THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN PEACEBUILDING: THE CASE OF ZIMBABWE
COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of a Master of Science Degree in Peace and Governance

Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities

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Bindura, Zimbabwe

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Abstract

Conflict, though inevitable can positively or negatively influences any anticipated development. Where there is negative conflict, there can never be positive development. The church as an institution within the society; has been fundamental in resolving conflicts in pre-independence era, and post-independence. This study sought to explore and evaluate the role that the Zimbabwe Council of churches played in peace building. Peace building is not an event but a process, achieved through the participation of many stakeholders. The methodology used for the study was qualitative because it allowed the researcher to get detailed information. The researcher used questionnaires, structured in-depth interviews and content analysis as data collection instruments. Judgement and snowball sampling was used in selecting informants who contributed meaningfully to the research; 23 informants participated in the study drawn from ZCC, pasters and members of churches affiliated to ZCC. Key findings were that the church as an important player in peacebuilding could have done more than it did but failed because of challenges faced. Conclusions were that the church remains one institution trusted by all conflicting parties to be neutral hence; could facilitate peace processes. Researcher recommended that the church-state relations and other policy makers in must improve so that there is appreciation of the church’s role in peacebuilding. The church should work to influence the government to include peace studies from primary school education, and in theological colleges where church leaders train.
Declaration

This Dissertation is my original work except on areas where sources were acknowledged. The work has never been submitted, nor will it ever be, to another University in the awarding of a degree.

STUDENT…MAADZA LIBERTY ...........DATE ..............................

Signature.................................................................

SUPervisor …DR. C. MUCHEMWA....DATE .............................

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Department of Peace and Governance.

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Dedication

This research is dedicated to my Mother Margaret Jane Maadza, my wife Charlotte and my kids Tinashe, Liberty jnr and Ian whom I denied the much-needed time.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>AACC</td>
<td>All Africa Council of Churches</td>
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<tr>
<td>EFZ</td>
<td>Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe</td>
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<tr>
<td>GNU</td>
<td>Government of National Unity</td>
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<tr>
<td>HOCD</td>
<td>Heads of Christian Denominations</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDC</td>
<td>Movement for Democratic Change</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCA</td>
<td>National Constitutional Assembly</td>
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<td>NCCK</td>
<td>National Council of Churches in Kenya</td>
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<td>SACC</td>
<td>South Africa Council of Churches</td>
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<td>TRC</td>
<td>Truth and Reconciliation Commission</td>
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<td>WCC</td>
<td>World Council of Churches</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZADHR</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Association of Doctors for Human Rights</td>
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<td>ZANU PF</td>
<td>Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front</td>
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<td>ZAPU</td>
<td>Zimbabwe African People’s Union</td>
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<td>ZCBC</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference</td>
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<td>ZCC</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Council of Churches</td>
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<td>ZESN</td>
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1.1 Background

The Zimbabwe Council of Churches is a church related organisation founded in 1964 as a fellowship of Christian denominations and church related organisations. It is an organisation with 26 member churches mainly of the protestant background and others with observer status. The Zimbabwe Council of Churches was as a result of the African zeal to create a platform where leaders of different Christian denominations tackle matters of mutual concern in an increasing tense political atmosphere (as cited in Ruzivo, 2008). Its objectives included, assisting churches in their common work of leadership development, lay and clerical, for common responsibility for liberation, justice, peace and human development.

In addition, it participates in forming an enlightened public opinion on issues of national importance affecting the people of Zimbabwe. For example when Zimbabwe was faced with several conflicts such as land conflict; electoral conflicts and operation restore order codenamed “Operation Murambatsvina” which affected thousands of people ZCC intervened in trying to bring peace in the country. Also, ZCC encourages churches to engage in a sustained effort to bring total salvation to all and total elimination of poverty and move towards self-reliance and sustainable development”, as is enshrined in the Zimbabwe Council of Churches Constitution. Realising that it is the moral obligation of the church to be there for the people, Benyera, (2015) noted that the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops’ Conference (ZCBC) and the Zimbabwe Association of Doctors for Human Rights (ZADHR) are some of the institutions within Zimbabwe who were very much vocal against Operation Murambatsvina.
Churches ended up housing families, providing food, and counselling to those affected by operation restore order. ZCC has participated in all national elections through provision of election observers and voter education for elections are national programs that affect people.

