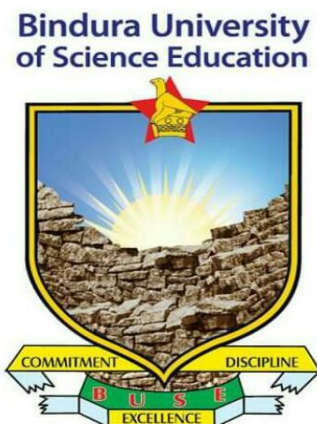


**BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION**  
**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PEACE AND GOVERNANCE**



**MUPEDZANHAMO MARKET AS A HIVE OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE**

**BY**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PEACE AND GOVERN-  
ANCE IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT FOR THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE BACHELOR  
OF SCIENCE HONOURS DEGREE IN PEACE AND GOVERNANCE.**

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**BINDURA, ZIMBABWE**

**31 MARCH 2025**

## **ABSTRACT**

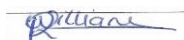
The purpose of this study was to understand how the Mupedzanhamo market has become a hive of political violence, to explore the intricate dynamics of political and economic violence at Mupedzanhamo Market in Harare, Zimbabwe. The study used a political opportunity structure theory as a theoretical framework. The study was grounded on a critical realist philosophy and employed a mixed method approach. A case study design was used as a research design. The population sample were vendors and market officials from Mupedzanhamo market. The study used a sampling size of 30 respondents. The research used questionnaires and interviews to collect data. The first objective of the research was to identify the key factors contributing to violence at Mupedzanhamo market. The second objective was to assess the impact of political violence on the livelihoods of vendors. The third objective was to identify existing coping mechanism employed by vendors in response to political violence. The last objective investigate how political actors manipulate and exploit the market for political gain. The research findings reveal that political rivalries and economic competition significantly exacerbate violence, leading to severe consequences for vendors including economic losses, business closure and psychological tolls. The study also highlights the role of political actors in manipulating Mupedzanhamo market dynamics for electoral gain. The study recommends for the strengthening of conflict resolution mechanisms, mental health services provision and promoting political neutrality among other things for mitigating violence and promoting a stable marketplace. Future studies can look at psychological impacts of economic instability and social policies.

## DECLARATION

I Ropafadzo Ethel William declare that this dissertation titled "Mupedzanhamo market as a hive of political violence", is my original work. It has not been submitted for any other degree or award and has been conducted in accordance with ethical guidelines.

Student's Name: Ropafadzo Ethel William

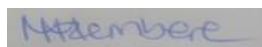
Student's Signature:



Date: 30 March 2025

Supervisor's Name : Dr Zembere

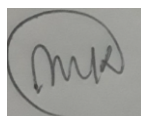
Supervisor's Signature:



Date: 15 August 2025

Chairperson's Name: Dr Kurebwa

Chairperson's Signature:



Date: 18/08/2025

## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated my loving family, their unwavering support and encouragement contributed to this work. To the resilient vendors of Mupedzanhamo Market, who contributed throughout the research, whose strength and determination in the face of adversity inspire us all. May their voices be heard, and their struggles recognized.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who supported me throughout the research process. To my supervisor, Dr Zembere for the guidance and unwavering support from onset to the end of the project. I would also want to extend my appreciation to my family for social, financial, material and spiritual support. I would also like to thank my friends M. Chitana and P Phiri for their support. Above all I would like to acknowledge the sovereignty of God over my academic pursuits, may His name be praised forever.

## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

CCC- Citizens Coalition for Change

CSOs- Civil Society Organizations

ILO- International Labour Organization

POS- Political Opportunity Structure

UN-United Nations

ZANU-PF- Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front

ZRP- Zimbabwe Republic Police

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background of the study**

Political and economic violence in marketplaces has been a recurring phenomenon globally, with various scholars examining its causes, consequences and implications. Marketplaces as hubs of economic and social activities have become sites of political contestation, reflecting broader societal tensions and conflicts (Tufekci, 2017). This phenomenon has been observed in various regions, hence a global issue. Chenoweth & Lawrence (2014), claim that the historical context of political violence in marketplaces is marked by periods of colonialism, authoritarianism, and economic inequality. These according to Davenport (2015), have often contributed to marginalization of certain groups, creating a conducive environment for political violence. The United Nations has noted an increase in political violence, with 40 countries experiencing some form of marketplace political violence in 2020 alone resulting in over 5000 reported deaths and injuries (Spartz, Sarker & De Waal, 2021)).

In Zimbabwe violence in marketplaces is a recurring phenomenon with various stakeholders offering different perspectives, the government attributing violence to opposition parties and CSOs, accusing them of seeking to destabilize the country (The Herald, 2022), and the Newsday report by Gukurume (2022) arguing that oppositions blame the government for using violence to suppress dissent and maintain power. Marketplace vendors and traders are often caught in the middle. Academics point to deep structural issues like economic grievances, ethnic tensions and authoritarianism as drivers of political violence (Muchemwa, 2019). Examining the drivers of political violence in Mupedzanhamo is crucial due to its significant impact on the lives of vendors,

traders and the broader community as well as its implications on Zimbabwe's economic and political stability. Investigating the root causes, consequences and dynamics of political and economic violence can inform policy solutions, promote peaceful conflict resolution and support the livelihoods of affected individuals by giving a deeper understanding to the complex interplay between politics, economy and society in Zimbabwe ultimately shedding light on ways to build a more just, peaceful and prosperous society.

Mupedzanhamo market, established in the 1980s, is a sprawling informal market in Harare, Zimbabwe's capital city. Initially a small market, it grew into a major hub for informal trade, employing thousands of vendors and traders. Meagher (2018), claims that the market's evolution was driven by Zimbabwe's economic downturn which led to a surge in informal economic activities. Today the market is a vital component of Harare's economy, providing livelihoods for millions of people. Nonetheless the growth has been marred by political and economic violence including intimidation, extortion and destruction of property. Political actors and economic interests have often intersected to produce violence, exploiting the market's informal nature and vulnerable population. The intersection of political and economic violence in informal markets is therefore a critical issue worth researching since the market is a significant livelihood source for millions of people coupled with vulnerability to political and economic exploitation, making it a pressing concern. By the dynamics of this violence, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the complex power dynamics at play and inform targeted interventions to promote economic stability, social justice, and human security.

Informal markets like Mupedzanhamo are sites of struggle where political and economic power dynamics play out. Poulsen (2020), argues that the market's informality creates opportunities for political actors to exert control and extract resources. Informal markets are very

often characterized by undefined, rules, regulations and norms, creating space for political and economic violence to thrive. The country's ongoing economic crisis, coupled with a rise in political tensions has further fueled the situation. Kanbur (2020), posits that Zimbabwe's prolonged economic crisis, political turmoil, and social unrest have created an environment conducive to violence and exploitation in informal markets. The study can therefore contribute to the ongoing theoretical debates on power dynamics, market outcomes, and institutional ambiguity in informal markets. The findings of the study can have far-reaching implications for policy, theory, and practice, ultimately contributing to a more nuanced understanding of informal markets and the role in shaping the lives of millions of people.

## **1.2 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of the study is to understand how the Mupedzanhamo market has become a hive for economic and political violence

## **1.3 Statement of the problem**

Mupedzanhamo market in Mbare has become a hotbed of economic and political violence, often characterized by frequent clashes between vendors, political activists, and law enforcement, resulting in physical harm, economic losses, and psychological trauma for vendors, customers and local residents. This recurring violence undermines the market's potential for economic growth and development and it further creates a culture of fear and intimidation. The problem of economic and political violence in Mupedzanhamo affects vendors, customers and the broader community, who suffer physical harm, economic losses and trauma. Evidently report by Midzi et.al (2020) on violence in Mbare documented 57 cases of human rights violations, including assault, torture and property destruction, also noted that 75% of the victims were informal traders and vendors. Despite existing studies on political and economic violence in Zimbabwe, there is a gap in localized

research that specifically addresses the dynamics within Mbare Mupedzanhamo, which is pivotal for understanding broader national trends.

#### **1.4 Research objectives**

- i. To identify the key factors contributing to violence at Mupedzanhamo market.
- ii. To assess the impact of political violence on the livelihoods of vendors at Mupedzanhamo market.
- iii. To identify existing coping mechanism employed by vendors in response to political violence.
- iv. To investigate how political actors manipulate and exploit the market for political gain.

#### **1.5 Research questions**

- i. What are the key factors contributing to violence at Mupedzanhamo market?
- ii. How does political violence affect the livelihoods of vendors in Mbare Mupedzanhamo?
- iii. What coping mechanisms do vendors in Mupedzanhamo use to cope with political violence?
- iv. How do political actors manipulate and exploit the market for political gain?

#### **1.6 Assumptions of the study**

The study assumes the impacts of political and economic violence are felt across various dimensions of community life differently.

The study also assumes that governance and regulator measures can help reduce violence at the market.

### **1.7 Significance of the study**

The significance of the study lies in its potential to uncover the complex dynamics of political and economic violence at Mupedzanhamo market and to identify effective strategies for mitigating this violence. By exploring the nature and extent of violence this study can inform the development of targeted interventions to promote a safer and more inclusive market environment. Further the research can contribute to deeper understanding of the intersections between political and economic factors in informal markets and how these intersections can fuel instability. Ultimately this study has the potential to contribute to a more peaceful and stable environment in Mupedzanhamo market, promoting inclusive economic development and human rights for all citizens.

The beneficiaries of this study are diverse. The vendors and traders in Mbare will benefit from a deeper understanding of the drivers and impacts of violence, enabling them to develop effective coping mechanisms, advocacy strategies to protect their rights and improved economic opportunities. Secondly CSOs working on human rights, peace building and economic development will benefit from the research findings and recommendations informing their programming and policy engagement. Policymakers and government officials will gain valuable insights to inform policy decisions and develop effective strategies to prevent and mitigate violence. Lastly, the broader academic community and researchers will benefit from the study's contributions to the field of informal market studies, advancing knowledge and understanding of the complex dynamics of political and economic violence.

### **1.8 Delimitations of the study**

The focus of this study is to understand how Mupedzanhamo market has become a hive for economic and political violence and will not encompass other markets or regions of Zimbabwe.

The study examines political and economic violence, but does not explore other factors such as environmental or cultural influences. While the study is limited by these boundaries reference will also be given to national level political and economic dynamics that influence local level violence, regional and global influences such as economic globalization, trade policies and international political dynamics that impact local markets will be considered

### 1.9 Limitations of the study

Potential limitations include the availability of participants willing to discuss sensitive issues related to violence and the possibility of biased responses due to fear of repercussions. Also the study will be constrained by accessibility issues, such as difficulty reaching certain key participants. The challenge of willingness will be countered by offering incentives like anonymity or partnering with local organizations to access potential participants. The issue of biased responses due to fear will be limited by ensuring confidentiality and use of a neutral language by using indirect questioning techniques.

### 1.10 Definition of keywords

- ❖ An **informal economy** according to Godfrey (2011), is the economic activity unregulated by law but governed by custom or personal ties.
- ❖ European Institute for Gender Equality (2017), defines **economic violence** as any act or behavior which causes economic harm to an individual.
- ❖ **Political entrepreneurship** according to Christensen & Hearson (2019), is the process of creating and exploiting political opportunities to achieve political goals.
- ❖ Chriss (2018), claims that **political violence** as consisting of those repertoires of collective action that involve great physical force and cause damage to an adversary in order to impose political aims.

## **1.11 Dissertation Outline**

### **Chapter 1: Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the introduction and background of the research project. It outlines the research problem by stating the aims and objectives of the study.

### **Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theretical Framework**

This chapter focuses on the literature review and unpacking of the theoretical framework of political governance. Definitions of important concepts to the study are also reviewed.

### **Chapter 3: Research Methodology and Design**

Chapter three focuses on the methodological considerations adopted by the researcher for this study. It describes the data collection tools, ethics and data analysis methods deployed for this study.

### **Chapter 4: Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion of Findings**

This is a crucial chapter of the thesis as it dwells on the analysis of the data collected and integrates it with the research problem. It analyzes and discusses the research findings.

