarded.

3.4.0 Data Analysis and Findings

The data were collected and then processed in response to the problems posed in chapter 1 of this dissertation. One fundamental goal drove the collection of the data and the subsequent data analysis. This goal was to develop a base of knowledge about the use of social media in political mobilization, that is, the effectiveness of social media as a platform to gather up support. These objectives were accomplished. The findings presented in this chapter demonstrate the potential for merging theory and practice.

3.5.0 Response Rate

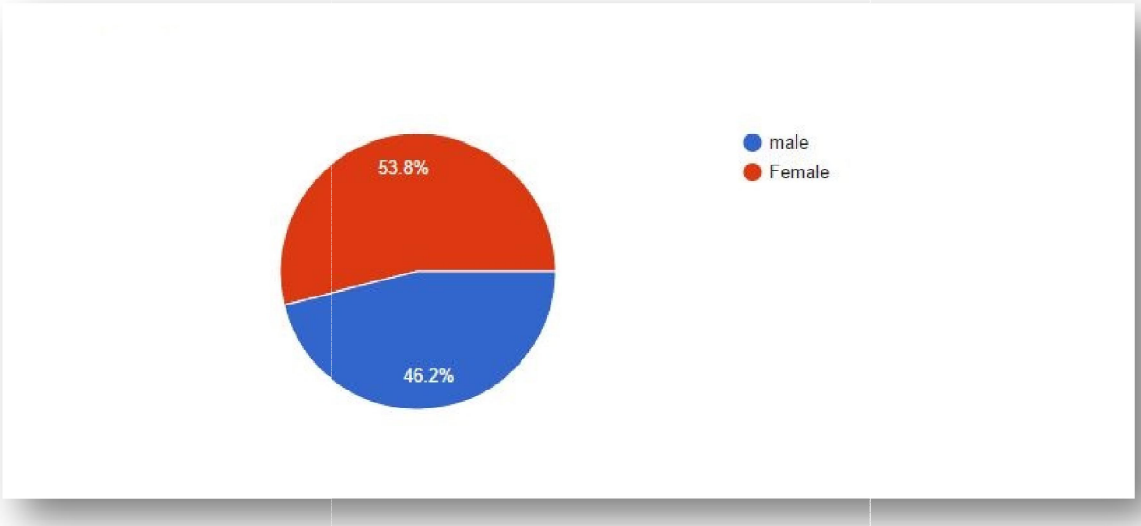
3.5.1 Questioners

In response to the one online questioners that was posted on several social media platform the targeted number of respondents was 200. However only 157 people responded. As a result the researcher printed the same type of questioner and handed it out to 20 respondents whose age group and calibre was not covered by online questioners. The information gathered through these complementary questioners was then submitted to Microsoft excell for information dissemination and numerical interpretation. The offline questionnaires were selective in nature, which means that the researcher was able to collect data from the

respondents that suited the age groups and groupings prescribed. The rate of response therefore is based on several construes based on the questioner. The following are the statistics of how different respondants performed with respect to the questionnaire;

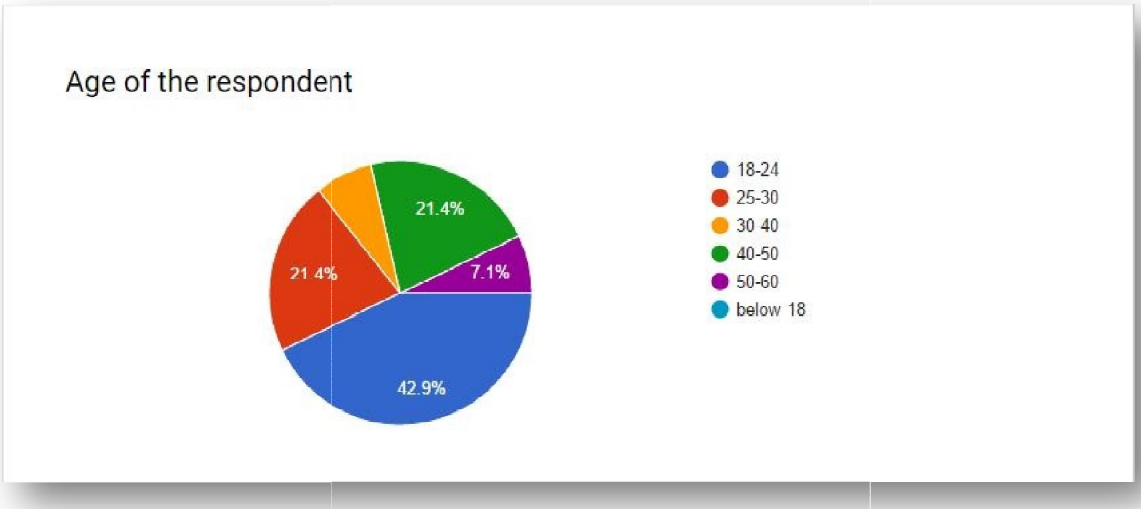
3.5.2 Gender Response Statistics

Figure 2.0 Gender Statistics



1The above difference between the response of Male and Females is proof positive that woman are more highly active on social media. This therefore could mean that they are the major consumers of information published on Social media. As to the extent to which the information passed over social media is from males or females and on what ratio, only an analysis of the following is instrumental;

Figure 3 Age of respondent

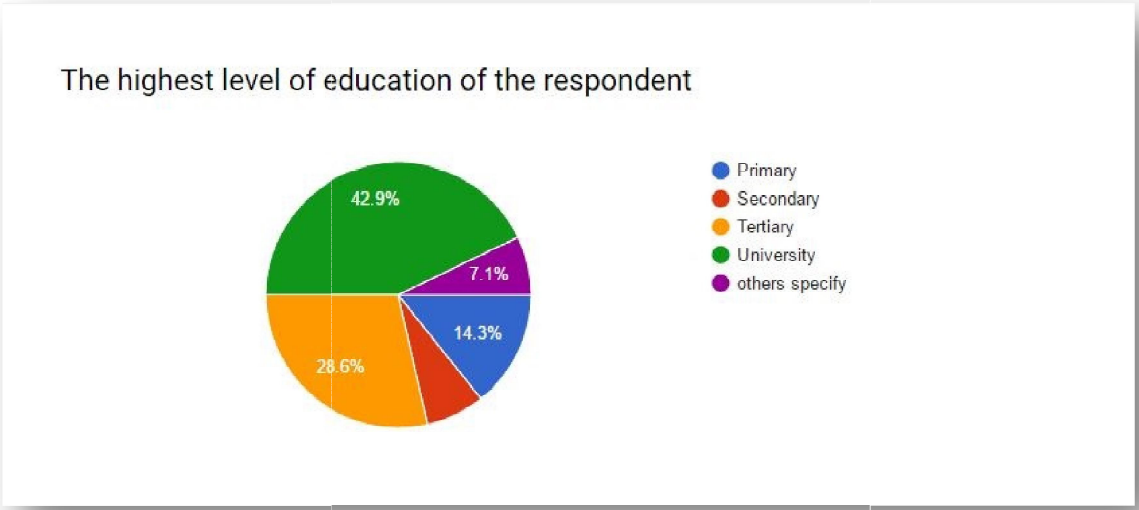


From the above statistics the majority of respondents fell under the 18-24 age group, 25-30 and 40-50 successively. This information is instrumental in one's understanding of the consumers and content generators social media information. The ages therefore can be sub-divided in relation to whether they fall on either the receiving or sending side. The sub-divides, therefore can be summed up as the following

- Information recipients and potential offline Participants (18-30)
- Mobilizers and information catalysts (30-50)
- Political Elites, Politicians and content generators(50-60)

These 3 sub-divides can further be explained based on the question posed on the online questionnaire with respect to the respondent's level of education. The following are the statistics.