Zimbabwe Council of Churches is a member of the World Council of Churches, an ecumenical organisation founded in 1948 in Amsterdam as a fellowship of churches. Its purpose is to be a visible sign of the common calling of Christians to faith in Jesus Christ expressed in, mission, evangelism, and service in the promotion of justice and peace between people Lozzio, (2018, 2). Peace and justice is at the core of the Christian gospel; hence, the World Council of Churches (WCC) promotes peace and justice globally through different programs. This purpose therefore cascades to regional bodies like the All Africa Council of Churches and then to the local organisations like the Zimbabwe Council of Churches, The National Council of Churches in Kenya (NCCK) and the South African Council of Churches (SACC). The church should be visible enough when in issues to do with peace and justice if it is to remain relevant to the people.

The statement on Promotion of a Peaceful Africa offered by the All Africa Council of Churches through the global ministries in December 2016 supports the African Union Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable development Goals that aims at building the Africa that Africans want. A peaceful Africa, free of poverty, Africa with good governance. It urges African governments to introduce peace, ethical and moral values and good governance education in school curricula. All religious faith traditions to have Peace education programs. This is to promote a culture of justice and peace in order to increase our engagement in enhancing democracy at the national, regional and continental levels. Global Ministries, (2016). Local organizations like the Zimbabwe Council of Churches are responsible for
implementing the position by All Africa Council of Churches.

It is not a unique phenomenon to have a council in Zimbabwe or church based organisation that represents the interest of citizens. There is the National council of Churches in Kenya, established in 1913, whose objectives includes, Building the capacities of the membership; and enhance the creation of a just and sustainable society. Githigaro, (2012, 103,104). There is also the South African Council of Churches. When society is just and sustainable it implies there is peace prevailing. Creating a just society or a peaceful society is not an event but a process. All these organizations are to unite different Christian denominations to tackle matters of mutual concern that affect church members and the whole community,

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Although the church derives its powers from its moral authority, a belief that peace building is a significant expression of Christian faith and its relationship with key stakeholders. These elements provide the church with everything needed in dealing with conflict and when put into action can provide solutions to conflict. There exist a challenge in the prosecution between the potential and the actual role church play in conflict management. This was the case during the management of violent conflict from 2000 where the Zimbabwe Council of Churches was not very visible despite its continued involvement in the national political processes. Despite the church having a mission of justice and peace, conflicts continued to escalate in various parts of the country. This is an indication that probably there are weaknesses in the methods used or there may be an infiltration in churches by external forces in peace building processes. Efforts has been made to resolve the problem of violent conflict, but those efforts have based their approaches to resolving conflicts in a society on the frameworks of political leadership, the United Nations programs as well as the truth and
reconciliation commissions. The failure of all other efforts to peace building within communities shows the need for application of other alternatives such as engaging the church. This is because the church has a great potential to send the message of peace to the society and have it received. Thus, this research builds on the principles of conflict resolution and transformation to explore church-based peace building, the challenges and opportunities to enhance peaceful co-existence among communities with past issues that trigger hate against each other.

1.3 Purpose of the study:

The study seeks to explore the role that Zimbabwe Council of Churches played in fostering peace building in Zimbabwe.

1.4 Objectives

1. To establish why the church should be involved in peace building.
2. To assess peace building processes employed by the church in Zimbabwe from 2000.
3. To evaluate the challenges and opportunities the church had in bringing forth perpetrators of violent conflict to justice.

1.5 Research Questions

1. Why is it necessary for the church to be involved in peace building?
2. What were the peace building processes used by the church in Zimbabwe from year 2000?
3. What challenges did the church face in trying to bring forth perpetrators of violent conflict to justice in Zimbabwe?
1.6 Assumptions

1. The mushrooming of other church organisations that seem to support the elite or those on positions of influence politically might have weakened the Zimbabwe Council of Churches.