### **Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions, Recommendations and Areas for further research**

This is the final chapter of the study, containing summary, conclusions drawn from the study and offering recommendations.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Political violence is a key issue that affects the activities and function of marketplaces, as it serves as a critical node for economic activity and social interactions. This chapter provides a comprehensive examination of economic and political violence in marketplaces laying the foundation for further analysis in the following chapters, by providing the theoretical frameworks, historical contexts and various impacts of violence. Marketplaces are not merely environment for economic activities, they are also battlegrounds where political agendas are advanced, social tensions are exacerbated and community dynamics are reshaped.

#### **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

This study will be guided by the Political Opportunity Structure (POS) theory. It was primarily developed by sociologists Tilly and Tarrow in the late 1980s. POS theory provides a robust framework for understanding the dynamics of political violence in marketplaces (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015). This framework builds on earlier works by scholars like Meyer and Skocpol, who have laid the groundwork for analyzing social movements and collective action (Meyer, 2004; Skocpol, 1979). Central to POS theory is the idea that shifts in the political environment

significantly influence the capacity for organized responses to political grievances, highlighting the importance of context in social movements (Tilly, 2004).

One of the key assumptions of POS theory is that political context is crucial. The theory posits that the likelihood of collective action, including violent responses to political grievances, is influenced by various political factors, such as the openness or closure of political institutions and state stability (Della Porta 2006). This understanding is vital for analyzing how vendors in marketplaces might respond to political violence, as contextual elements play a significant role in shaping their actions (Piven & Cloward, 1977). The theory also focuses on opportunities for mobilization. Political opportunities arise from changes in the political landscape, such as shifts in government policies or the emergence of supportive actors within the state (Tarrow, 1998). These opportunities can either facilitate or hinder collective action, making this aspect particularly relevant for this research. Understanding how political changes impact the dynamics of violence and resistance in marketplaces can illuminate how vendors strategize their responses (Della Porta, 2013).

POS theory emphasizes the agency of actors within the political structure. While structural factors are crucial, market participants like vendors and consumers actively assess their political environment, strategizing their responses and mobilizing resources to influence political outcomes (Buechler, 2008; Snow et al., 2023). This focus on agency aligns with the research aim to understand how vendors navigate and respond to political violence. The theory suggests that political opportunities interact with other factors, such as social identities and resource availability, allowing for a nuanced analysis of the variables influencing political violence in marketplaces (Wallerstein, 1983; Melucci, 1996). The relevance of POS theory to this study is multifaceted. It aids in understanding market dynamics by analyzing how the political context such as changes in

government or political repression affects vendors' responses to violence and their capacity for mobilization (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015; Borras, 2008). Additionally, POS theory provides insights into collective action, which is critical for examining how vendors might organize in response to political violence and negotiate for better protections (Beyerlein & Hipp, 2006). This detailed exploration of the political environment focusing on the openness of political systems and the role of local governance enables the identification of how various political factors influence the nature of political violence and market responses (Tarrow, 2011).

POS theory is particularly well-suited for this research because its emphasis on the interplay between political contexts and social actors provides a comprehensive framework for analyzing how vendors respond to violence and the factors that facilitate or hinder their collective action (Porta, 2007). This theoretical approach enhances the understanding of the dynamics at play and offers valuable insights for practical applications in policy and community resilience, highlighting the need for effective interventions to reduce violence and support economic stability.

### **2.3 Conceptualizing Political Violence**

Political violence refers to the use of force or coercion by state or non-state actors to achieve political objectives (Houghton & Health, 2021). This form of violence can manifest in various ways including armed conflict, terrorism, civil unrest, and repression. In the context of marketplaces, political violence specifically pertains to acts of violence that disrupt economic activities and target market participants due to political motives. This can occur through intimidation, physical assaults, property destruction, and coercive tactics aimed at controlling market dynamics or influencing political outcomes (González, 2022). Marketplaces often reflect the broader socio-political environment in which they exist. Political violence in these spaces is frequently exacerbated by factors such as economic inequality, social fragmentation, and weak

governance (Baker, 2015). For instance, in regions experiencing political instability, marketplaces may serve as battlegrounds for competing political factions, where vendors and consumers become collateral damage in wider conflicts. The dynamics of these environments can create conditions ripe for violence, as individuals and groups vie for control over economic resources.

In marketplaces, political violence can take several forms, such as coercion and intimidation, where political actors may use threats or violence to compel vendors to support specific agendas or political parties. This can manifest in extortion, harassment, or violent reprisals against those who resist compliance. The violence can also be in the form of state repression, whereby government authorities may employ violence against vendors or consumers to maintain control or suppress dissent. This includes aggressive policing, arbitrary arrests, and violent crackdowns on protests occurring in or around marketplaces (Cheng, 2023). Terrorism and armed conflict are also forms of political violence in marketplaces. In areas where political violence escalates into armed conflict, marketplaces can become direct targets, with attacks aimed at instilling fear among the populace or disrupting economic activities to weaken state power.

Political violence in marketplaces is a complex phenomenon influenced by various contextual factors, forms of violence, and the responses of market participants. Understanding this interplay is essential for developing effective strategies to mitigate violence, promote economic stability, and foster resilience among vendors and consumers (Amin & Spencer, 2023). As political landscapes evolve, continued research into the dynamics of political violence in marketplaces will be critical for informing policy interventions and supporting vulnerable populations in these economic spaces (Harris, 2015). This research is necessary to address existing gaps in understanding how specific political contexts shape violence in marketplaces, ultimately guiding efforts to create safer and more resilient economic environments for those most affected.

### **2.3.1 Historical Context of Political Violence**

Political violence has been a persistent characteristic of human societies throughout history, manifesting in various forms and driven by a multitude of factors. Understanding the historical context of political violence helps illuminate its causes, evolution, and impact on societies. Key historical developments that have shaped the landscape of political violence include the ancient and medieval periods, the age of revolutions (17th to 19th centuries), ideological causes and state violence (20th century), late 20th century to present, and ongoing themes and future considerations (Gurr, 2021). Political violence can be traced back to ancient civilizations, where conflicts over power, territory, and resources were common. In ancient Rome, for instance, political assassinations, such as that of Julius Caesar, illustrate how violence was used as a means to achieve political objectives (López, 2022). Similarly, during the medieval period, power struggles among feudal lords often resulted in violent confrontations, both in the form of warfare and internal strife. Religious conflicts, such as the Crusades, exemplify how ideological differences could lead to widespread violence, often justified by a broader political agenda (Kaldor, 2018). These early examples underscore the deep-rooted connection between political power and the use of violence in human history.

The Enlightenment and subsequent revolutions in Europe and the Americas marked a significant shift in the nature of political violence. The English Civil War (1642-1651) and the American Revolution (1775-1783) demonstrated how disenfranchised groups could mobilize against established powers, using violence as a tool for political change (Marx, 2020). The French Revolution further exemplifies this dynamic, as revolutionary fervor led to widespread violence, including the Reign of Terror (Hobsbawm, 2019). These events highlighted the potential for political violence to be both a catalyst for change and a source of societal turmoil, raising questions

about legitimacy and the moral implications of using violence for political ends. The 20th century saw a dramatic escalation in political violence, particularly with the rise of totalitarian regimes and ideological conflicts. The two World Wars exemplified how state-sponsored violence could devastate entire societies while also showcasing the use of violence as a tool for imperial expansion and nationalistic fervor (Tilly, 2019). The Cold War era introduced a new dimension of political violence, characterized by proxy wars, insurgencies, and state repression. The conflicts in Vietnam, Korea, and Afghanistan signified how ideological battles could lead to prolonged violence involving state and non-state actors (Klein, 2021). The decolonization movements in Africa and Asia often involved violent struggles against colonial powers, reflecting the complex interplay of anti-colonial sentiments and national identity.

In the late 20th century, the rise of terrorism and asymmetric warfare transformed the landscape of political violence. Groups such as al-Qaeda and later ISIS employed violence not only to achieve political aims but also to spread ideological beliefs (Moghadam, 2019). The attacks in September 2001 marked a pivotal moment in global politics, leading to widespread military interventions and a renewed focus on counter-terrorism (Rudolph, 2022). Contemporary political violence often manifests in the form of civil wars, ethnic conflicts, and violent protests, influenced by globalization, economic inequalities, and identity politics (Kalyvas, 2018). The Arab Spring 2010-2012 exemplified how social movements could erupt into violent conflict as citizens sought to challenge authoritarian regimes.

Throughout history, certain themes have persisted in the study of political violence, including the role of power dynamics, the influence of ideology, and the impact of socioeconomic conditions (Cramer, 2020). The interplay between state and non-state actors remains a critical area of exploration, as does the role of technology in facilitating or mitigating violence. Understanding

the historical context of political violence is essential for addressing contemporary issues. By examining past patterns and their implications, scholars and policymakers can better navigate the complexities of modern political violence and work towards effective solutions that promote peace and stability.

## **2.4 Factors Contributing To Violence in Marketplaces**

Political violence in marketplaces is a contested issue that has garnered attention from various scholars, each highlighting different contributing factors. The existing literature identifies several key elements that drive political violence in these economic spaces, including economic disparities, political instability, social tensions, and the role of law enforcement. Research by Caruso (2015) attributes political violence in marketplaces to economic disparities, emphasizing that unequal distribution of resources can lead to competition and conflict among vendors. In environments where wealth is concentrated in the hands of a few, marginalized groups may resort to violence as a means of claiming a share of economic opportunities. This notion is echoed by Kalyvas (2006), who argues that economic grievances are often at the heart of violent conflict, as disenfranchised individuals seek to challenge existing power structures. These studies illustrate how economic inequalities create fertile ground for political violence, particularly in marketplaces that serve as microcosms of broader societal issues.

Political instability is another factor contributing to violence in marketplaces. Scholars like Bates (2001) have noted that weak governance and the absence of effective state institutions can lead to increased violence as various groups vie for control over resources and political power. In many cases, marketplaces become battlegrounds for political factions seeking to assert dominance or disrupt rival groups. This perspective aligns with the works of Höglund (2009), who claims that during periods of political unrest, markets can be destabilized, leading to increased violence among

vendors and consumers. The intertwining of political power struggles and economic activity underscores the importance of understanding governance dynamics in the context of marketplace violence.

Social tensions also play a significant role in contributing to violence in marketplaces. According to Mamdani (2001), ethnic and social divisions can exacerbate existing tensions, particularly in heterogeneous societies. In marketplaces where different groups interact, underlying social grievances can erupt into violence, especially during periods of heightened political conflict. This is supported by Fearon & Laitin (2003), who argue that social divisions, combined with weak state capacity, create conditions ripe for violence. The literature suggests that understanding the social fabric of marketplace communities is essential for addressing the roots of political violence.

The role of law enforcement cannot be ignored in discussions of political violence. Research by Harris (2015) illustrates that heavy-handed policing can exacerbate tensions in marketplaces, leading to resistance and violence among vendors. Conversely, the absence of law enforcement can create a vacuum that allows criminal elements to thrive, further destabilizing the marketplace environment. This dual role highlights the complex relationship between state authority and marketplace dynamics and suggests that effective law enforcement strategies are crucial for mitigating violence.

Despite these insights, significant knowledge gaps remain in the literature. Most studies focus on specific contexts or case studies, limiting the generalizability of their findings. There is a need for comparative analyses that explore how different factors interact across various marketplaces. While the literature provides valuable insights into the factors contributing to political violence in marketplaces, a more comprehensive understanding of how these factors



interact, particularly in diverse social and political contexts, will be critical for developing effective interventions and policies aimed at reducing violence in marketplaces.

## **2.5 Effects of Political Violence on the Livelihoods of Vendors**

The effects of political violence on vendors in marketplaces are profound, as the violence impact their economic stability, social relations, and psychological wellbeing. A growing body of literature explores these consequences, revealing both immediate and long-term ramifications for vendors operating in conflict-affected environments. One of the most immediate effects of political violence is economic disruption. Schneider & Medina (2017) illustrates that violence often leads to decreased customer turnout, resulting in significant income loss for vendors. This economic instability can force vendors to reduce their product offerings or even close their businesses altogether, exacerbating poverty and limiting economic mobility. Schneider (2018) further highlights that in areas plagued by violence, vendors may face increased operational costs, such as investing in security measures or paying bribes to local authorities, which can further strain their financial resources. These studies underscore the precarious economic position of vendors in violent contexts, where their livelihoods are directly threatened by the instability surrounding them.