Figure 4 Level of Education



Even though it can be said that University respondents could have majored in responding to the online questionnaire, it is critical to note that the 50% of the university respondents were no longer undergraduates and over the age of 40. This proves the above notion that information usually comes from Political Elites and Politicians and is disseminated to other social groups who in-turn become the major political participants. Based on these statistics, it can be said that the response on the questionnaire can be rated excellent. It is however important to note that, in instances where the question required more than a yes or no answer some respondents were reluctant to give as much information. This was likely the case amongst the 18-24 age Group.

3.6Social media use and Political Mobilization in Zimbabwe.

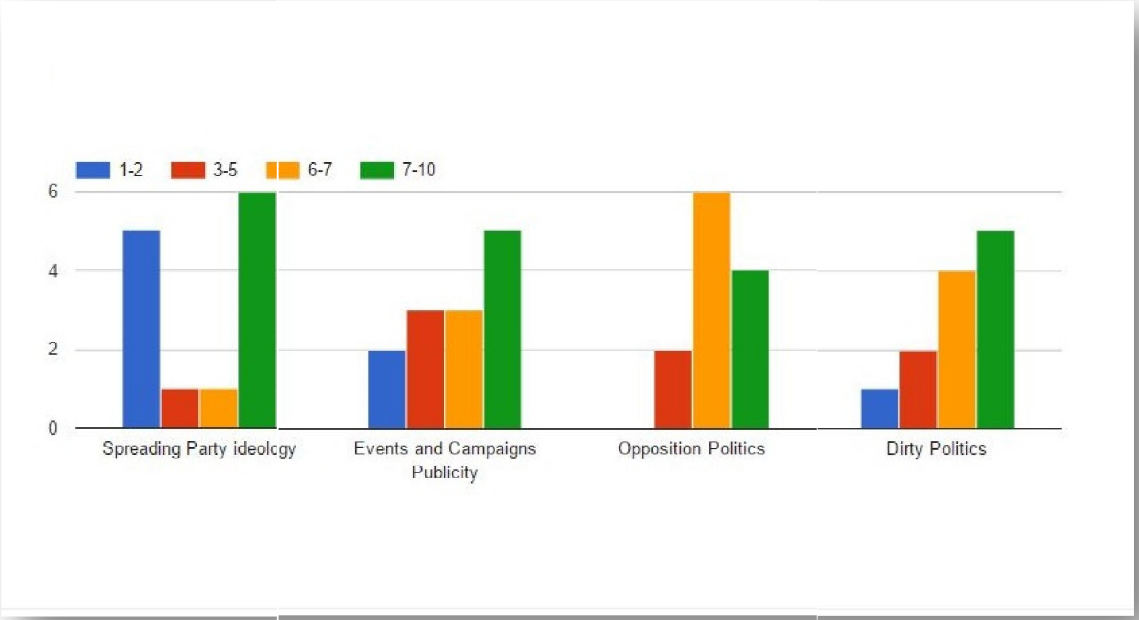
Based on the Results collected it is critical to view Castel's network theory as correctly predictive. Social media has become a global village for political interaction and its impact on politics in Zimbabwe goes without bounds. The response from the three major uses of Social media obtained in this research shows that one cannot ignore the impact of Social Media in providing a political platform for political engagement. The so-called repressive media laws in Zimbabwe like AIPPA and POSA are fearlessly challenged through social media because when it comes to Social media there is no jurisdiction. The major thesis out of Castel's Network theory is that social media can be used for any or all of the following purposes

- Spreading Party ideology

- Events and Campaigns Publicity
- Opposition Politics
- Dirty Politics

The following information obtained from the questionnaire respondents shows the major reasons for the use of social media in Zimbabwe;

Figure 5 Purpose for Social Media use



Based on the above information respondents were asked to rate the purpose of social media by political parties in Zimbabwe (Zanu Pf and Mdc T). In accordance to the above Statistics it is conclusive that social media content by politicians has mainly been labelled as Dirty Politics. On average, the above information proves that 47% use for social media by political parties in Zimbabwe is for Dirty Politics, 35% is for Opposition Politics, 10% is for Spreading Party ideology and 8% is for Events and Campaigns publicity. This can be explain by the nature of opposition that exists between Zanu Pf and Mdc T. Most of the Time spent on Social media by these political parties is on counter-opposition especially on the part of Mdc T because social media is its major Political Publicity platform.

The 47 % lead of Dirty politics therefore proves Castells' Network Theory correct, with respect to his projection that, 'the emergence of new media has helped to shift the power from the state to the network society. The fact that the power to control information no longer

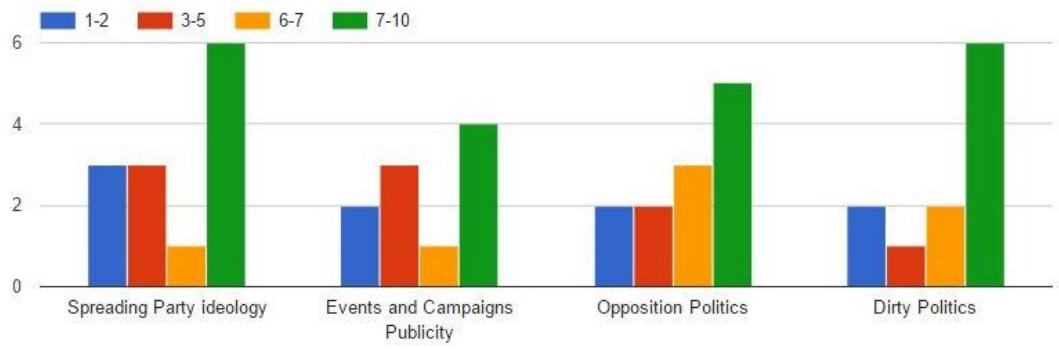
resides exclusively with the institutions of the state but resides in social media networks, is reason enough to explain why Opposition parties like Mdc T have maximized on Dirty Politics. The rise of Social media ensured that ZanupfOpposition tries as much to expose the weaknesses of the party in a way that will spread awareness to the social media public. One good example here is the @Dzamara March that was launched on twitter in response to the so called Abduction of Opposition party members by Zanu Pf loyalists;

Figure 6 Screen shot of Morgan Tsvangirai's Twitter handle

The growth of the trend of Politicians trying to use social media as a platform for spreading negative news about their political counterparts, has shaped social media use in Zimbabwe. The research data gathered from the questionnaires produced astounding results as to what social media users think is the major reason for the use of social media; with respect to Zanu Pf and Mdc T respectively. As a result the following sub headings were compiled;

3.6.1 Zanupf Social media use

Figure 7Zanu Pf Social media Statistics



With respect to the above Statistics Zanupf has predominantly been rated by the respondents as being effective in using social media for every purpose that was asked of, with especially high remarks in its use of Social media for Spreading Party ideology and Dirty Politics being considerably higher than the others. Zanupf has however legged behind with respect to Events and Campaigns Publicity. This stray behind can be explained from the view that Zanu Pf also relies heavily on its override on state-owned traditional media houses.