2. Infiltration by the politicians forced the leadership in Zimbabwe Council of Churches to compromise their position.

3. Political affiliation of individual members of the community affected peace building processes by the church in Zimbabwe.

1.7 Justification of the Study

The study has both academic and policy justification. Academically, there lack systematic study of the role of ZCC actors in peace building. Church as a religious organization has usually been associated with causing or escalating conflict. Importantly there is absence of concrete studies on the role of the Zimbabwe Council of churches in peace building in Zimbabwe. This is despite the fact that the Zimbabwe Council of churches has been involved in Zimbabwe’s political dialogue for a long period. The absence is critical especially regarding the management of electoral related conflicts and other conflicts from year 2000 to current period. The study will fill this important gap, through contributing to understanding the participation of the church on the management of conflict.

This study is of great value because; conflict in Zimbabwe is becoming disastrous in terms of destruction of properties, loss of lives and negative influence on the country’s economy. Hence, the move of this study to contribute to the efforts of reducing further occurrence of negative conflicts is commendable. In addition, several groups’ tries to address conflicts may be without following due processes, methods or approaches; therefore, this work has
suggested alternative approaches that may be used. The use of several approaches will prevent similar conflicts in future. For example, if this was addressed, possibly the 2008 runoff presidential election violence would not have taken that direction. The present study has suggested to the church some alternative methods of peace building that she can adopt.

On policy grounds, there is a need to explore how church actors have contributed to and can potentially contribute towards peace building. This is an important goal for there is lack of serious inclusion of church actors in policymaking process. The church has been in the periphery when it comes to policy making. Policy makers normally would want to hear the voice of the church to serve their personal interests. Therefore, Policy makers should come up with policies that are usable by the church, Non-Governmental Organisations and other peace actors in addressing different kinds of conflicts and other related issues.

Further, the study will help church actors to have a deeper understanding of their roles as peace builders. The study will also help the church in how they can best channel their resources towards building a peaceful Zimbabwe.

1.8 Delimitations of the Study

The study concentrated only on the role of the Church in fostering peace building in Zimbabwe through the involvement of the Zimbabwe Council of Churches. Many publications are available on behalf of other organizations like, Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference (Z.C.B.C), and the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (E.F.Z) about their involvement in peace building processes. To the best of the researchers knowledge, very little is available as literature on the role of the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (Z.C.C) as a church organization in peace building processes.
1.9 Limitations of the Study

The researcher may face the challenge with some stakeholders not be willing to cooperate and thereby withholding important information due to suspicion. Politically the Zimbabwean environment is not very friendly that people are free to respond to questions that seem political. This factor can affect the quality of the findings of the research. However, in order to cushion this, there was clarity to participants that all the information provided was purely for research and respected as highly confidential. It will also be a challenge getting slots for interviewing highly placed people with the needed information for this research. Hence, the researcher will be patient and schedule appointments before meeting the participants. Generalisation of the results will not be possible because of the sample size; therefore, to address this challenge the researcher applied selective sampling. The research will have the support and authorization from relevant offices before any information is collected.

1.10 Definitions of terms

The Church – Is a term that simply refers to the assembly of people who believe in God. Sengers (2012:55) as cited by Manyonganise (2016) defined the church from a sociological perspective. Manyonganise says that the church is an institution within a society endowed with grace and salvation distributed to the masses. This sociological definition is useful within this study for it shows that the church does not exist in isolation but it exists within a society. The church can refer to denominations, but it can also refer to Christian organisations such as Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference (ZCBC), Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ) and others. For the purposes of this study, the church refers to the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC).

Peacebuilding- refers to a process that begins from when conflict ends to when there is sustainable peace. Boutros Ghali the then secretary general of the United Nations in his
Agenda for peace report (1992) cited by Peek, (2016) defined peace building as the action to identify and then support structures that strengthens and solidify peace so that there will be no relapse into conflict. This definition is valid within the context of this research for it shows that peace building is a process that starts by identifying potential causes, actual causes or sources of conflict.