Political violence can adversely affect social dynamics within marketplaces. According to a study by Varshney (2003), violence can erode trust among vendors, leading to a breakdown in community cohesion. When political violence disrupts social networks, vendors may become isolated, relying solely on individual survival strategies rather than community support. This fragmentation can diminish the collective resilience that often characterizes vendor communities, making them more vulnerable to further violence and economic hardship. De La Torre (2017)

cements this view by claiming that the fear generated by political violence can deter collaboration among vendors, ultimately undermining their negotiating power and access to resources.

The psychological effects of political violence on vendors are also significant. Research by Miller (2015) highlights how exposure to violence can lead to increased levels of stress, anxiety, and depression among vendors. The constant threat of violence can create a pervasive sense of insecurity, impacting not only the mental health of vendors but also their ability to engage effectively in economic activities. Bourgois (2003) argues that the trauma associated with violence can lead to long-term psychological scars, affecting the interactions of vendors with customers and their overall quality of life. These findings suggest that the impacts of political violence extend far beyond immediate economic losses, permeating the psychological wellbeing of individuals in affected marketplaces.

Despite the valuable literature, significant knowledge gaps that warrants for further research remain in the literature regarding the effects of political violence on vendors. Much of the existing research tends to focus on immediate economic impacts, often overlooking the long-term consequences on mental health and community dynamics. There is a need for longitudinal studies that track the ongoing effects of political violence on vendors over time, providing a more comprehensive understanding of their experiences. Further research could enhance our understanding of these impacts and inform more effective support strategies for vendors operating in politically volatile.

### **2.5.1 Gender Dynamic in Political Violence**

The intersection of gender dynamics and political violence in marketplaces has emerged as a critical area of study in recent years. Various scholars have explored how gender influences the experiences of vendors and consumers in politically volatile environments, revealing distinct

vulnerabilities and coping mechanisms that differ by gender. The effects of political violence can differ across gender lines, with female vendors often experiencing unique vulnerabilities. Peterson (2018) posits that women in marketplaces face heightened risks during violent episodes, including gender-based violence and discrimination. The literature suggests that female vendors may be disproportionately affected by the economic fallout of political violence, as they often have less access to financial resources and networks than their male counterparts (Moghadam, 2023). This gendered perspective highlights the need for targeted interventions that consider the specific challenges faced by women in violent marketplaces.

Literature also suggests that women often play crucial roles in community resilience and conflict resolution. According to Varshney (2003), women vendors can act as mediators in community disputes, leveraging their social networks to foster cooperation among diverse groups. Their involvement in informal markets can enhance social cohesion, which is vital during periods of political instability (Meyer, 2021). However, the pressures of political violence can undermine these roles, as women may be forced to prioritize their personal safety over community engagement. This duality highlights the complexity of women's roles in marketplaces during times of political unrest.

The psychological impact of political violence on women has been a focal point of several studies. Bourgois (2003) examines how trauma associated with violence can lead to long-term psychological effects, particularly among women who may be more likely to experience both physical and emotional violence. Recent studies further confirm that trauma can affect women's ability to participate in economic activities and community life, further entrenching their marginalization (Almeida, 2020). Mamdani (2001) discusses how societal norms regarding gender

roles can exacerbate these psychological impacts, as women may feel pressured to conform to traditional expectations, limiting their agency in violent contexts.

The studies also address how gender dynamics shape responses to political violence. Research by Enloe (2014) suggests that women often mobilize to create support networks and advocate for their rights in the face of violence. These grassroots movements can be instrumental in addressing community grievances and challenging the status quo, although they may also face significant pushback from patriarchal structures (McClain, 2023). This activism illustrates the resilience of women in marketplaces, as they navigate the complexities of political violence while striving for economic and social justice.

Despite the valuable insights provided by existing literature, there are notable gaps in the study of gender dynamics in political violence within marketplaces. Many studies focus primarily on women's experiences, often ignoring the perspectives of men and the ways in which gendered expectations shape their responses to violence. This research aims to enhance a more comprehensive analysis that considers how masculinity interacts with political violence in marketplace contexts, as well as how men and women can collaborate to foster resilience. The intersectionality of gender with other factors, such as class, ethnicity, and age, remains underexplored. Understanding how these intersecting identities influence experiences of violence and resilience in marketplaces warrants further research.

## **2.6 Coping Mechanisms Utilised By Vendors**

The coping mechanisms employed by vendors in marketplaces facing political violence and economic instability have been the subject of growing scholarly interest. Various studies have explored how vendors adapt to the challenges posed by violence, highlighting a range of strategies rooted in resilience, community solidarity, and economic ingenuity.

One prominent coping mechanism identified in the literature is community solidarity. Research by Varshney (2003) underscores the importance of social networks among vendors, suggesting that collective action can enhance resilience in the face of political violence. Vendors often band together to share resources, provide mutual support, and advocate for their rights against external threats. This sense of community can be particularly vital during periods of unrest, as it fosters a supportive environment where individuals can collectively navigate the challenges of violence. Mampilly (2015) further supports this point, noting that strong social ties can enable vendors to mobilize quickly in response to threats, thereby reducing individual vulnerability.

Vendors also rely on diversification of income sources to cope with violence in marketplaces. Studies by Baker (2015) highlights that many vendors adapt to the uncertainties of political violence by diversifying their products or services. For instance, vendors may expand their offerings to include items that are in higher demand during periods of conflict, such as food staples or basic necessities. This strategy not only helps to stabilize their income but also positions them as essential providers in their communities. According to Schneider (2018) such adaptability is crucial for survival in volatile environments, as it enables vendors to respond dynamically to shifting market demands caused by political disruptions.

Innovative business practices also emerge as vital coping strategies. Research by Goldstein (2023) highlights how vendors leverage technology, such as mobile payment systems and social media, to enhance their business operations and reach more customers. These tools can facilitate transactions and communications, allowing vendors to maintain their businesses even amidst chaos. Additionally, some vendors utilize informal networks to share information about safe trading practices and secure locations, which helps mitigate the risks associated with operating in violent contexts. Vendors also engage in risk management strategies to cope with the threats posed

by political violence. According to Harris (2015), this can include investing in security measures, such as hiring local guards or forming cooperative security arrangements with neighbouring vendors. While these strategies may entail additional costs, they are viewed as necessary investments to protect livelihoods. The literature suggests that such proactive measures can create a sense of safety, enabling vendors to continue their operations despite the surrounding violence.

Despite the valuable insights provided by existing literature, several knowledge gaps remain regarding the coping mechanisms of vendors in marketplaces. More research focusses on individual or community-level strategies, often neglecting the structural factors that shape these coping mechanisms. For instance, there is a lack of empirical studies that examine how local government policies or market regulations influence vendors' abilities to cope with violence. Understanding these broader systemic factors could provide a more comprehensive view of the challenges vendors face, hence warrants for further research. While the literature acknowledges that certain coping strategies may be effective, there is limited exploration of the long-term sustainability of these mechanisms. For instance, reliance on informal networks or diversification may provide short-term relief, but further research is needed to determine their effectiveness over time in the face of protracted violence.

## **2.7 Strategies Employed By Political Actors to Manipulate Markets for Political Gain**

The manipulation of marketplaces by political actors for strategic advantage has garnered increased attention in recent years. Scholars have examined how political entities exploit these economic spaces to consolidate power, influence public opinion, and achieve political objectives. Considerable literature has identified the use of economic incentives by political actors to gain support from vendors and consumers. Cummings et al. (2016) discusses how political parties often provide financial assistance, subsidies, or favourable regulations to win loyalty from market

participants. During election periods, politicians may promise tax reductions or grants to vendors, creating a dependency that can be exploited for electoral gain. This economic manipulation can undermine the autonomy of vendors, making them more susceptible to coercive tactics and reinforcing patron-client relationships, as highlighted in the works of Gonzalez et.al (2020).

Another significant tactic employed by political actors is coercion and intimidation. According to Höglund and Oberg (2011), political actors may resort to threats or violence to suppress dissent among vendors or coerce them into supporting specific political agendas. In regions where political violence is prevalent, marketplaces can become battlegrounds for competing factions. Their research illustrates how local leaders use intimidation to control market activities and restrict the flow of information, thereby consolidating their power. This coercive strategy can effectively stifle opposition and dissent, as fear permeates the marketplace environment.

Political actors also resort to strategic messaging and propaganda to manipulate public perceptions within marketplaces. Di John (2011) emphasize how political entities target vendors and consumers with curated messages that aim to shape attitudes and mobilize support. During politically charged periods, marketplaces serve as focal points for disseminating propaganda through public speeches, posters, and social media campaigns. By framing economic issues within a political context, actors can enhance their legitimacy and consolidate support, effectively using the marketplace as a platform for political mobilization.

The creation of alternative markets has emerged as a strategy employed by political actors. Schmidt (2021) discusses how some political entities establish parallel marketplaces that operate under their control, side-lining existing informal or traditional markets. These alternative spaces can be leveraged to showcase political achievements or provide controlled economic opportunities

to loyal supporters. Such strategies reinforce political power and influence while undermining the autonomy of existing market structures, ultimately reshaping the economic landscape in favour of political agendas.

Despite these insights comparative analyses are needed to explore how various political systems and cultural contexts shape the strategies employed by political actors in different marketplaces. Also while immediate effects, such as increased political support or compliance, are well-documented, the long-term consequences of these manipulative strategies on marketplace dynamics and vendor behaviour remain underexplored.

## **2.8 Psychological Impacts of Violence on Market Participants**

The psychological Impacts of political violence in marketplaces on market participants have garnered increasing scholarly attention in recent years. This body of literature explores how exposure to violence affects the mental health, social relationships, and economic behaviours of vendors and consumers. Drawing from literature the most immediate psychological impact is increased anxiety and stress among market participants. Research by Miller et al. (2015) shows that vendors and consumers often experience heightened levels of fear and uncertainty in environments marked by political violence. This constant state of alertness can lead to chronic stress, which adversely affects mental health. Höglund and Oberg (2011) further emphasize that the psychological toll of violence can impede vendors' ability to engage in their daily activities, resulting in decreased productivity and economic instability. The literature suggests that such psychological distress not only affects individual well-being but can also disrupt marketplace dynamics, as vendors may withdraw from their economic roles due to fear.

The impact of violence on social relationships is another critical area of concern. According to Varshney (2003), political violence can erode trust within vendor communities, leading to social



fragmentation. When fear and suspicion become prevalent, market participants may become less willing to cooperate or support one another, undermining the social networks that are vital for economic resilience. Cummings et al. (2016) add that the breakdown of these social ties can create a sense of isolation among vendors, further exacerbating feelings of vulnerability and helplessness. The deterioration of community cohesion not only affects individual mental health but also diminishes the collective capacity of vendors to respond to challenges posed by violence.

Adding on, literature highlights the psychological concept of learned helplessness, particularly in relation to vendors' coping mechanisms. Bourgois (2003) illustrates how continuous exposure to violence can lead individuals to perceive their situation as unchangeable, resulting in a resignation to their circumstances. Such mind-sets can hinder proactive behaviours, such as seeking out new markets or diversifying income sources, ultimately perpetuating cycles of poverty and vulnerability. The phenomenon of learned helplessness underscores the need for interventions that empower vendors and help them regain a sense of agency in the face of political violence.

Literature further examines the impact of trauma on market participants. Research by Schmidt (2021) indicates that exposure to violence can lead to long-term psychological issues, such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which can significantly impair an individual's ability to function in a marketplace setting. Symptoms of PTSD, including flashbacks, hyper-vigilance, and emotional numbing, can deter vendors from participating in economic activities and disrupt consumer behaviour. The long-term psychological effects of trauma highlight the importance of providing mental health support for market participants affected by political violence.