The hypotheses presented by Castel are concerned with the effect of social media use on offline political participation. The socio-demographic variables, given in the questionnaire, explained variance in offline political participation by Zanupf Social media users. The gender statistic when viewed closely to the participation of Zanupf on Social media give a suggestion on the link between online participation of Zanupf party members and its offline standpoint. The positive coefficient of gender shows that women are more active in offline participation than men. It can also be observed that the major givers of information on social media on the part of Zanupf are aged 30 to 50. This means that the higher one's age the higher one's level of political efficacy and therefore the higher they are able to use social media to engagement social media users in offline political participation.

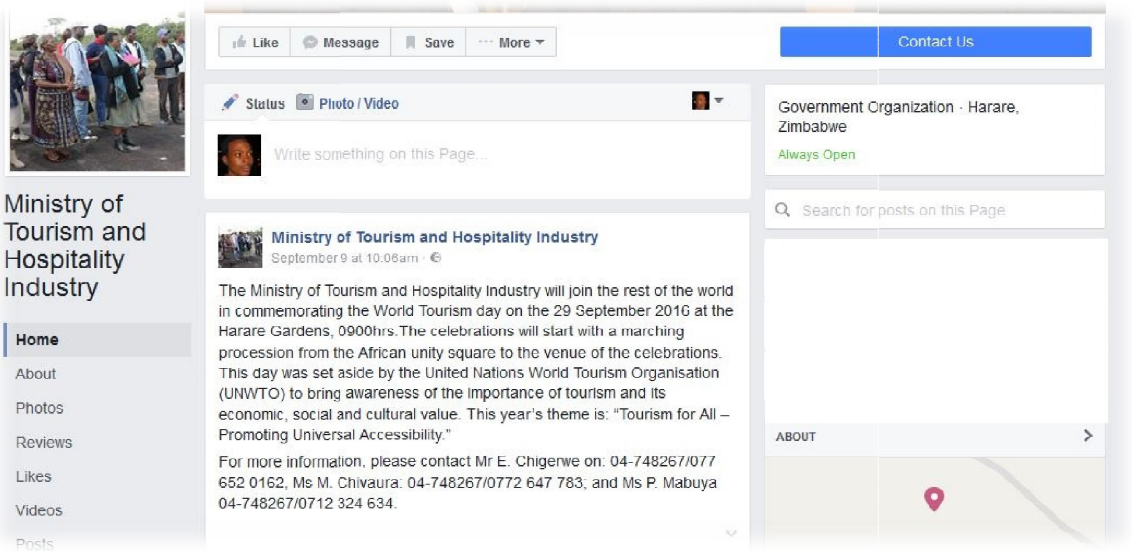
In line with content analysis mentioned in the previous chapter, the above can further be explained by Mugabe's sentiments with relation to the use of social media. President Mugabe has challenged Zanu-PF youths to use information communication technologies to defend

and promote the ruling party as well as for the development of the country. Addressing Zanu-PF Youth League National Assembly at the ruling party headquarters Mugabe said;

> *In promoting the party, our youths should use social media to defend the party and promote the party and develop Zimbabwe through ICTs. You all have a role to play in promoting our production and Zim Asset Brand Zimbabwe. Brand Zimbabwe, the image of Zimbabwe, a Zimbabwe that is s democratic, hardworking and peaceful. That's the image, the Brand of Zimbabwe you should project outside. And also to defend it from its detractors. Our youths should learn from the youths in China, Cuba and Russia that economic success stories have resulted from proper and constructive use of ICT.(www.facebook.com/pages/Zimbabwe-African-National-Union-Patriotic-Front)*

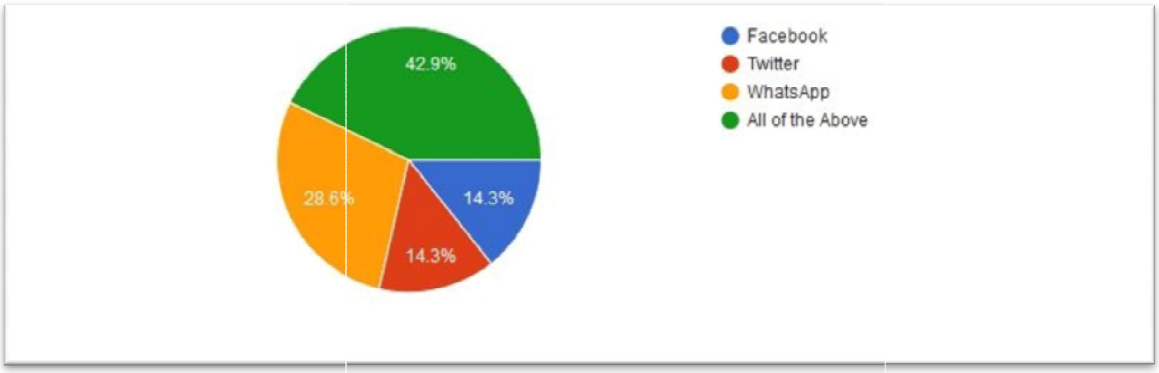
In light of the above the rating given by respondents in relation to Zanu Pf use of Social media for spreading party ideology becomes iconic. One fact observable in this research is that Zanu Pf maintains two broad fundamental reasons for social media use. The first, like Mdc T, social media for Zanu Pf encapsulates the demand to spread party ideology, publish events and campaigns and to influences a negative picture of opposition. It is however important to note that Zanu Pf as the Ruling party has the responsibility of creating the image that the world sees of Zimbabwe and as a result social media use for Zanu Pf also involves the branding of Zimbabwe. In this respect, the use of social media for political mobilization involves the mobilization of Zimbabwean social media users with the intention of sending out a favorable picture of the Zimbabwean nation. The same can be seen in the picture below of how politicians also use social media to ensure the success of certain national events to the glory of Zanu Pf;