**Conflict** -Thakore, (2013) says that conflict is inevitable; it is part of human life. Conflict refers to a struggle or contest between people with different needs, beliefs, ideas, values or goals. Whenever there is interaction, conflict is certain. Conflict also refers to an expression of aggression. Since individuals differ in perception, beliefs, values, needs, interest and goals, incompatibility is oblivious. In this study, Thakore’s definition of conflict shall be used for it is very appropriate to the conflict that have been experienced in Zimbabwe since 2000.

**Violence**– refers to deliberate use of physical force or power against another person or against oneself resulting in hurt, damage or even psychological harm. However, Galtung (1990) noted three types of violence that is, direct violence referring to those behaviours that serve to threaten life or reduce one’s capacity to meet basic human needs. Structural violence referring to organized ways where some groups are restricted from equal access to basic human needs. Structures that impedes can be formal or legal. Cultural violence representing the existence of prevailing social norms that make direct and structural violence seems acceptable. Galtung’s explanation of violence is valued in this study for it elucidates areas that need attention in people’s life.
1.11 Structure of the Study

Chapter one gave an introduction of the study through the background of the study that highlighted the setting of the research on church-based peace building in Zimbabwe. There was clarification on the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, specific objectives, research questions, assumptions and justification of the study. Finally, the chapter presented the delimitations, limitations and the definition of key concepts to the study. Chapter 2 of the study focused on the theoretical framework and literature review of the related cases of conflict in the world, then on the continent of Africa, regional and lastly local. Chapter 3 presented the research methodology used for the study, while chapter 4 covered analysis, presentation and discussion of the results. Chapter 5 provide the conclusion and recommendations made based on the research.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction
The world over, conflicts have been experienced, the reason being that societies have variations in interest. In an environment where there is no consensus and mutuality, human beings can easily end up scrambling for a few available resources and this leads to violent conflicts. This chapter looks at the theoretical framework that will guide this research and reviews the literature that is already available on the subject of conflict, peacebuilding and concludes with the Church and its role in peace building.

2.1 Theoretical Framework
Two theories developed by well-known practitioners John Paul Lederach and John Burton forms the theoretical guidelines for the research. In an effort to explain the problem under study, Lederach’s (2002, 2005) Conflict Transformation Theory and Burton’s (1990) Human needs theory will be applied.

2.1.1. Conflict Transformation Theory
According to Lederach, (2007:17) Conflict Transformation focuses on change, addressing two questions: “What need to be stopped?” and “What is to be built?” Lederach noted that for transformation to take place it involves a movement from one thing to another. This implies that whenever efforts to build peace start, those involved must not only focus on starting point they must think of how to reach sustainable peace. The understanding that Lederach had was that peacebuilding is a process and not an event; hence, it requires approaches that goes beyond traditional diplomacy. Whenever there is a conflict Lederach would argue that,
it is an opportunity of transforming relationships. He shifted from the customary conflict resolution practices that are short term in nature such as, conflict management and conflict prevention. His approach therefore was a holistic approach that encompasses not only peacebuilding but peace keeping as well. Wilkin (2016) agrees with Lederach that contemporary conflicts are identity conflicts, which are relationship-based. When dealing with these kinds of conflicts, conflict resolution specialists should start by exploring the shared meanings, perceptions, and responses to conflict based on social realities, experiences and cultures. In the process of transforming relationships, truth, mercy, justice and peace are key. Addressing these key concepts guarantees attainment of sustainable peace. The foundation of Lederach’s theory of peacebuilding is on his findings from deeply divided societies. He discovered that disrespecting individual’s basic need and refusing individual participation in decision-making and when there is no equal distribution of resources, conflict is definite.

Lederach (2007) argues that in conflict transformation there are four dimensions to conflict that need understanding, that is, personal, structural, relational and cultural. Peacebuilders need to know that conflict change individuals personally, emotionally and spiritually. Conflict also influences systems and structures. How relationships are organized, and who has access to power, from family and organizations to communities and whole societies. Also peacebuilders should note that people with direct contact, when there is conflict, behaviour changes for example, communication patterns change, stereotypes are created, polarization increases, trust decreases. Norms that affect human behaviour culturally changes whenever there is a violent conflict. Lederach’s findings show that a lot of attention is needed in peace building efforts, people need to be educated, financial and cultural resources are very crucial. Conflicting parties need to be accorded time to reconcile at their own pace so that sustainable
transformation is realised. The world over conflicts have been settled and not resolved. When conflict is resolved, it must be complete, acceptable and self-supporting. Zimbabweans need reconciliation and an atmosphere that is friendly for peacebuilding. The church therefore can help in conflict resolution and create this conducive atmosphere for peacebuilding for it enjoys respect from all parties that has been in conflict.