**Existing literature focusses on immediate psychological reactions, often overlooking the long-term consequences for mental health and economic stability. Longitudinal studies are needed to track how psychological impacts evolve over time and influence individual and community resilience. The role of cultural context in shaping psychological responses to political violence is often ignored. Different cultural interpretations of trauma and resilience may influence how market participants cope with violence, yet this diversity is rarely addressed in existing frameworks**

## **2.9 Legal Frameworks and Market Violence**

The relationship between legal frameworks and political violence in marketplaces has become an increasingly significant area of study in recent years. Scholars have explored how laws, regulations, and enforcement mechanisms can either mitigate or exacerbate instances of political violence, shaping the experiences of vendors and consumers within these economic spaces. A key fundamental theme in the literature is the role of regulatory frameworks in influencing marketplace dynamics and political stability. Research by Gonzalez et.al (2020) argues that effective legal frameworks can create an environment conducive to economic activity and social cohesion. When vendors feel protected by the law, they are more likely to engage in business activities, fostering community resilience. Conversely, Cummings et al. (2016) argues that weak or inconsistent enforcement of laws can lead to a power vacuum, allowing political actors to exploit marketplaces for their own gain. In such contexts, vendors may face increased risks of extortion, violence, and political manipulation, which can escalate tensions and lead to violent confrontations.

The impact of informal legal structures is a critical area of exploration. Schmidt (2021), indicates that in many developing countries, informal markets operate outside the purview of formal legal systems, creating unique vulnerabilities for vendors. In these cases, local power

dynamics, rather than established laws, dictate the rules of engagement. This can lead to a situation where political actors manipulate informal structures to exert control over market participants, often resulting in violence. The literature suggests that understanding the nuances of informal legal frameworks is essential for comprehending how political violence manifests in marketplaces.

The role of law enforcement practices is also crucial in shaping the relationship between legal frameworks and political violence. Studies by Höglund and Oberg (2011) emphasize that heavy-handed policing can exacerbate tensions in marketplaces, as vendors may feel targeted and oppressed. When law enforcement is perceived as an extension of political power rather than a protector of public order, it can lead to increased resistance from vendors, escalating conflicts. Conversely, Goldstein (2023) argues that community-oriented policing strategies can help build trust between law enforcement and market participants, thereby reducing the likelihood of violence. This highlights the importance of considering the relationship between legal enforcement practices and community dynamics in the context of political violence.

Drawing on literature there is a focus on legal frameworks related to property rights and their implications for political violence. Mampilly (2015) suggests that insecure land tenure can lead to conflicts among vendors, particularly in informal marketplaces. When vendors lack clear legal recognition of their property rights, they may be more vulnerable to eviction or exploitation by political actors. This insecurity can create a climate of fear and competition, increasing the potential for violence as vendors fight to protect their livelihoods. The connection between legal recognition and economic security underscores the need for robust legal protections to mitigate political violence.

Despite these insights, several knowledge gaps remain in the literature regarding the interplay between legal frameworks and political violence in marketplaces. Much research tends

to focus on specific case studies or regional contexts, limiting the generalizability of findings. Comparative analyses are needed to explore how different legal systems and cultural contexts shape the relationship between law and political violence in various marketplaces. The literature often overlooks the role of international legal frameworks in influencing local market dynamics. Understanding how international trade laws, human rights treaties, and transnational legal norms interact with local legal frameworks could provide valuable insights into the mechanisms of political violence in marketplaces.

## **2.10 Chapter Summary**

The chapter presents a detailed literature review analysing the political and economic violence in marketplaces. It employs the political opportunity structure framework to explore how economic activities within marketplaces are influenced by political contexts, illustrating how these environments can serve as battlegrounds for power struggles and conflict. Historical context is provided highlighting the evolution of violence in marketplaces. The chapter also explores the role of social networks in marketplaces, how they can either mitigate or exacerbate violence.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides a comprehensive outline of the research methodology and design employed to investigate the complex phenomenon of Mupedzanhamo Market as a hive of political violence. The purpose of this study is to explore the intricate relationships between political and economic factors that contribute to violence in the market, and to examine the impact of these factors on the vendors, traders, and market leaders. This chapter provides an overview of the research philosophy, methodology, design, population, sampling methods, data collection techniques, validity, and reliability measures, as well as data presentation and analysis procedures. By adopting a systematic and rigorous approach, this study aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on market-related violence and inform policy interventions.

#### **3.2 Research Philosophy**

This study was grounded on a critical realist philosophy. The critical realist philosophy acknowledges the existence of an objective reality while recognizing the role of social constructs and power dynamics in shaping the understanding of that reality (Bhaskar, 2013). Critical realism provides a nuanced perspective on the complex interactions between political factors that contribute to violence in Mupedzanhamo Market. This philosophy was particularly suited to the study, as it allowed for an examination of the structural and agency-related factors that shape market dynamics. Critical realism further, enabled the researcher to consider the multiple perspectives and experiences of vendors, traders, and market leaders, while maintaining a focus on the objective reality of market-related violence.

### **3.3 Research Approach**

The research employed a mixed-methods approach that is combining both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis methods. This approach enabled a comprehensive understanding of the research phenomenon, allowing for both in-depth exploration of participants' experiences and quantitative analysis of market trends and violence patterns (Creswell & Hirose, 2019). The qualitative component involves semi-structured interviews and observations, which provide rich, contextual data on market dynamics and violence. The quantitative component involves survey questionnaires and document analysis, which provide numerical data on market trends and violence patterns.

### **3.4 Research Design**

Research design is the overall strategy that was chosen to integrate the different components of the study in a coherent and logical way. This study utilized a case study design, focusing on Mupedzanhamo Market as a single case. This design is particularly suited for exploring complex, contemporary phenomena in real-world settings, allowing for an in-depth examination of a single case. According to Yin (2009), case study research enabled the researcher to gain a nuanced understanding of the research phenomenon by exploring the “how” and “why” questions. This approach is further justified by the need to explore the complex dynamics of political and economic violence at Mupedzanhamo Market, which cannot be adequately captured through quantitative methods. By employing a qualitative case study design, this research aimed to provide a detailed and contextualized understanding of the research phenomenon.

The case study design is further justified by Stake (1995), who emphasizes the importance of exploring the particularities and complexities of the case. Merriam (2015) further articulates the significance of context in case study research, underscoring the need to consider the historical,

cultural, and social context in which the phenomenon occurs. In this study, the context of Mupedzanhamo Market, including its history, cultural significance, and social dynamics, will be carefully examined to provide a rich and nuanced understanding of the complex dynamics of political and economic violence. By considering the context and particularities of the case, this research aimed to contribute to a deeper understanding of the research phenomenon and provide insights that can inform policy and practice interventions.

### **3.5 Population and Sample**

Market vendors formed a significant part of the population of this study. These individuals are directly involved in the day-to-day activities of the market and are likely to have first-hand experience of the political and economic violence that occurs there. As such, they are well-placed to provide valuable insights into the nature and extent of the violence, as well as its impact on their livelihoods and well-being. Furthermore, these vendors may have developed coping mechanisms and strategies to deal with the violence, which could inform policy and practice interventions. Market leaders and administrators are another critical group within the population of this study, as they are responsible for managing the market and ensuring that it operates smoothly and efficiently. As such, they may have a unique perspective on the political and economic violence that occurs at the market, as well as its impact on the market's operations and may have access to valuable data and information about the market, including records of incidents of violence and efforts to address them. This sample is sufficient to provide a representative cross-section of market stakeholders and to enable meaningful analysis.

### **3.6 Sampling Methods**

The sample consisted of approximately 30 participants, including 27 vendors (with a balanced representation of both males and females) and 3 market leaders. Both primary and

secondary sampling utilized purposive sampling; vendors were selected based selected on their length of time operating in the market and experiences with violence. While market leaders selected based on their position, length of tenure and experiences with violence. This sampling approach ensured a diverse range of perspectives, enabling the collection of in-depth information on the interplay of economic and political violence at Mupedzanhamo market. By including both male and female vendors, the study portrayed the gender dynamics of violence, ultimately offering nuanced insights.

### **3.7 Data Collection Methods**

#### **3.7.1 Semi-Structured Interviews**

The study utilised semi-structured interviews with vendors, and market leaders to gather in-depth information on market dynamics and violence. The method involved asking open-ended questions within a predetermined thematic framework. The questions allow for spontaneity and flexibility during conversations. This approach is ideal for studies that require in-depth, open ended discussions, and can also be used to identify patterns, themes and meanings that might not be immediately apparent, but leaves room for spontaneity and follow-up questions. These interviews further allowed participants to share their thoughts, experiences and opinions in detail, providing valuable insights for the research.

#### **3.7.2 Survey Questionnaires**

Survey questionnaires were used as a data collection method to investigate violence at Mupedzanhamo market. The survey objectives are to understand the prevalence of political and economic violence, to identify the root causes of violence, to identify the coping mechanisms employed by vendors and to examine the impact on market vendors. The survey questionnaire comprised a mix of multiple-choice questions, open-ended questions, and rating scales to gather



both quantitative and qualitative data. This methodology was informed by existing studies on violence and conflict transformation. By employing survey questionnaires, this study aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complex issues surrounding Mupedzanhamo Market.

### **3.7.3 Documentary Analysis**

Secondary data was collected using documentary analysis. To select these documents a systematic process was followed, firstly relevant sources were identified such as academic databases, government reports and news archives. Conducting a key word search was also employed, using terms like “Mupedzanhamo market”, “economic violence” or “political violence” to select these documents. Screening the titles and abstracts of the documents was also essential to determine their relevance, quality and reliability. By applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria such as relevance, timeframe, and geographical scope the selection of a comprehensive and representative set of documents for analysis is guaranteed.

According to Yin (2003), documentary analysis is a qualitative data collection technique that focuses on investigation of various textual data. Documentary analysis serves as a vital data collection method for exploring Mupedzanhamo Market as a hub for political and economic violence. This approach involves scrutinizing a range of documents, including government reports, newspaper articles, NGO reports, market association documents, academic studies, policy documents, court records, and social media posts. By applying content, thematic, and contextual analysis, this study aimed to uncover evidence of political and economic violence, its impact on stakeholders, and the underlying power dynamics.

The analysis focused on specific research questions, such as the historical and contemporary manifestations of political violence at Mupedzanhamo Market, the role of economic

interests in perpetuating violence, and the effects on market traders, customers, and surrounding communities. Additionally, the study examined government policies and interventions aimed at addressing or potentially exacerbating violence at the market. By employing documentary analysis, this study will provide a comprehensive understanding of the complex issues surrounding Mupedzanhamo Market, shedding light on the dynamics of political and economic violence and informing strategies for mitigating its impact. The researcher employed the data analysis method with caution because as noted by Guion, Diehl & MacDonald (2011), documentary analysis has some loopholes in that the information found in texts can be inaccurate, biased or incomplete. To circumvent these weaknesses, the researcher will cross-validated the data collected using this technique with primary data collected using interviews.

### **3.8 Validity and Reliability**

The research enhanced both validity and reliability through several techniques. Validity suggests truthfulness of research findings. Babbie (2010), defines validity as a term describing a measure that accurately reflects the concept it is intended to measure. To enhance validity in this study, various strategies were adopted. Firstly, data collection methods was triangulated using multiple data sources such as in-depth interviews, observations and documentary reviews in order to validate interpretations and conclusions in findings. The researcher also submitted these findings to peers for their review on the validity of methods, meanings, interpretations employed by the researcher in compiling findings. According to Creswell (2007) peer review is helpful in validating findings as peers can give objective views to critic findings.

The research was also guided by principle of member checking and participant validation to ensure accuracy and authenticity. Participants were invited in providing feedback on the findings, and follow-up interviews were also conducted to verify interpretations. Such a process

guaranteed that participants' perspectives were accurately represented using their own words and phrases wherever possible.

To maintain data quality, rigorous data cleaning and validation techniques was applied. An audit trail was also done in order to ensure the validity of data. In this regard, the researcher kept detailed and accurate records of the whole methodological inquiry procedures from sampling of participants to data presentation and analysis procedures. This helped in ensuring that the final report was made from a specific reference point reducing chances of misrepresentation of facts.