Figure 8 Screen Shot of Ministry Of Tourism Facebook Page



The above shows the importance of Social media for Events Publicity has been utilized by Political elites to mobilize citizens to support their campaigns. This can be a pointer to the fact that online participation also impacts on the offline political participation especially when one looks at the success of the world tourism day in Harare 2016. In other words online social media participation alongside a mobilizing factor(politician, political party, movement etc) is correlated to the offline political participation. To prove this, a content analysis of the Million march by Zanu Pf which was mainly organized by Zanupf, is instrumental. The Zanu PF Youth League-organized million-man march whose purpose was to "express solidarity with President Robert Mugabe' as an iconic leader was mainly organized through social media. What is important to this research is that Social media was the chief platform for the publication of this event. In the Questionnaire the respondents were asked if they had participated in any offline event that they only started to hear about on social media. It is of particular interest to this research to point out that, the questionnaire did not give respondents suggestions of any event, yet 43 % of the respondents mention the Million March as the event that they participated in which the head of on social media. With respect to this it is important to note the statistics of the specific social media platform responsible for this,

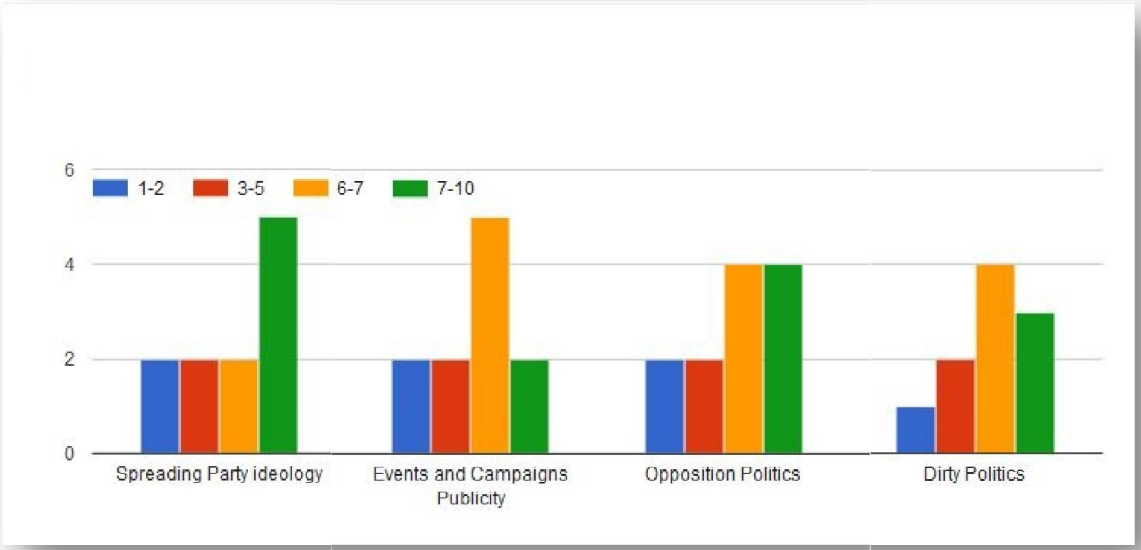
Figure 9 Statistics of the use of different Platforms in Political events



The above statistics clearly portray the impact of the WhatsApp Social Media platform to the political activities organized by Zanu Pf. Technically, the WhatsApp platform has been rated as the most used social media platform in Zimbabwe because it is relatively cheap to use and is averagely easy for most Zimbabweans to use. As a result Zanu Pf has maximized the use of this social media platform as a way of ensuring the success of it political party. In essence therefore, the online participation of Zanupf youth is correlated with their offline civic participation.

3.6.2 Mdc T Social media use

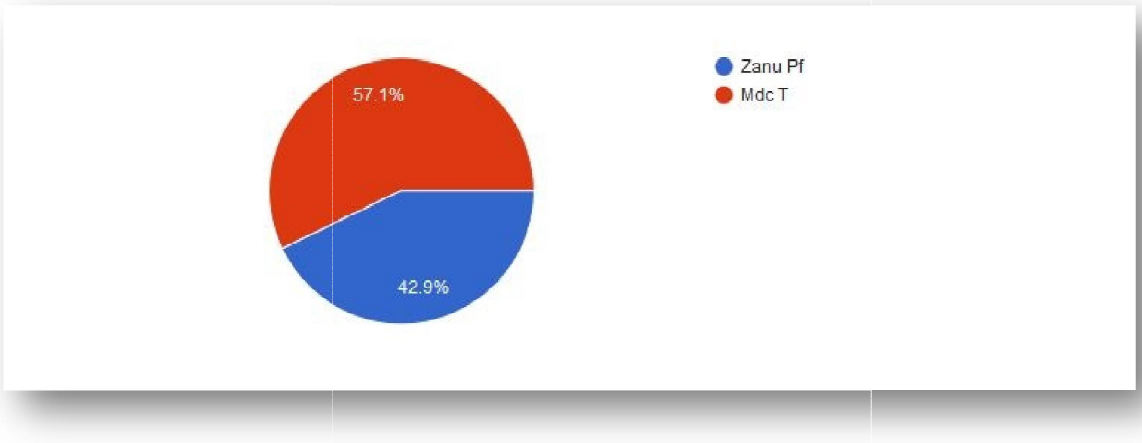
Figure 10Mdc T Social media Statistics



With respect to the above Statistics Mdc T has predominantly been rated by the respondents as being effective in using social media for every purpose that was asked of, with especially high ratings in its use of Social media for Spreading Party ideology and Events and Campaign publicity and average ratings in opposition politics and Dirty Politics. It is critical,

therefore to note, that ZanuPf's ratings for the use social media for these for purposes is 42.9% and that of Mdc T is 57.1 %, meaning that social media Mdc T has been more active in the use of social Media for Political mobilization. This can be further be cemented by the statistics obtained for the questionnaire that asked the respondents on the party that has been most effective in the use of social media for political mobilization.

Figure 11 Effectiveness on Social Media



The above statistics can be explain in view of the Network theory. According to Castells the diffusion of internet access, mobile communication, and digital and social media, have driven the development of "horizontal networks of interactive communication" (Castells, 2007: 246).

Social media have the ability to create weak ties, they have a high level of anonymity and online communication is egalitarian by nature. These inherent qualities in social media provide a space for citizens to mobilise. In essence, therefore, the Mdc T has relied heavily on the hypothesis brought forward by the Network Theory that the emergence of new media represents a major change to the political landscape. In the view of the Mdc T, the use of social media will slowly drive the population to understand the true nature of the ruling party and therefore lure more support to the Mdc T party.

One trend visible in social media is that opposition to authoritarian rule has been the consistent collective-action goal across the Zimbabwe. An important question to be addressed is whether the most of the recent Mdc T campaigns would have occurred without the presence of social media. In the demonstrations mentioned above, against the abduction of Mdc T Party members, social media arguably provided the Mdc T with the means to communicate and coordinate with one another to rally around their common goal. In essence

the Network theory's position that "…digital media are important precisely because they have a role in popular mobilizations against authoritarian rule," has been seen as the most plausible reason for the use of social media by the Mdc T. This can further be explained by the 6-7(Opposition politics) and 7-10 (Dirty politics) rating that the respondents gave in response to the question of the major purpose of Social media use by Mdc T.