2.1.2 Human Needs Theory

John Burton used the theory of Human Needs in his studies of social and political conflicts. The foundation of human needs theory is on the idea that there are certain basics that humans must have. In his findings, Burton acknowledged that, frustration of human basic needs is mightier than military mighty. It causes instability in societies. According to Burton (1990), when individuals and communities are denied access to the available basic human needs, which may be physical, psychological, social or spiritual without which existence is impossible, is the actual cause of violent conflict. Conflict is a consequence of competition over scarce resources available to satisfy the basic human needs of individuals and communities. Identity, recognition and security are some of the needs that Burton considered key.

Frustration of these basic human needs according to Burton is the root cause of conflict. Punishment and coercion can never prevent individuals who are seeking to fulfil these needs. The needs are non-negotiable, individuals cannot do without; therefore people will seek to fulfil them by any means possible. Human beings find it difficult to live together peacefully when deprived of their basic needs. Persuading or threatening human beings into giving up on these basic needs is not possible. The analysis of the root causes of conflict basing on the theory of human needs suggest the need for a radical restructuring of society to meet human
needs to resolve conflict. An appropriate institution in the society that can create a sustainable peace can fulfil identity recognition and security as fundamental needs. (Burton 1997:33-40) quoted by Walsh, (2015). Burton viewed institutions as capable of fulfilling the needs of all parties to a conflict and consequently building sustainable peace. The church is an institution within a society and therefore makes this theory particularly applicable and usable by the church organisation. The need for security refers to the seven elements of human security, these are, personal security, health security, community security, political security, economic security, food security and environmental security. These are the basics in an individual’s everyday life.

2.1.3 Relevance of the theories in the context of the study

The two theories, Conflict Transformation theory and Human Needs theory are relevant for this study for they find the underlying cause of conflict. The need for recognition, identity and security forms the basis of the conflicts that Zimbabwe has been having since 2000. The conflicts are relationship based and what the church has to do is to address broken relationships. It should bring conflicting parties together for truth telling, justice, mercy and peace, introducing programs that will avoid a relapse in to violent conflict. Land conflict in Zimbabwe in year 2000 was mainly a result of an unequal distribution of land by the former colonisers hence a few were beneficiaries of the land. In 2005, operation restore order was of the need for power thereby violating ordinary people’s rights. Violation was severe in people’s right to shelter, food, security and even political security. The same with election conflict of 2000 to 2013, there was gross violation of people’s political security, personal security, the right to life and protection. Thus the two theories helps to examine the root causes of conflict in Zimbabwe and understand the extent the country has suffered because of
failure to fulfil the needs. The theories also outline the process that may lead to a sustainable peace in Zimbabwe.

2.2 Literature Review

2.2.1 The Church and its role in peacebuilding

The Church and Civil Society Forum, (2012) said that, there are sections of the church that have been compromised largely and ended up speaking on behalf of political parties. The moment the church speaks on behalf of a political party, it would have either willingly or unwillingly supported violence, which they must condemn. This has therefore led some scholars to conclude that religion in the whole world is the source of most violent conflicts that the world is experiencing. Religion is power, and nearly every person is religious. The church is not divorced from these religious groups therefore it is blamed. It is for example, in North Africa there is so much violent conflict between Christianity and Muslim. In most Arabic states, there is conflict between Christians and Muslims. These, according to Lederach are identity conflict and they are conflicts of relationships, which need resolution with full understanding of the background, truthfulness, mercy, justice and peace in order to bring about sustainable peace. If the church is truly the source of violent conflict, can it not be a solution to ending those conflicts? Surely, the church can play a very significant role in ending violent conflicts.