The researcher also conducted pilot testing to ensure reliability of the data collection instruments. A pilot survey was administered, and feedback was used to refine the survey questionnaire. By integrating these strategies the study thus provides a robust and trustworthy exploration political violence at Mupedzanhamo market.

### **3.9 Data Presentation and Analysis**

As identified by Braun and Clarke (2006), data analysis in this study involved engaging in an exhaustive thematic analysis procedure to look for patterns in the collected data. Attending to the overall patterns as well as the specific particulars at an individual level so as to uncover the patterns and meaningful patterns was a rigorous process called thematic analysis. The researcher classified the data collected in such a manner so as to make sense of the assertions that would reflect Mupedzanhamo as a hive of political violence.

Stemming from this kind of analysis, the researcher was able to note additional instances that support or contradict previous observations and pick up nuances in the data which highlights the multiplicity of voices that the participants have in common. In order to translate the results of the thematic analysis, the use of the narratives, direct quotations, bar charts and pie charts.

According to Nowell et al. (2017), this type of data display enhances the credibility of the study outcome by offering the readers a rich and detailed view of the participants' standpoints. Even though straight quotes enriches the presentation and provide more credibility, narratives provide more of a background of the framework of each participant's experiences.

### **3.10 Pilot Testing**

A pilot study was conducted with 4 vendors to test the data collection instruments and refine the research design. The pilot study provided valuable insights into data collection challenges and informs adjustments to the research design.

### **3.11 Ethical Considerations**

Ethical considerations will be critical so as to observe the rights of people to privacy, safety, confidentiality and protection from deceit with the pursuit of scientific endeavour (Polit and Hungler, 1998). Neuman (2011) notes that ethical research requires balancing the value of advancing knowledge against the value of non-interference in the lives of others. Therefore it is critical that research does not cause any harm to those being studied (Arnold, 1970).

This study adheres to stringent ethical standards, prioritizing participants' rights and dignity. Informed consent will be obtained from all participants, ensuring they comprehend the study's purpose, risks, and benefits. Participants will sign consent forms after receiving clear explanations. Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained through pseudonymization, secure data storage, and password protection. Permission to conduct this research will be sought from Bindura University of Science Education in order to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements. Participants' rights to withdraw from the study without penalty or consequence will be respected.

### **3.12 Chapter Summary**

This chapter outlined the research methodology, employing a mixed-methods approach to investigate political and economic violence at Mupedzanhamo Market. The study utilized survey questionnaires, interviews, and documentary analysis, with purposive and snowball sampling techniques. Data analysis combined descriptive and inferential statistics with thematic analysis. Rigorous ethical considerations ensured participant protection through informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity, with institutional review board approval. Validity and reliability were ensured through triangulation, member checking, pilot testing, and inter-coder reliability. The methodology provides a comprehensive foundation for understanding the complex dynamics of market violence, with findings presented in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **4.0 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the data gathered from the study exploring Mupedzanhamo market as a focal point of political violence. The aim of the data analysis is to comprehend the viewpoints of participants and examine the relationship between the market and the phenomena of violence, focusing on understanding the underlying factors contributing to its reputation as a site of conflict. A total of 30 individuals were interviewed and their responses have been coded from participant 1 to 12 (P1-P30). Figures, tables, and graphs are utilized throughout this chapter to enhance clarity and brevity.

#### **4.2 Demographic Presentation of Participants**

The demographic information of the respondents provides an understanding of the characteristics of vendors and market officials affected and impacted by political violence at Mupedzanhamo market. A total of 30 respondents were interviewed.

##### **4.2.1 Gender distribution**

The study achieved a balanced gender representation, with 50% male and 50% female participants contributing to the research. This intentional sampling ensures a diverse range of experiences and perspectives regarding the issues of political and economic violence at Mupedzanhamo market.

**Table 4:2:1 gender distribution of participants**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Male</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>50%</b>

<b>Female</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>50%</b>
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#### **4.2.2 Age Distribution**

The age range of participants in the study was diverse, spanning from 18 to 45 years and above. Nonetheless the majority of participants fell within the age range of 35-44 years, indicating that this age group was most prevalent in the sample. This age range is significant since it represents individuals who are likely to be established in their careers and have experienced the dynamics of Mupedzanhamo market firsthand. The presence of younger and older participants also provided valuable insights into perspectives of different age groups on the issues of political and economic violence at the market.

**Table 4.2.2 Age distribution of respondents**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>18-24</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>13%</b>
<b>25-34</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>35-44</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>45+</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>27 %</b>

#### **4.2.3 Role in the market**

Participants were categorized into two distinct groups, 3 market officials (10%) and 9 vendors (90%). This inclusion of both market officials and vendors allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the market dynamics and the factors contributing to violence

**Table 4.2.3 role in the market**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Market official</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Vendor</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>90%</b>

### **4.2.3 Experience at the market**

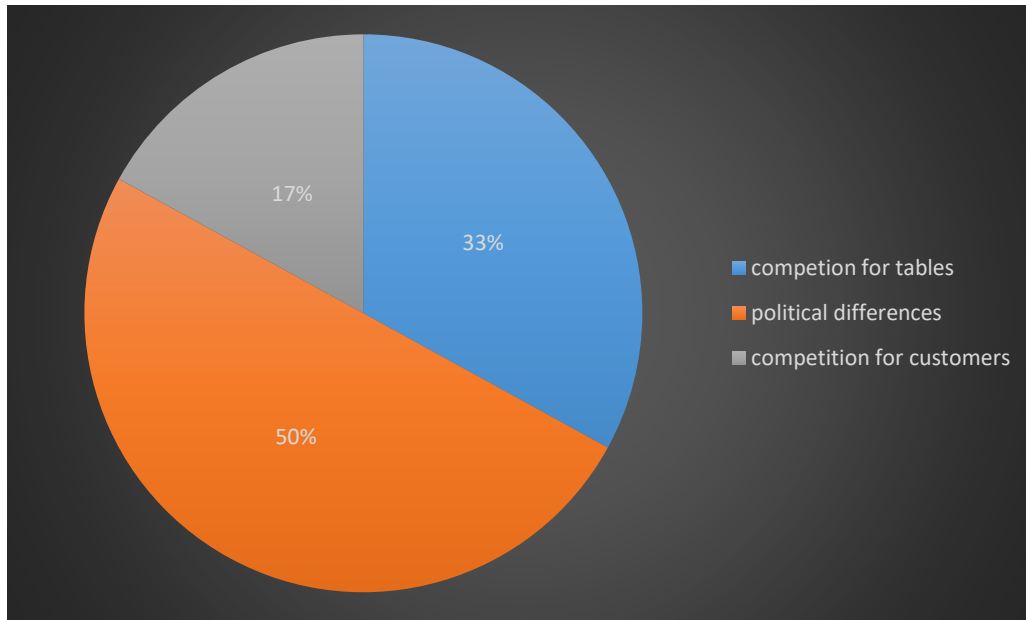
The participants had varying levels of experience at Mupedzanhamo market. The majority (27%) had over 5 years' experience, while 23% had a 4 year experience, 20% had 3 years, 13% had 2 years and the remaining 17% had less than a year. This diversity in experience provides a rich tapestry of insights into the market's dynamics.

**Table 4.2.3 experience at the market**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Less than a year</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>2 years</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>13%</b>
<b>3 years</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>4 years</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>23%</b>
<b>5 years+</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>27%</b>

### **4.3 Key factors contributing to violence at the mupedzanhamo market**





Interviews revealed various perspectives on the issues of violence at Mupedzanhamo market. The study identified several factors contributing to violence, categorized into political, economic, and social factors. Politically, the market is a hub of activity, with various political parties vying for control, leading to a culture of intimidation and conflict. This aligns with Tilly and Tarrow's Political Opportunity Structure (POS) theory, which posits that political contexts influence the capacity for collective action. The presence of political differences, particularly between supporters of the Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) and the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), exacerbates violence as groups assert dominance. The market is a melting pot of different ethnic and linguistic groups, and these differences often manifest as conflicts and violence. 50% (15) of the participants claimed that violence at the market is a result of political differences.

P1 said;

*The political differences is a major cause of violence in the market, particularly between the Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) and the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), have contributed to violence at the market. Notably, the fight for control of tables and stalls within the market is a major source of conflict between CCC and ZANU-PF supporters.*

This aligns with the literature that highlights how political competition can exacerbate violence in urban spaces according to Tilly & Tarrow (2015) on their political opportunity structure theory. The presence of political differences, particularly in a politically charged environment, fosters a culture of intimidation and conflict (Borras, 2008).

Economically, intense competition for limited resources fuels conflicts illustrating how economic hardship drives aggressive behaviours, resonating with Kalyvas (2018), who argues that economic conditions can lead to violence as a survival strategy. This perspective underscores the POS theory, where economic opportunities and constraints shape actors' responses to political environments. 33% (10) of the participants attributed violence at Mupedzanhamo market to competition for market stalls.

As P2 noted that;

*There are conflicts over tables also between the original owners of the tables, who pay rent to the council, and the individuals to whom they sublet the tables.*

Specifically, issues of overcharging by the original owners were cited as a source of tension and violence.

According to P15;

*The competition for market stalls and customers at is fierce and intense. With a limited number of stalls available, we are forced to compete aggressively for space, leading to conflicts and disputes over stall allocation.*

The literature indicates that economic hardship can drive individuals to engage in violent behaviours as a means of survival (Kalyvas, 2018). The findings support this notion, as vendors reported aggressive competition for stalls and customers, which often escalates into violence. Economic disparities in resource allocation contribute to conflicts, as vendors struggle for limited opportunities (Caruso, 2011). From the interviews and questionnaire findings 17 %( 5) of the participants pointed competition for customers as one other factors leading to violence.

P4 highlighted that;

*The large number of vendors selling similar products creates a highly competitive environment, with vendors vying for the attention of a limited number of customers. This leads to a range of tactics, including undercutting prices, spreading rumours, and even physical intimidation, in an effort to economically gain an advantage over competitors. The resulting tensions and conflicts often boiled over into violence, further destabilizing the market environment.*

The majority of the participants, 50 %( 15) attributed violence at the market to political differences.

P5 pointed that;

*The dynamics at Mupedzanhamo market in Ward 4 are influenced by the dominant presence of ZANU-PF, which controls the allocation of tables inside the market. As a result, CCC members are relegated to operating outside the market, leading to tensions*

*and conflicts as they try to gain access to tables inside the market. This struggle for control and access to resources is a key driver of the violence and instability at the market.*

In the same voice, P20 highlighted that;

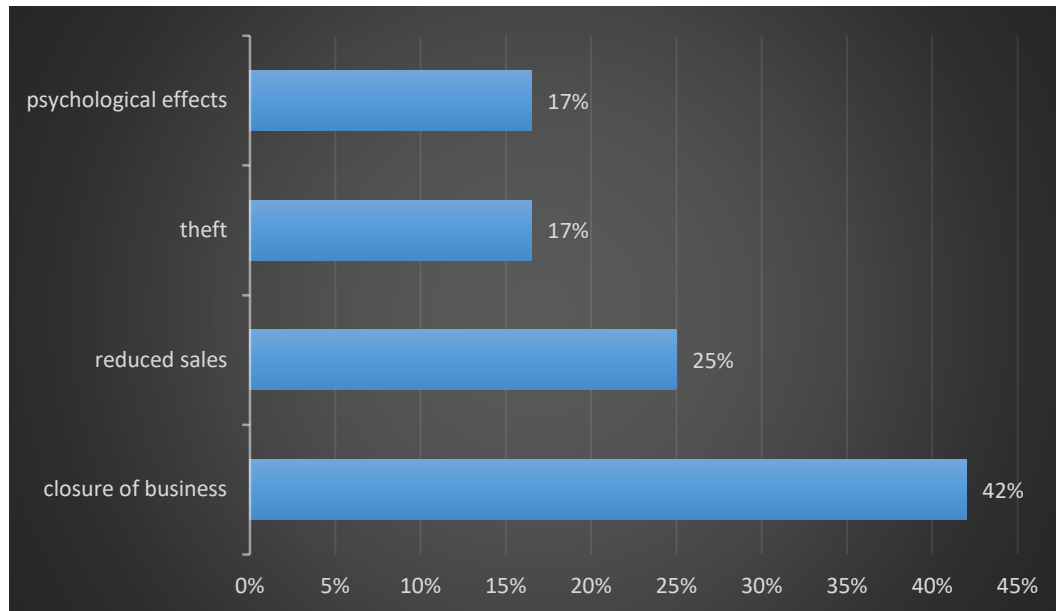
*The situation at Mupedzanhamo market in Ward 4 is characterized by a power imbalance, with ZANU-PF holding significant influence over the market's operations and resources. This dominance is reflected in the allocation of tables, with ZANU-PF supporters and affiliates being favoured in the allocation of tables inside the market.*

The vendors at Mupedzanhamo market identified several factors that contribute to the prevalence of violence in the market. One of the main factors is the presence of political differences, particularly between supporters of ZANU-PF and CCC. These political differences often manifest as conflicts and tensions between vendors, with each side seeking to assert its dominance and protect its interests. The dominance of ZANU-PF in the market is also a significant factor contributing to violence. The party's control over the market's operations and resources has led to the marginalization and exclusion of CCC members, who are forced to operate outside the market. This has created a sense of resentment and frustration among CCC members, who feel that they are being denied equal opportunities to participate in the market. The resulting tensions and conflicts between these political parties often escalate into violence, as each side seeks to assert its dominance and protect its interests. This aligns with aspect central to POS theory, the idea that shifts in the political environment significantly influence the capacity for organized responses to political grievances, highlighting the importance of context in social movements (Tilly, 2004). This violence can take many forms, including physical altercations, intimidation, and sabotage, and can have serious consequences for the market and its stakeholders.