It can be observed that the internet, through social media, significantly contributes to transcend geographical and socio-economic boundaries and facilitates collaboration among the alienated intellectual elite, the youth, and the urban residents. For the Mdc T social media helps to remove one of the central obstacles of collective action under 'authoritarianism', namely the lack of social interaction. The ways in which social media contributes to offline participation confirm various aspects of the Network theory and can be summarized in 3 main categories.

i) Network Formation

On the one hand, for Zanupf opposition, social media facilitates the formation of personal networks of digital activists who challenge the regime's control of the public sphere and offers an alternative discourse to the official political narrative. In line with the arguments of Network Theory, the Internet thus provides, for the opposition, the resource of a partially uncontrolled space that undermines the regime's strategy of social isolation and fosters solidarity among Zimbabwean social media users due to their shared feelings of repression. On the other hand Social media also gives Zanu Pf a platform for offensive and defensive politics whereby the party uses social media for the same reason as Mdc T and also uses it to create a negative image of the opposition.

ii) Information Transmission

The statistics show how social media allows opposition Social media users to circumvent the national media blackout by brokering information to the international mainstream media, most notably the Zimbabwean Newspaper or even television channels like BBC. The breakdown of censorship barriers enables both Mdc T and Zanu to mobilize collective action. This is the reason why the statistics for both parties' use of social media for events and campaign publicity all fell under the same average of 60%. Social has become an important highway for information transmission and because the state cannot fully conceal social

media, social networking platforms can now be labelled as platforms that facilitate democratic governance by informing the public about party intentions and helping to calculate the extent of upcoming events and protests. The function of social media as an information hub in the Zimbabwe thus supports arguments of the Network Theory regarding protest mobilization.

iii) Collective Identity Formation

Social networking sites play an important role in politicising the urban and rural areas. This supports the arguments brought forward by the Network Theory, according to which overlapping membership in several networks leads to a spill-over of information from an activist network to networks of less engaged citizens. It also illustrates the important function of social networks in building a collective amongst Zimbabweans. Social media thus helps to connect impoverished street protesters, socio-economically and culturally privileged and highly motivated digital activists, and the young urban middle class and motivate them to participate in national politics.

3.7 Content analysis of Zanu Pf and Mdc T Social media posts

Based on the Guidelines proposed by Krippendorff (2004) a content analysis of the social media posts of Zanu Pf and Mdc T on social media is instrumental to proving the relevance and purpose of Social Media in Political mobilization. The following Table documents the 25 recent posts/tweets/messages from each political party (or its members). It is, hereby, important, for the researcher, to outline the problem of fake accounts that are usually created in the name of a political party with the intention of spreading wrong information about that political party. To curb this problem the research made use of sampling methods that ensured that the information gathered is authentic. For information to be authentic every post or tweet or message from a political party was regarded as authentic if, (1) it resembled the vision of the political party in question, (2) it corresponded with the present events of that Political Party as published on other alternative media platform, (3) it was obtained from a political group that had more than 500 followers (and or fans). In essence these three guidelines were instrumental in the gathering of the following information;

Zanu Pf

Table 1 Random content of Zanu Pf on Social Media

Social Media Platform	Name of Platform	Content	**Purpose Symbol**
Facebook	**Team Zanu Pf Live**	*New York- ColtrainChimurenga leading the troops in Solidarity with President Mugabe and the people of Zimbabwe*	-a -b
Facebook	***Team Zanu Pf Live***	*We appreciate the recognition by the world at the 71st Session of the General Assemblly where Zimbabwe-Represented Cde Frederick Shava- as the new President of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)*	-b
Facebook	***Team Zanu Pf Live***	*True Revolutionaries never Sell out*	-a
Facebook	***Team Zanu Pf Live***	*Once again, President Mugabe has buried his detractors @ the UN. The Ploy by Pastor Evan Mawarire to Humiliate our President has Faltered, this time in a foreign land. It appears Mawarire is a failure, everything about him, look at his Cv*	-a -c
Facebook	***Team Zanu Pf Live***	*V.P.E.D Mnangagwa has called on Zimbabweans to put aside their differences and unite to support the government-led command agriculture scheme to boost food security*	-a -b
Twitter	***Team Zanu Pf Live***	*Freedom to protest is different from freedom to burn private and public property- can this be democracy*	-a -c
Facebook	***Team Zanu Pf Live***	*While others are strategizing to be beaten in town & in the next election, Zanupf is working and strategizing to win the next election. VIVA ZANU PF*	-a -c
Twitter	***Team Zanu Pf Live***	*Subscribe and follow us on YouTube we are on the following link www.youtube.com/channel/teamzanupf*	-a
Twitter	***Team Zanu Pf Live***	President Mugabe thanked the war veterans for their concern because the communiquereleased was being used as a weapon for regime change	-a -b
Twitter	***Team Zanu Pf Live***	CdeSekeramayi said that war veterans are angry on the insult made to the President by a clique of the war veterans	--a

Mdc T

Table 2 Random content of Mdc T on Social Media

Social Media Platform	Name of Platform	Content	Purpose symbol
Facebook	Mdc-t Charter House	WHAT NEXT AFTER #ThisFlag NEW POLITICAL GENERATION (Prt2) The Zimbabwe political landscape has changed. What the #ThisFlag movement did was to create an awareness and bravity for Zimbabweans that has been festering for the past 36 years. On the political front and current we have Zanu-PF. They claim to win every election. They could change the leader and promise change but this is very much a redressing of the same party issues and corruption we have had all these years....	-a -c
Facebook	Mdc-t Charter House	WHAT AM I HEARING? I seem to be hearing things. What am I hearing?I hear that Zimbabweans seem to have had enough, finally, and volcanoes in the form of protests are erupting everywhere. What am I hearing?I hear that this is indeed Mugabe and his minions' last supper. What am I hearing?I hear that at some point a certain ItaiDzamara projected all this and many labeled him a mad man. What am I hearing?I hear that the government can't afford to pay civil servants anymore, as a result doctors and teachers have downed their tools? What am I hearing?I hear that a new and better Zimbabwe is beckoning but it will come at a cost. What am I hearing?What am I hearing?	-a -c
Facebook	Mdc-t Charter House	Join me at this demo.... The UK &IRELAND MDC-T London Branch in the SOUTHEAST DISTRICT kindly invites you to a demonstration on the 7th of April 2016 , from 11am to 1300 at the Zimbabwean Embassy .This would be in solidarity with the demonstration being held in Zimbabwe on the same day. The aim of the demonstration is to highlight the plight of Zimbabweans who are surviving on less than a dollar per day when the Government of Zimbabwe readily admits the misappropriation of USD15 billion. For further information please contact me as below or our London branch secretary ClemenceMunyukwi 07889667686.	-a -b -c
Facebook	Mdc-t Charter House	Happy Birthday Dr Richard Morgan Tsvangirai. MAY THE ALMIGHTY LORD CONTINUE TO BLESS YOU AND GUIDE YOU IN HIS PATH IN THIS STRUGGLE.We pray that you may be protected and be multiplied with more wisdom and vision. May your territories be extended and reach greater heights. I love you my president	-a -b
Facebook	Mdc-t Charter House	mr president you cant appoint mps to parliament on the quota system and boycott the election. It doesnt make sense. And to those who thing doc magaisa is a sellout grow up. Thats why its called Democratic... Tinobvumidzwa to have different views. Even Save vanobhaiza sometimes.	-a -b -c
Facebook	Mdc-t Charter House	Nelson 'Cobra' Chamisa at it again. The President of MDC Transform has resurfaced back again calling the legitimate MDC Team members of parliament to come back to the big tent so that they fight together. Chamisa who already have plans to move out of the big tent has now decided to call the renewal Mps to come back so that they will not be recalled from parliament	-a -b
Facebook	Mdc-t Charter House	It's so sad wenpple are trembled wth fear such that they can't let their voice to be heard Mr Government pliz hear me out jobs jobsjobs n jobs this is not wat Zimbabwe voted fo in 1980,Zimbabwe arise	-a -c
Facebook	Mdc-t Charter House	ZIMBABWEAN ELECTIONS WERE RIGGED - SOUTH AFRICAN INVESTIGATING COMPANY CLAIMS A private South African based intelligence organisation Nasini Projects has allegedly unearthed a deadly electoral fraud in the just ended harmonized elections in Zimbabwe.	-b -c