The participation of faith-based organization in several peace-building activities on the African continent and beyond has been tremendous. The Church is a part of faith-based organizations that has been involved in conflict resolution programs since time immemorial. The involvement of these religious organizations in peace building activities can be a better alternative in dealing with identity-based conflicts. The church command a very huge following, it accommodates all age groups, all races, different political party members and
The church as an organization has the power to convince many people using its faith-based approach, and people regarded it as having solutions to every problem. The fact that the church can accommodate people of different background implies that it is very capable of bringing up sustainable peace, according to Githigaro, (2012).

According to Leach, (2012), the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) played a pivotal role in Sudan mediating between the South and North Sudan and it led to the signing of the 1972 Addis Ababa Peace agreements. The professionalism of the World Council of Churches and the All Africa Conference of Churches demonstrated the extent to which a non-governmental organisation can help. The WCC and AACC was able to establish some communications between two parties that have been in conflict. They were able to start a dialogue that does not compromise their interest or put those interests at risk even in the future. The WCC/AACC as a religious organisation allowed it a degree of moral authority at the same time being a non-governmental organisation made it less of a political threat. The relationship between the Christian Church and the Abdoud administration was not friendly to the extent that Abdoud expelled Christian missionaries. The expulsion was an effort of trying to Islamize the South Sudan. WCC/AACC’s ability to remain apolitical made the post Abdoud government have some trust with it. The conflicting parties were convinced to come to a negotiating table for a dialogue that then led to the signing of a peace agreement. It is important to note that peace agreement is not at all sustainable peace but it is a step towards peace for it brings an opportunity to start the process of peacebuilding because the environment will be conducive for peace programs.
According to August, (2013), in the life and witness of the Christian church, reconciliatory teaching cannot be ignored. In South Africa, there is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) that brought rival parties together. The commission came after a political negotiation between two rival parties that is, Nelson Mandela of the African National Congress (ANC) and Frederic William de Klerk’s National Party ending the more than 40 years apartheid. The Church in South Africa played a very pivotal role in the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. South Africa had a very long history of political conflict, and because of that these conflict led to a much-divided society where there was a violation of human rights. The TRC was meant to bring about what had happened in the past, who committed the offence, once the truth is clear and known, then people will put the past behind and move into the peaceful future with hope. Kur, (2015) agreed with August (2013) in that the Christian leaders in South Africa helped in the proceedings and hearings of the Truth and Reconciliation process. The Christian ethics therefore became the major player in the reconciliation exercise. The coming out from prison after 27 years of Nelson Mandela and his subsequent election as the first black president of South Africa in 1994 set the reconciliation process in motion. In this, the church played the role of bringing the long warring parties to a negotiation table in a bid to reconcile the conflicting parties. South Africa realised that the church because of its access to many people, could be in a better position to reconcile leading to a sustainable peace.

The mission of the church is not just preaching the gospel, but acting also on the gospel. The church has a moral obligation to stand for the people and with the people whenever there is need. According to Munemo, and Nciiza, (2014), the church from the period when the country was under colonial rule it was involved in peace processes. Peace processes included provision of services necessary for human existence. It was the obligation of the church to
promote peaceful and harmonious existence between different people of different background in a society. Promotion of a democratic environment was part of the church’s mandate from as early as the 1960s. It has often challenged the repressive Rhodesian government, and it continued to challenge the post-independent government of Zimbabwe, a sign of living its prophetic call of being the custodian of a moral and just society. The Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC), a Christian organisation founded in 1964 played a very important role from before independence and after independence. The Church engaged itself in service provision to the public; it provided education through establishing schools, health through establishing hospitals and clinics, food through agricultural farms and several other services. This agrees well with John Burton theory of Human Needs. If human basic needs are addressed the chances of reducing violent conflict into peaceful communities are great.