Another factor contributing to violence in the market is the intense competition for limited resources, such as market stalls and customers. With many vendors competing for the same customers and resources, tensions and conflicts are inevitable. This competition can lead to aggressive behaviour, including physical altercations and sabotage, as vendors seek to gain an advantage over their competitors. As Mamdani (2001) literature points that, ethnic and social divisions can exacerbate existing tensions, particularly in heterogeneous societies. In marketplaces where different groups interact, underlying social grievances can erupt into violence, especially during periods of heightened political conflict. The vendors also noted that a lack of reasoning capacity among some individuals is also a contributing factor to violence in the market. Some vendors are prone to acting impulsively and aggressively, without taking the time to think through the consequences of their actions. This impulsiveness can lead to the escalation of conflicts into violent incidents, causing harm to individuals and damage to property.

The struggle for economic survival is also a driving force behind the violence in the market. Vendors are competing for limited resources, and the desire for financial gain can lead to conflicts and tensions. The disputes over table allocation and ownership are a prime example of this, with vendors competing for access to the limited number of tables available in the market. The vendors at Mupedzanhamo market therefore identified a complex interplay of factors that contribute to the prevalence of violence in the market. While the findings align with much of the literature review there are some discrepancies worth noting, while the literature implies that vendors in informal markets generally leverage their networks for collective bargaining and support (Meyer, 2004), in contrast, the participants in the study expressed feelings of isolation and fear, suggesting that the competitive atmosphere exacerbates individualism rather than collective action.

#### 4.4 The effects of political violence on the livelihoods of vendors at mupedzanhamo



The impact of political violence on vendors is profound, affecting their economic stability and mental health. On the issue of the effects of violence on the livelihoods of vendors at Mupedzanhamo market, participants expressed differing viewpoints. Many vendors reported business closures and financial losses due to violence, which aligns with findings in the literature that emphasize the detrimental effects of political instability on informal economies (Schneider & Medina, 2017). This further illustrates how political violence disrupts economic activities and livelihoods, supporting the POS theory's assertion that political conditions significantly influence economic outcomes. 42% (13) of the participants' claim that violence have often led to closure of their businesses.

P7 said;

*I had to close my business for about a year or so, because I couldn't take the risk of losing everything I had worked for. The violence was just too much.*

P9 added

*I was forced to close my business after my goods were destroyed during a violent clash. I didn't have the resources to start over again.*

This highlights the severe impact of violence on the livelihoods of vendors, with some being forced to abandon their businesses altogether. 25% (3) of the participants pointed that violence results in reduced sales.

P25 pointed out that,

*The destruction of property and goods n during violence not only results in financial losses but also leads to reduced sales*

P2 added;

*The violence leads to a reduction in sales, customers are afraid to come to the market because of the violence. As a result, the sales have decreased significantly.*

This decline in sales can have severe consequences for vendors, including reduced income, financial instability, and difficulty in supporting themselves and their families. The loss of revenue can also make it challenging for vendors to restock their goods, pay rent, and cover other business expenses, ultimately threatening their livelihoods.

16.5% (5) of the participants highlighted the psychological trauma resulting from violence, echoing Miller et al. (2015), who asserts that violence can have lasting emotional consequences as the findings highlight how stress of operating in such a volatile environment is affecting their

mental health. With some reporting flashbacks and nightmares related to their experiences. This supports views by Bourgois (2003) that the trauma associated with violence can lead to long-term psychological scars, affecting the interactions of vendors with customers and their overall quality of life.

As P23 mentioned;

*The stress of operating in such a volatile environment is affecting my health and well-being. I've experienced headaches, fatigue, nightmares and irritability, which is impacting my relationships with my family and friends.*

P30 highlighted that;

*I have flashbacks of the violence whenever I hear a loud noise or see a crowd of people. It's like I'm reliving the trauma all over again*

And P9 agreed by saying;

*I keep having nightmares about the day my stall was attacked. I wake up in the middle of the night, thinking I'm back in that situation.*

Another 16.5% (5) of the participants claimed that violence at Mupedzanhamo market often leads to theft and looting of their stock.

P5 mentioned that;

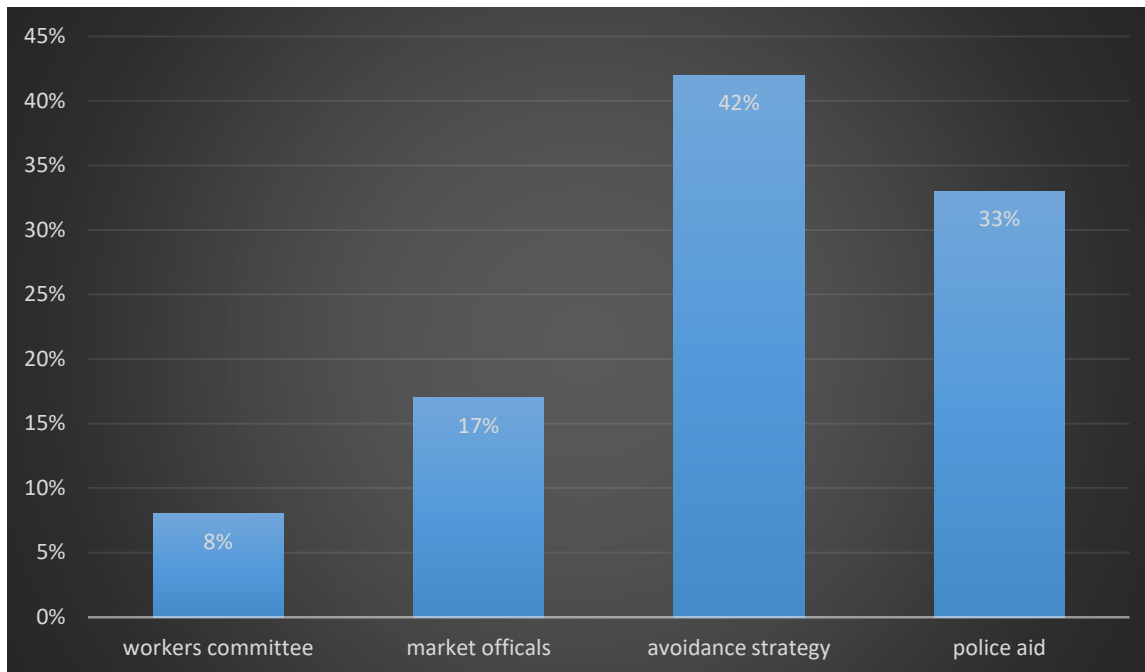
*I have lost count of how many times I've had to replace my stock due to theft or damage. It's becoming unsustainable.*

The findings shows that the violence at Mupedzanhamo market has had a devastating impact on the livelihoods of vendors. With one of the most significant effects being closure of businesses.



Vendors who have experienced violence first-hand have reported feeling forced to abandon their businesses due to the high risk of further violence. This has resulted in significant financial losses. The closure of businesses also has a ripple effect on the entire market, leading to a decline in customer confidence and a decrease in overall economic activity. As a result of the violence, vendors have also suffered significant damage to their property and goods. Vendors have reported having their stalls destroyed, their goods stolen or damaged, and their equipment vandalized. This has resulted in significant financial losses for vendors, who must replace damaged or stolen goods and equipment in order to continue operating thereby undermining vendors' ability to provide for their families and maintain their livelihoods. The violence has also had a significant impact on the mental health and well-being of vendors. The flashbacks and nightmares reported by the vendors can be a manifestation of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which can have long-term effects on their mental health and well-being. The psychological trauma caused by the violence can also impact vendors' ability to work, interact with customers, and maintain relationships with family and friends

#### **4.5 Coping mechanisms used by vendors in mupedzanhamo to cope with violence**



Despite the prevalence of violence at Mupedzanhamo market, vendors have developed various coping mechanisms to navigate the challenging environment characterized by political and economic violence. In this politically charged environment, the POS theory that the lack of favourable political opportunities leading vendors to adopt more reactive coping strategies. In an effort to mitigate the risks of violence vendors resort to avoidance strategy, deliberately steering of clear of situations that may escalate to conflict. Others take the proactive approach of reporting incidents of violence to market officials, the police and the works committee, in hopes that these authorities will intervene. In extreme cases the vendors are forced to flee the scene in order to protect themselves from harm, highlighting the extreme measures that some Individuals are driven to take in order to cope with violence in their workplaces. While these mechanisms may provide temporary relief, they can also perpetuate the cycle of violence and undermine vendors' ability to develop more effective coping strategies. Therefore the literature suggests that coping mechanisms

in urban informal settings are often reactive rather than proactive, highlighting the need for systemic changes to address underlying issues (Della Porta, 2013). 42% (13) of the participants pointed the avoided strategy as key to cope with violence at Mupedzanhamo market.

P10 highlighted;

*In most case avoiding certain situations is the only solution to minimize their exposure to violence. This avoidance behaviour may include avoiding confrontations with violent individuals or adjusting their business operations to avoid periods of high tension. By avoiding these situations, vendors aim to reduce their risk of being victims of violence and minimize the disruption to their businesses.*

P6 pointed;

*When violence erupts, I just run away. It's the only way to stay safe*

P19 mentioned that;

*I've learned to recognize the signs of the political violence, and when I see them, I just grab my things and run. It's not ideal, but it's the only way to avoid getting hurt and ensure my safety.*

P25 supported this by adding;

*Running away is not a solution, but it's the only option when violence breaks out. I just hope that I can return to my stall and resume business as usual once the situation calms down.*

17 % ( 5) of the participant highlighted their reliance on market officials as a means of coping with violence at the market. By reporting incidents to market officials, vendors hope to receive support

and intervention to prevent further violence and ensure their safety. This highlights the importance of market officials in maintaining order and providing a sense of security for vendors operating in the market.

P1 pointed;

*The market officials are like our guardians. We rely on them to keep us safe and to resolve conflicts peacefully*

P11 added:

*When faced with a violent situation, I immediately report it to the market officials. They are the only hope for getting help and protection and it gives me a sense of security knowing that someone is listening and will take action to protect me.*

However, 33% (10) of the participants rely on the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) as a means of seeking help and protection in cases of violence. However, literature suggests that police responsiveness can vary, and while vendors in this study reported quick responses, Moyo (2019) highlights that such responsiveness does not guarantee fair treatment.