With respect to the above information downloaded from the Facebook accounts of the two political parties Zanupf and Mdc T, an evaluation of the constant purpose of the use of social media by these two political parties was made in accordance to the guideline proposed by the network theory on the 4 main purposes for social media use. These are

- Spreading party ideology -a
- Events and Campaigns publicity -b
- Opposition politics -c
- Dirty Politics -d

With respect to the above information all intended purposes were given a symbol to enable easy analysis of data. The researcher therefore was tasked with categorising each of these purposes in according to the information taken from the social media platforms of Zanu Pf and Mdc T.

3.7.1 Zanu Pf Content Analysis

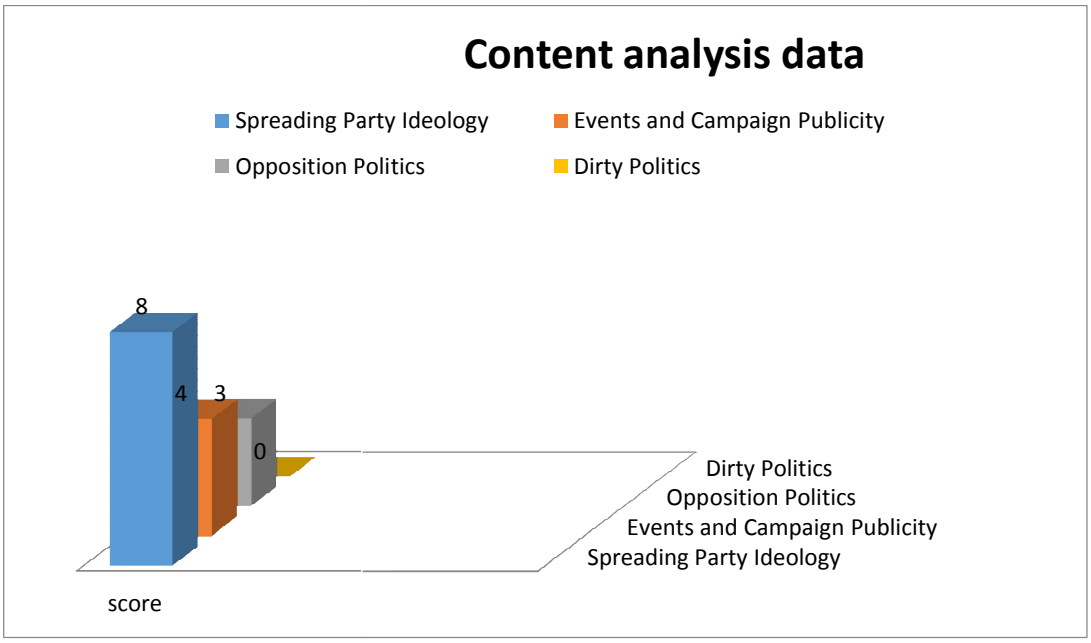


Figure 12Zanu Pf Content Analysis

The above information summarizes the nature of information on social media platforms by Zanu pf. With respect to these results the main reason for social media use by Zanu Pf boils

down to the need to spread party ideology alongside the need to publicize party events and campaigns. It is somewhat, surprising that, according to content analysis opposition and dirty politics are the least purposes for social media use by Zanu Pf. The best explanation for this is the fact that Zanupf already has traditional media as a primary platform for opposition politics and dirty Politics. Another reason to explain is the discouragement Robert Mugabe gave to Zanu Pf members on the use of social media use (www.dailynews.co.zw/articles/2016/04/05/). Social media contents, therefore, influence human behavior in different ways . With respect to Zanu Pf, the importance of social media in political stability is critical. This can especially be seen in the above content where the group Team Zanu Pf Online on Facebook was encouraging facebook followers to also follow their Twitter account. Zanu Pf has understood that Social media is the source of information in the 21st Century Zimbabwe.

3.7.2 Mdc T Content Analysis

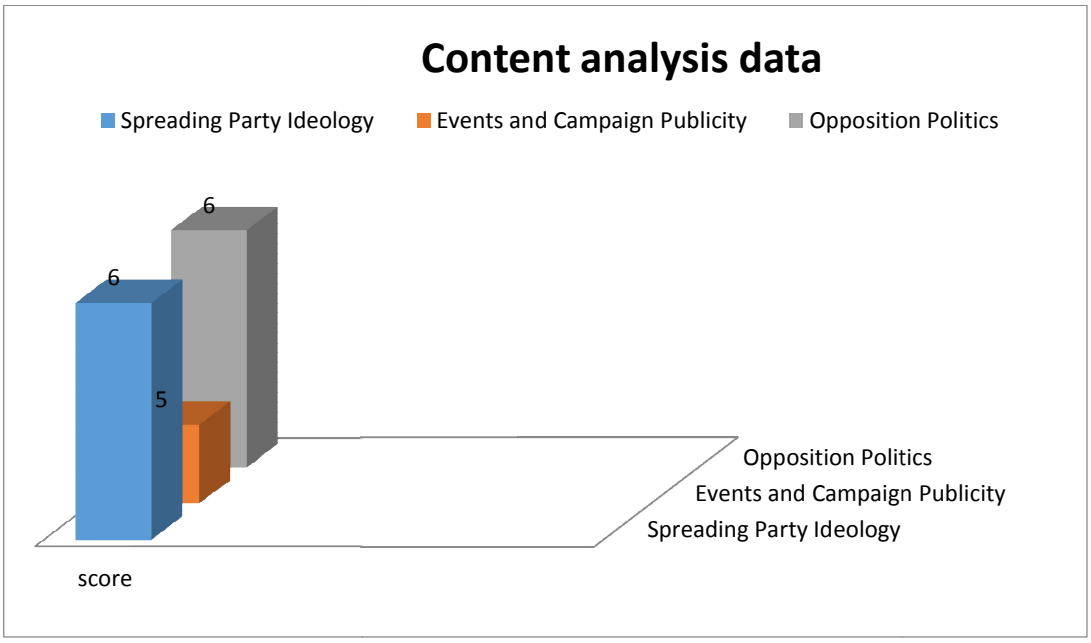


Figure 13Mdc T Content Analysis

The above information summarizes the nature of information on social media platforms by Mdc T. With respect to these results the twomain reasons for social media use by Mdc T boil down to the need to spread party ideology and opposition politics. The need to publicize events and use social media for dirty politics is very minimal with respect to Mdc T. The

theory put forward by Castells helps to explain how the technological revolution and the consequent rise in the use of social media has changed the manner in which political mobilization is done. With respect to Zanupf and Mdc T the median purpose for social media use is Spreading Party ideology. This bring to motion Castel's proposition that the internet is the 21st century innovation for the quick passage of information within any political system. The demand the fast passage of political information as proposed by the major mobilization concepts, is the major driver for the use of social media use in Zimbabwe. This therefore proves the efficacy of social media in political mobilization.

Mdc T aligns its purpose for social media use with the views of Bellin, who noted that '…social media is an important new empirical reality that will govern the question of authoritarian resilience from now on" (Bellin, 2012: 139). This explains why the content published on Mdc T social networking pages suggests that the purpose for spreading party ideology is core-equal with that of Oppostion Politics. As Lynch(2012) stated that new media can in fact support contentious collective action even under the constraints of authoritarian rule due to its ability to "reduce transaction costs, nurture informational cascades, foster diffusion and increase the costs of state repression" (Bellin, 2012: 139), Mdc T has also used social media with the intention of impacting similar results. This makes social media relevant in stimulating political mobilization; limiting or enhancing the mechanisms of state repression; affecting international support for the regime; and affecting the overall control of the public sphere" (Lynch, 2011: 304). The ubiquitous nature of Social media means that even with the most sophisticated surveillance and censorship technologies it is still difficult completely control them.

3.8AN OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

The results shows that Social media in Zimbabwe has been used for one or any of four purposes highlighted by Castel's Network theory; Spreading party ideology, Events and Campaign publicity, Opposition politics or dirty Politics. The outstanding finding the research gathered, with relation to these four, Zanu Pf and Mdc T, is that the purpose of Spreading party ideology is the median purpose in the use of social media in Zimbabwe. The research gathered that the use of social media for Political Mobilization fits differently amongst different age groups. The research gathered that the age group 18-30 is the most

active group, thereby making it the most targeted group by Zanu Pf and Mdc T in their endeavors to mobilize support for their activities. Therefore, according to this research, this research this group was labeled as the Information recipients and potential offline Participants The age group 30-50, in accordance to the findings, was labeled as the age group of Mobilizers and information catalysts which implies that this age group acts as the information middle man on social media. In other words these are politicians who disseminate information from the source and publish it on social media with the sore aim of attracting supporters from their Political parties. The final age groups that of 50 years and above which has been categorized as Political Elites, and content generators. These are not so active social media users but the heads of Political parties and their hierarchies that are the source of the ideologies that are being spread through social media platforms.

The research demonstrates that, in accordance with the above age groups, social media is an effective platform to mobilize citizens for various political purpose. The boiling point of the research is the finding that Spreading party ideology is the most intended purpose for social media use, while other purposes like Events and campaigns publicity, opposition politics and dirty politics are of as much considerable importance. For Mdc T social media complements for its lack of influence in the use of state owned traditional media platforms, thereby all the efforts made by this political party is dedicated to ensure that it gains the same political grounds gained by Zanupf since 1980. On the other hand, for Zanu Pf, social media is an added advantage that has mainly been used to counter attack the strong hold that Mdc T had thought it had over the use of Social Media. As a result these two political parties has used social media for more or less the same purpose.

3.9SUMMARY

In this chapter, on the one hand, research methodology and research design used in carrying out the research were outlined. A combination of items mainly the research population, presentation data collection, and analysis have been outlined to guide the researcher in the gathering of data. It also weighed the pros and cons of using each instrument. Also examined were the sampling techniques and how the researcher chose to use them. On the other hand, the other key functional area of this Chapter was to present the results of the research and analyze the data gathered from the research. The data was presented using quantitative approach using tables, pie charts and graphs. Data obtained proved that Social media is very relevant in Political mobilization in Zimbabwe. One of the key findings that the research gathered is that there is a relationship between online political participation and offline political participation. The two political parties, Zanu Pf and Mdc T were used to prove the authenticity of these finding through the implication of several research instruments. The outstanding use of social media platforms like Facebook Twitter and WhatsApp by these two political parties proved that Castel's network theory, as reflected in Chapter two, correctly predicts the impact of Social media in Political mobilization. The proceeding chapter is a short well-crafted chapter focusing on the summary, conclusion and recommendations of this whole study.

CHAPTER 4:SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.0 Introduction

The fundamental goals of this chapter is to provide a summary of all the previous chapters and also draw a logical conclusion from the research findings. A number of recommendations and strategies on the effective and efficient use of Social media in Political Mobilization in Zimbabwe will also be discussed in this chapter. It is hereby important to note that the research focused mainly on highlighting the use of social media in political mobilization through the cases of Zanu Pf and Mdc T.

4.1 Summary

The research was directed in a way that measures the extent to which Social media platforms like Facebook and Zanu Pf and Twitter, have been used by politicians in Zimbabwe to attract more supporters. One of the critical intention of this research was to prove the relevance of social media in political mobilization in Zimbabwe.

The primary focus of the first chapter was to give an introductory genesis of the subject matter of the research. This consisted of the background information, objectives, and research questions, justification of the research, delimitation and limitations to the study being delineated. On this note it is important to highlight that three research questions guided the nature and extent of the information gathered in the chapters proceeding chapter one these research questions asked about the relevance of social media Political mobilization, how Social Media been used to impact on Political mobilization by Zanu Pf and Mdc T and how online participation of Zanu Pf and Mdc T on Social media influenced on the offline political participation of their supporters.

To establish a firm ground to answer the research question prompted in the above chapter, chapter two was solely aimed at linking the subject matter of social media and political mobilization to the literature that is available. Various scholarly views were examined in a tactical manner that examined the two broad topics encapsulated in the subject under discussion, that is; Social media and political mobilization. Having made these two concepts understandable, two were discussed in relation to each other and the context in which they were being discussed. The critical phase of this chapter was how a link between the research-

questions were linked to the study of Manuel Castel who propounded the network theory gave a several hypothesis that became the researcher's fundamental goal to prove correct or amiss.