P7 stated;

*The police have been helpful in dealing with violent situations. They arrive promptly and help to calm the situations.*

P12 mentioned

*When I report a violent incident to the police, they respond quickly. It gives me confidence that they are taking my safety seriously.*

8% (2) of vendors at Mupedzanhamo market opt to rely on the Workers Committee as a means of seeking help and protection in cases of violence. The Workers Committee is a group of representatives elected by the vendors to address their concerns and protect their interests.

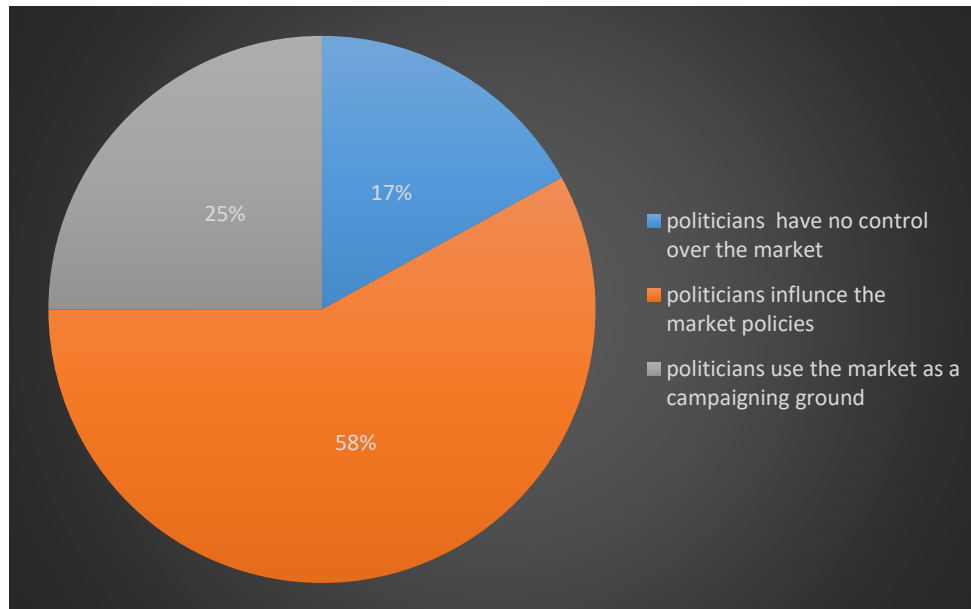
As P3 noted;

*The Workers Committee is like our voice. We report incidents of violence to them, and they help to resolve the issue and prevent further incidents*

To some vendors at Mupedzanhamo market, in situations of violence, running away is often the only option they feel they have to protect themselves.

For most vendors, running away is a survival strategy that allows them to avoid physical harm and protect themselves from the immediate danger. However, it also means that they may have to abandon their stalls and goods, potentially leading to financial losses and disruption to their businesses. The research findings reveal that vendors at Mupedzanhamo market employ various coping mechanisms to deal with the violence. Nonetheless the question of the effectiveness of these strategies is a matter of debate. While some vendors reported that these strategies had helped them to avoid or mitigate violence, others expressed frustration as these strategies may provide a temporary relief but not address the underlying causes of violence and may even perpetuate a culture of fear and silence. Interestingly, while some literature indicates that informal networks can be a source of strength and support for vendors facing external pressures (Mamdani, 2001), the findings from the study indicate that many vendors feel isolated and fearful. Overall, these coping strategies illustrate the limited agency vendors have in navigating their environment, aligning with the POS theory that emphasizes how political conditions can constrain collective action and individual responses to violence.

#### 4.6 Ways in which political actors manipulate the market for political gain



According to the findings, 17 % ( 5) of the participants at Mupedzanhamo market have pointed out that politicians do not have total control over the market, as it belongs to the City of Harare. This means that the city council has the ultimate authority over the market, and politicians can only exert influence over the market through their relationships with city council officials. This reflects a nuanced understanding of power dynamics in the market and aligns with Cummings et al. (2016), who discuss how political patronage can undermine vendor autonomy.

P1 highlighted;

*The city council is the one that collects the rent, and the council owns this place, not the politicians. So, they cannot just do whatever they want and do not have control over the market*

*P7 mentioned;*

*This is a business place and politicians do not control the market since it belong to City council.*

This perspective suggests that while politicians may have significant influence over the market, they are not the ultimate authority. The City of Harare's ownership of the market provides a check on the politicians' power, and vendors can potentially appeal to city council officials if they feel that politicians are overstepping their bounds. However, it's worth noting that politicians may still be able to exert significant influence over the market through their connections.

While some vendors acknowledged that the City of Harare owns the market, 58% (17) of the participants pointed out that politicians still have significant influence over the market policies.

As P7 mentioned;

*Even though the city council owns the market, the politicians still have a lot of influence.*

P20 further highlighted;

*The politicians may not own the market, but they have a lot of influence over the policies that govern it. They can decide who gets market tables or not.*

P22 pointed out that;

*The city council may collect the rent, but the politicians decide how the market is run. They have a lot of power behind the scenes.*

25% of the participants highlighted that politicians perceive the market as a platform for political campaigning, particularly during election periods. This aligns with Tilly and Tarrow's POS theory, which posits that political actors leverage social contexts for their gain. The pressure on vendors

to support certain parties illustrates how political dynamics can shape economic opportunities and create an environment of intimidation. The findings pointed out that politicians don't actually control the market, but rather view it as a prime location for campaigning.

As P1 noted;

*The politicians don't really care about running the market, they just see it as a place to come and campaign. They know there are a lot of people here, so they come to try and win our votes*

P11 mentioned;

*The politicians are always coming here, especially towards election. They just use the market for campaigning in order to gain votes.*

As Tilly & Tarrow (2015) explores how political violence and intimidation are often used to enforce party loyalty within informal economies, some vendors at Mupedzanhamo market have reported feeling pressured to support certain political parties in order to maintain their stalls and businesses.

P12 highlighted;

*The choice of political party one makes determines whether it becomes difficult for one to maintain their stall and to operate their business*

Vendors also expressed that their primary obligation is to the City of Harare in terms of rents and taxes, while their obligation to politicians is primarily electoral. This distinction underscores their agency in navigating political relationships, as highlighted in the POS framework, where actors respond to the incentives and constraints presented by their political environment.



P5 pointed;

*We pay our rents and taxes to the City of Harare, but the only payment we make to politicians is our vote.*

P30 highlighted

*Our vote is the only leverage we have with politicians. We don't pay them any money, but we can choose to vote for them or not.*

The research provided that politicians are perceived to manipulate the market at Mupedzanhamo in various ways. One way is through the allocation of stalls and trading spaces. Politicians also use the market as a platform for campaigning and vote-buying. During election periods, politicians often visit the market, making promises and offering gifts to vendors in exchange for their support. The politicians simply use the market as a campaigning ground but have no total control over the market as it belongs to the city of Harare. The vote-buying process creates a situation where vendors may feel pressured to support a particular politician in order to receive benefits or avoid negative consequences.

The research findings provide crucial insights regarding the assumptions underlying the study. The first assumption posits that the impacts of political and economic violence are felt across various dimensions of community life differently. The findings support this assumption, revealing that political and economic violence influences community dynamics in distinct ways, affecting areas such as social cohesion, economic stability, and mental health. For instance, individuals in communities experiencing political violence may face heightened anxiety and distrust, while those in areas affected by economic violence may struggle with financial insecurity and diminished opportunities.

The second assumption suggests that governance measures can help reduce violence in the market. The research findings present a mixed picture regarding this assumption. While certain governance interventions such as improved law enforcement and community engagement initiatives have shown promise in reducing violence, the effectiveness of these measures varies significantly based on local contexts and the nature of the violence experienced. In some cases, governance measures have successfully mitigated violence and fostered safer market environments, while in others, they have been less effective, indicating that not all governance strategies are universally applicable. Overall, the findings affirm the first assumption about the varied impacts of violence on community life, while they provide a nuanced view of the second assumption, suggesting that while governance measures can be effective, their success is contingent upon the specific circumstances and challenges faced by each community.

#### **4.7 Chapter summary**

This chapter presented the findings on the factors contributing to violence, the effects of violence on the livelihoods of vendors, the coping mechanisms employed by vendors, and the political manipulation of the market at Mupedzanhamo. The findings revealed that violence is a pervasive problem at the market, driven by a range of factors including economic competition, political rivalries, and social tensions. The effects of violence on vendors' livelihoods were found to be severe, with many vendors reporting losses, injuries, and trauma. Despite these challenges, vendors at Mupedzanhamo have developed a range of coping mechanisms to mitigate the effects of violence, including forming social networks, seeking support from market associations, and using informal dispute resolution mechanisms. The chapter also highlighted the significant role of politics in shaping the market environment, with politicians exerting influence over the market through various means, including the allocation of stalls, campaigning and vote-buying. The

findings of this chapter provide a nuanced understanding of the complex issues affecting vendors at Mupedzanhamo market.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter synthesizes the findings from the study on Mupedzanhamo market, focusing on the multifaceted issues surrounding violence, the impact on vendors' livelihoods, and the coping mechanisms that vendors employ in response to these challenges. The analysis presented here is intended to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics at play within the

market environment, particularly in relation to political influences and economic competition. The insights gained from this research can guide stakeholders and policymakers in developing strategies to mitigate violence and promote a more stable and supportive marketplace for all participants.

## **5.2 Summary of findings**

The study revealed several critical findings related to the violence prevalent in Mupedzanhamo market, which can be categorized into various interconnected themes.

### **5.2.1 Factors contributing to violence at mupedzanhamo market**

The study revealed that violence at Mupedzanhamo market is a multifaceted issue driven by political, economic, and social factors ranging from intense competition among vendors for limited resources, coupled with political rivalries between supporters of different parties thereby creating a volatile environment. The findings highlight that political influences play a significant role in exacerbating tensions, often leading to confrontations that have detrimental effects on vendors. A primary factor contributing to violence in Mupedzanhamo market is the intense political rivalry that exists, particularly between supporters of the Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) and the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF). This rivalry often manifests in aggressive confrontations, as vendors align themselves with different political factions. Highlighting the intertwining of political power struggles and economic activity Hoglund (2009), notes that during periods of political unrests markets can be destabilized leading to increased violence. The competition for limited resources within the market also exacerbates tensions among

vendors. Many vendors engage in aggressive tactics, such as price undercutting and intimidation, to secure their share of customers and stalls, leading to conflicts that can quickly escalate into violence. Furthermore, the market environment reflects broader societal tensions, including ethnic and linguistic divisions, which further complicate the dynamics of conflict and contribute to the overall atmosphere of instability.

### **5.2.2 Impact of violence on the livelihoods of vendors at mupedzanhamo market**

The impact of violence on the livelihoods of vendors at Mupedzanhamo market is profound. Many vendors reported being forced to close their businesses due to violence, resulting in significant financial losses. The constant threat of violence and actual incidents of property destruction have deterred customers, leading to a decline in sales and overall economic instability. This aligns with the works of Schneider & Medina (2017) who illustrates that violence often leads to decreased customer turnout resulting in losses for vendors. In addition to the financial repercussions, vendors face significant psychological challenges, with many experiencing anxiety, stress, and trauma as a direct consequence of their experiences in the market. The fear of violence not only affects their ability to operate but also impacts their mental health. Exposure to violence can lead to increased levels of stress, anxiety and depression (Miller, 2015). This psychological toll not only affects their work performance but also has far-reaching implications for their personal relationships and overall well-being, creating a cycle of vulnerability that is difficult to escape.

### **5.2.3 Coping mechanisms employed by vendors at mupedzanhamo market**

In response to the challenges posed by violence, vendors have developed various coping mechanisms to navigate the hostile environment. Many vendors adopt avoidance strategies, deliberately steering clear of confrontational situations by adjusting their hours of operation or

avoiding known trouble spots within the market. While this approach aims to minimize their exposure to potential violence, it often limits their business opportunities and profitability. Additionally, vendors frequently report incidents of violence to market officials, workers committee or the police, seeking intervention and support to protect themselves and their businesses. This strategy aligns with views by Mampilly (2015) who posits that strong social ties can enable vendors to mobilize quickly in response to threats reducing individual vulnerability. However, in extreme situations, some vendors feel compelled to flee the market during outbreaks of violence, which, while providing immediate safety, can lead to further financial losses and the abandonment of their stalls. While some of these strategies provide temporary relief, they do not address the root causes of violence and can perpetuate a culture of fear highlighting the need for more effective and sustainable solutions.