The third chapter dealt with two broad constructs in relation to each other. On one broad side, a research methodology was defined and highlighted with respect and linkage to the subject of the use of social media in Political Mobilization. Research designs like online questionnaires and content analysis became the primary sources for data collection. How these designs were used, their boundaries, advantages and disadvantages, was discussed exhaustively so as to ensure that the research had a clear and measureable focus.

On another broad side chapter three delineated the study results. The study established that Social media is a very effective platform for political mobilization. Data obtained proved that Social media is very relevant in Political mobilization in Zimbabwe. One of the key findings that the research gathered is that there is a relationship between online political participation and offline political participation. The two political parties, Zanu Pf and Mdc T were used to prove the authenticity of these finding through the implication of several research instruments. The outstanding use of social media platforms like Facebook Twitter and WhatsApp by these two political parties proved that Castel's network theory, as reflected in Chapter two, correctly predicts the impact of Social media in Political mobilization.

It is therefore the fundamental goal of this chapter, chapter five, to give the summary of the whole study, recommendations and conclusion of the research work.

4.2 Conclusions

Through examining the role of social media in the cases of ZANU Pf and Mdc T, this research project aimed to gain a greater understanding of the role of social media in politics and specifically in what respects they are effective tools for initiating political mobilization. To gain a better understanding of this phenomenon as well as answering the research questions stated, this section provides a discussion summarizes the logical conclusions obtained by the researcher.

One of the key conclusions observable in this research is that Zimbabwean politicians now have a space to communicate, coordinate and mobilize support in a country where traditional media sources are often controlled and restricted. Social media have been used by Zanupf opposition to initiate political mobilization in order to stimulate political change in accordance to their party ideology. The rise of social media and its new found use in politics is significant. There are several ways in which this new communication method is affecting political mobilization. In Zimbabwean politics communication has always been a crucial element to social movements, over time this has taken many forms including pamphlets, manifestos, television and radio. Social Media is a new addition to their repertoire and provides some unique elements. This makes social media especially suited to being used by social movements as they rely on a certain degree of communicative autonomy to exist.

The emergence of Social media in Zimbabwe has helped to shift from traditional mobilization methods to newer and dynamic methods that ensure effectiveness. As Allagui&Kuebler (2011: 1436) rightly observes, the power to control information no longer resides exclusively with the institutions of the state; it resides in social media networks. It is therefore to no surprise that one of the chief reasons for the use of social media between Zanu Pf and Mdc T is spreading party ideology. It comes to no surprise that social media is now the best way to spread party information abroad as it can be observed that even the oldest of Zimbabwean Citizens are now becoming abreast with this new technological development of the 21st century.

However it is important for one to be careful not to overstate the power of social media because it also inhibits some limitations. Through the emergence of social media, social movements have been used by Zanu Pf opposition because they are believed to have greater autonomy which has enabled them to confront the state on their own terms. As Castells (2007) rightly states that naturally social movements are not originated by technology, they use technology. It therefore critical that political parties remember that there is a no nexus between the powers embedded social media and the capacity to challenge the political order on the basis of the internet. In essence therefore, technology cannot solely determine the process and the outcome of the power-making process but however plays an important role in maximizing the chances for political mobilization.

The theory put forward by Castells helps to explain how the technological revolution and the consequent rise in the use of social media has helped political parties by giving them an effective platform for Political Mobilization. In fact this can be evident in the through the research findings outlined in this paper. As Bellin (2012: 139) righty states "…social media is an important new empirical reality that will govern the way political parties govern their activities. Social media can support the party endevours and intentions in Zimbabwe and continues to grow in the manner in which it influences the masses.In essence therefore the logical conclusion of this research to say that online political mobilization works.

4.3 Recommendations

This research was driven by the desire to create a link between social media and effective political mobilization through studying the cases of Zanu Pf and Mdc T. It is, therefore necessary to highlight recommendations that politicians can take note of in their endevours to use the social media innovation in gaining more political ground.

To begin with, one notable recommendation is in line with the innovation that the nation of China made in the face of the recognition of the viral growth of social media in the nation. Social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter had been growing in influence in China and the fear that other nations like the USA may try to use Social media to impact change in china's ideologies drove certain innovations that can also be used in Zimbabwe. Even though the ban that China put on Social media in reaction to this threat, is not recommended for Zimbabwe, the way in which China counteracted the complains of the Chinese people is. China introduced its own social media platforms that replaced social networks like Facebook and twitter. The same is also crucial in Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwean government should push for the introduction of Zimbabwean based social media platform. One key benefit this can ensure is the outstanding protection this can give to the government especially with respect to the influence that western nation have on the internet.

With respect to the Political parties in Zimbabwe, as in the cases of Zanu Pf and Mdc T, it is recommended that social media division be established as major divisions within political parties. A social media division is one of the key groupings within a political party that specifically deals with social media. Such an innovation can be drawn from the 2008 presidential election in the USA where subdivides within the contesting parties were made to deal with political mobilization on social media platform. Research from this specific election

shows that social media was very instrumental in ensuring victory for Obama and his party. In the face of the upcoming 2018 elections in Zimbabwe and all future elections, social media divisions are critical especially when political parties aim at influencing the younger generation or the youth.

One final recommendation given in the light of this research, is that social media should be strictly monitored by the state. This is so because social media also creates a platform for what are called cyber terrorists that aim at spreading wrong information and agendas in the name of the government. In Zimbabwe, the same can be said of the internet saga of Baba Jukwa and Zanu Pf which presented an off-setting picture of the innovation of Social media. Monitoring Social media in this respect can be done in the same way several nations have allowed social media networks like Facebook and Twitter to build headquarters in their territories which enables better understanding between these nations and the social networks and also makes monitoring of these social networks easy.

4.4 Suggestions for future research

The study of Social media worldwide is on a pace-setting level, yet when one looks at Zimbabwe the Literature that covers social media use in Zimbabwe is very minimal. It is therefore an important development for government to give more effort to the research regarding social media. Such government departments like ZIMSTATS should be given a mandate to compile social media information for the benefit of future research. It is therefore critical that Tertiary institutions like the Midlands State University encourage research along these lines through introducing and making module likes, 'Social Media,' as is the case with other Universities like Harvard and Witwatersrand, compulsory for students.

Appendix I: Respondent questionnaire

Online Survey on the impact of social media and Political mobilization in Zimbabwe.

Dear respondent,

My name is Moses Musanhu, a fourth year student studying a Bachelor of Science Degree in Politics and Public Management with the Midlands State University. This questionnaire is designed to examine **the use of Social Media in political mobilization in Zimbabwe. Cases of Zanupf and Mdc**T, and is in partial fulfilment of the requirements to obtain the above mentioned degree. The information you provide will help in understand the relationship between social media and Political Mobilization in Zimbabwe. Only the members of the research team will access the information you give. In order to ensure privacy you are provided with the participant's telephone number +263777 548 632 which will you also be used for the follow up procedures.

The summary of the results will be mailed to you after the data has been analyzed in case you are interested.

I thank you very much for your time and cooperation and appreciate your help in furthering this research.

Yours sincerely

……..
Researcher

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