#### **5.2.4 How political actors manipulate the market for political gain**

The influence of political actors in Mupedzanhamo market is significant, often exacerbating the existing tensions and contributing to the cycle of violence. While the City of Harare maintains ownership of the market, political actors exert considerable influence over its operations, particularly during election periods. As Schmidt (2021) highlights how some political entities establish parallel markets that operate under their control, politicians may pressure market officials to control the allocation of stalls, resulting in favoritism towards supporters of specific political parties. This manipulation creates an inequitable environment, where vendors aligned with certain political factions receive preferential treatment, while others face marginalization. The market serves as a platform for political campaigning, with politicians making promises and distributing gifts in exchange for vendor support. This transactional relationship can compel vendors to align

with particular political parties, further complicating their ability to maintain independence and stability in their businesses.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

#### **5.3.1 Understanding the Dynamics of Violence**

The findings highlight that political influences play a significant role in exacerbating tensions, often leading to confrontations that have detrimental effects on vendors. The study therefore concludes that violence at Mupedzanhamo market is a multifaceted issue driven by political, economic, and social factors. The intense competition among vendors for limited resources, coupled with political rivalries between supporters of different parties, creates a volatile environment. It is clear that Mupedzanhamo Market is a site of intense political and economic violence, which affects the livelihoods and well-being of vendors. It is therefore critical to address the root causes of political and economic violence at the market, including the issue of market stall allocation in order to ensure the safety of vendors and a sound running of the business.

#### **5.3.2 Impact of violence on the livelihoods of vendors**

The effects of violence on vendors' livelihoods are profound. The violence results in business closures, financial losses, and severe psychological distress due to their experiences in the market. The fear of violence not only affects their ability to operate but also impacts their mental health, leading to long-term consequences for their well-being and family relationships. The research concludes that the psychological toll vendors suffer from the violence is intense and very often ignored. This therefore calls for mental health services since the severe consequences of violence not only threaten the financial viability of vendors but also impact their mental health and community relationships.

### **5.3.3 Coping Mechanisms**

The study concludes that although vendors have developed various coping strategies, ranging from avoidance, reporting incidents to authorities, and fleeing when violence erupts, some of these strategies simply provide a temporary relief. The strategies do not address the root causes of violence and can perpetuate a culture of fear. The study therefore emphasizes the need for more comprehensive and sustained response to address the issues of political and economic violence at Mupedzanhamo Market. This response should involve a range of stakeholders, including government officials, market leaders, traders, and civil society organizations. The response should also be guided by a high concern on the psychological effects of the violence on vendors.

### **5.3.4 Political Manipulation of Mupedzanhamo market**

The research finding posits that while the City of Harare maintains ownership of the market, politicians exert considerable influence over its operations. This manipulation creates an environment where vendors feel pressured to choose political allegiances, affecting their business stability and security. The only role the city of Harare partakes is to receive funds from the vendors while the political entities control market allocation and policies in the market which results in vendors feeling obligated to align themselves with political parties in order to maintain stalls. This situation in the market calls for a policy of political neutrality when it comes to the informal business. The promotion of transparency, accountability, and fairness at Mupedzanhamo Market is key to ensure low violence cases. This can be achieved through a range of strategies, including the establishment of clear and transparent market rules and regulations, the promotion of trader organizations and associations, and the provision of training and support to traders.

## **5.4 Recommendations**



- i. Objective 1 sought to identify the key factors contributing to violence at Mupedzanhamo market;

- **Strengthening Conflict Resolution Mechanisms**

Implementing formal conflict resolution mechanisms within the market can help address disputes before they escalate into violence. Establishing a mediation committee comprising market officials and vendor representatives could facilitate peaceful dialogue and conflict resolution. Structured mediation processes have been shown to enhance social cohesion and reduce the likelihood of violent confrontations in community settings (Boulle, 2018). Effective mediation can provide a platform for grievances to be aired and resolved amicably, thus fostering a more collaborative environment among vendors.

- ii. Objective 2 sought to assess the impact of political violence on the livelihoods of vendors at Mupedzanhamo market;

- **Mental Health Support Services**

Providing access to mental health support services for vendors is essential in addressing the psychological impacts of violence. Counselling and support groups can help vendors cope with trauma and stress, fostering a healthier community atmosphere. McKeon (2022), argues for the integration of mental health services in economic policies, asserting that mental health support must be considered a critical component of economic development strategies to foster healthier marketplaces. Mental health services are crucial for enhancing individual resilience, particularly in contexts characterized by violence and instability. Initiatives may include regular workshops focusing on stress management, emotional well-being, and coping strategies, ultimately contributing to a supportive community environment.

- iii. Objective 3 to identify existing coping mechanism employed by vendors in response to political violence.

- **Supporting Vendor Associations**

Encouraging the formation and strengthening of vendor associations can empower vendors to voice their concerns collectively. These associations can serve as platforms for advocacy, support, and resource sharing, helping vendors negotiate better terms and conditions for their businesses. By fostering collective action, vendors can enhance their bargaining power and improve their working conditions (Nguyen, 2021). Additionally, associations can facilitate training and capacity-building initiatives, equipping vendors with the skills needed to succeed in a competitive market.

- iv. Objective 4 sought to investigate how political actors manipulate and exploit the market for political gain.

- **Promoting Political Neutrality**

Efforts should be made to promote political neutrality within the market. Training sessions and workshops for vendors on the importance of maintaining a non-partisan approach can help reduce tensions and foster an inclusive environment. Encouraging political neutrality can mitigate conflicts that arise from partisan affiliations, ensuring that all vendors feel represented and valued. As Collier (2024) notes, to build a peaceful society, it is essential to create economic systems that are politically neutral and inclusive, thereby reducing grievances that may lead to violence. The city council should also ensure fair allocation of stalls and resources, regardless of political affiliations, to promote equality and inclusivity.

## **5.5 Areas for further research**

To build on the findings of this study, the following areas for further research are recommended. By addressing these areas, future research can contribute to a deeper understanding of the

complexities surrounding vendor experiences and the broader socio-political landscape in which they operate. First, longitudinal studies on political influence are essential to examine how political changes over time affect social and economic behaviours. Such research could explore how shifts in political regimes influence community engagement and activism, as well as the long-term effects of political policies on voter turnout and public trust.

Additionally, investigating the impact of economic policies on informal markets is crucial. This research could focus on how government regulations shape informal economic activities, particularly in terms of tax incentives or penalties and their effects on the growth of these markets. Understanding the role of informal trade during economic downturns could provide insights into the resilience of these sectors.

Mental health implications also warrant further exploration. Research in this area could investigate the psychological effects of economic instability and social policies, particularly how participation in informal markets impacts the mental health of vendors. Additionally, examining the mental health outcomes for communities affected by stringent economic policies could reveal important connections between economic conditions and psychological well-being.

Lastly, the role of women vendors in informal markets presents a vital area for study. Research could focus on the contributions and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs, particularly how cultural perceptions influence their business success. Identifying effective support systems that empower women vendors in informal economies would be invaluable for fostering gender equity and enhancing economic participation. Together, these research areas can provide valuable insights into the interplay between politics, economics, and social dynamics within informal market settings.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **RESEARCH CONSENT FORM**

**Researcher:** Ropafadzo Ethel William

**Institution:** Bindura University of Science Education

**Research Topic:** Mupedzanhamo market as a hive of political and economic violence

#### **Purpose of the study:**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the prevalence and causes of violence at the market, to understand the impact of these acts of violence and to identify existing coping mechanism employed by vendors in response to political violence. The study seeks to gather data from vendors in order to understand their experiences and perceptions of violence at the market.

#### **Participation**

You are invited to participate in the study by sharing your experiences and opinions. Your participation will involve a semi-structured interview and a questionnaire. You will be free to withdraw from the study at any time.

#### **Confidentiality**

All information collected during this study will be kept confidential and anonymous. Your name will not be linked to the responses you provide.

**Participant signature**\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your participation

## **MUPEDZANHAMO MARKET AS A HIVE FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC VIOLENCE**

### **INTERVIEW GUIDE**

#### **Section A: factors contributing to violence**

1. What do you think are the main factors that contribute to violence at Mupedzanhamo market?
2. Have you ever experienced or witnessed violence at Mupedzanhamo market? Can you describe the incident?
3. Are there any specific times of day or year which violence is more likely to occur at the market?

#### **Section B: impact of violence on vendors**

1. How has violence affected your business or livelihood?
2. Have you ever experienced or witnessed any form of economic exploitation?
3. Are there any specific challenges that you face as a result of violence at the market?
4. Have you ever experienced any emotional or psychological effects like, flashbacks, nightmares or anxiety as a result of violence at the market? If so can you describe how these experiences have affected you?

#### **Section C: coping mechanism**

1. How do you cope with the risk of violence at the market?

2. Are there any specific strategies or tactics that you use to protect yourself or your business from violence?
3. Have you ever sought help in response to violence at the market?
4. Are there and programs that you think could help reduce violence at the market?

**Section D: Political influence in the market**

1. How do you engage with government official or agencies?
2. Have you ever experienced or witnessed any attempts by political actors to control the market?
3. Are there any specific ways in which you think political actors use the market to further their own interests?
4. Are there any payments or fees that you pay to politicians in order to operate in the market? If yes how do you feel about these payments?

## **MUPEDZANHAMO MARKET AS A HIVE FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC VIOLENCE**

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE**

#### **Instructions**

- Please tick where necessary

#### **Section A: Demographic information**

##### **1. Role at the market**

- Vendor
- Market official

##### **2. How long have you been involved with the market?**

- Less than a year
- 1 year
- 2 years
- 3 years
- 4 years
- 5 year+

##### **3. Age range**

- Under 18
- 18 to 24

- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45+

4. Gender

- Male
- Female
- Other

**Section B: Factors contributing to violence**

1. Have you ever experienced or witnessed violence at the market?

- No
- yes

2. How often do you experience violence at the market?

- Daily
- Weakly
- Monthly
- Rarely

3. What are the main causes of violence at the market? (Select all that apply)

- Competition for space or customers
- Political differences
- Other (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_



4. Have you ever reported an incident of violence to the authorities?

- Yes
- No

**Section C: impact of violence on the livelihoods on vendors**

1. How has violence at the market affected your business?

- Reduced sales
- Increased costs or expenses
- Damage of property or goods
- Theft of stock

2. How has violence affected you emotionally or psychologically? (Select all that apply)

- Flashbacks
- Nightmares
- Anxiety/ stress

3. Have you ever had to close your business or stall due to violence or threats?

- Yes
- No

**Section D: coping mechanisms employed by vendors at the market**

1. How do you respond to violence at the market? (Select all that apply)

- Report to the authorities
- Avoid the situation
- Seek help from market authorities

2. Do you think there are support systems for you as vendors in case of violence?

- Yes
- No

3. What support would you like to see provided to vendors? (Select all that apply)

- Counseling or trauma support
- Financial assistance or compensation
- Improved security measures

### **Section E: Political manipulation of the market**

1. Do you think politicians or political parties have influence over the market?

- Yes
- No

2. If yes how do you think they exert their influence (select all that apply)

- Allocation of market space or stalls
- Control over market fees or taxes
- Influence over market policies

3. Have you ever felt pressured to support a particular politician or political party to maintain your market stall or business?

- Yes
- No



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# **BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION**

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of Science Education



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## **DEPARTMENT OF PEACE AND GOVERNANCE**

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28 November 2024

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

**RE: REQUEST TO UNDERTAKE RESEARCH IN YOUR ORGANISATION**

---

This serves to introduce the bearer, \_\_\_\_\_, Student Registration Number \_\_\_\_\_, who is a **HBSC PEACE AND GOVERNANCE** student at Bindura University of Science Education and is carrying out a research project in your area/institution.

May you please assist the student to access data relevant to the study, and where possible, conduct interviews as part of a data collection process.

Yours respectfully

**J.KUREBWA (DR)**  
**Acting Chairperson**



# Ropafadzo William

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