According to Matika, (2014) the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) in 1997 initiated the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA). The main reason of having this was to advocate for a new democratic and people driven constitution. The NCA gained popularity during this period and it caused the government’s first post-independence defeat in a referendum. The defeat did not go well with the government and led to a violent election in June 2000. The fact that the NCA was a brainchild of the ZCC, the relationship between the church and the state became bitter. Churches with a missionary background (churches linked to western countries) were regarded enemies of the state, and the indigenous churches regarded as real churches. Even as the relationship between the church and the state was no longer as good as before, the church continued with its mandate of providing services on behalf of the government through civic society organizations and on its own as well.
Dodo, Nyoni, and Makwerere (2014), noted that during the liberation struggle, the Roman Catholic Church advocated for truth telling. Many people suffered during the liberation struggle and in order to be successful in helping them, truth, justice and mercy are key. According to Sampson, cited by Dodo, (2014) talked of categories that religion uses in intervening for peacebuilding, advocates, intermediaries, observers, and educators. The church in Zimbabwe, such as the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops conference (ZCBC), The Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ) and the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) have played a role in monitoring and observing national activities that are very much likely to be violent like the national elections. They have continuously spoke against violence during the election period and after election. These organisations in the mid 2000 embarked on a project known as The Zimbabwe We Want. They tried to educate the masses and to get the views from the people unfortunately the program died prematurely. All this was an effort to build a peaceful Zimbabwe.

Many people sometimes question the role of the church as an institution. The church is an all-rounder, meaning, it must be in every situation trying to provide answers to the challenges that people have. The government of Zimbabwe through the then President Robert Gabriel Mugabe would not want the church to be seen participating in political processes. When the church becomes vocal against government policies, it will be threatened and treated as a member of the opposition political party. The church must represent God’s kingdom on earth. Munemo, and Nciiza, (2014), argued that it is the church’s obligation to be in a position to influence situations for the better, preserve good things and bring healing. The church’s main purpose of existence should be transformative in nature meant to transform individual people’s life for the better.
As part of the civil society organisations, the church should advocate for the promotion of democracy and human rights. It must castigate and challenge the government and any community leadership when becoming repressive to the people. The church should be very much against violation of human rights and because of its influence to many people including those on political leadership position, its voice will be heard especially when it remained apolitical. Peacebuilding cannot be a success without the church playing its role of being the voice of the voiceless and providing services needed for everyday survival because government on its own cannot do everything. According to Kaulemu, (2013), the church played a very big role in colonising Africa, and again the church played a role in the liberation of the countries colonised. The late Canaan Banana was quoted by Kaulemu as saying; there were church leaders who supported “African advancement” and justice, and those who supported the colonial regime.” In contemporary conflicts, the church is not a united force; it is confused whether to support the status quo or upholding the interest and dignity of the local majority. The division in the church may be due to infiltration of the politicians and or by the fact that the church is now very much in need of material things that the government can provide. Transformation should start in the church first before it can transform the nation. The church need to be peaceful before it can advocate for peace.

2.2.2 Church and the processes of Peacebuilding

The church has used several processes in its efforts to bring about sustainable peace. Some of the processes are mobilisation of resources for service provision, mediation, monitoring, and advocacy. The church from time immemorial played a very pivotal role in the life of the people of Zimbabwe. According to Munemo and Nciizah, (2014) the church in efforts to provide services for the people established Christian Care in 1967. This was a non-political organization, which support everyone despite different political affiliation, race, class,
religion or colour). This was an important aspect as it attended to the needs for both races, the whites and the blacks. This reflected the church’s devotion to create a peaceful and just society. The church provided education, health, agriculture, and many other developmental programs that were crucial for the nation during and after the colonial era. According to Githigaro, (2012), the church was involved in the mediation efforts in Nigeria in the 1967-70 Biafran war; the WCC and the AACC mediated between the south Sudan and North Sudan that then led to the signing of a peace agreement in 1972 in Addis Ababa. Through the involvement of the church “in the name of the community of Saint’ Egidio” in mediation, the Mozambican civil war ended in 1990. Mediation has proved to be one area that the church has been strong in efforts to bring lasting peace.

Wilkins and Vokes, (2016) quoted the statement that was made by the Secretary General of the Uganda Joint Christian council, “No political rally will ever gather the crowds you see gathered in Ugandan churches every Sunday morning.” It was a statement made in response to a question on the role of the Church in Uganda elections. It therefore shows the level of religiosity of the Ugandan people. In fact, the church commands a very huge membership hence cannot isolate itself from participating in national events like elections. The Inter-Religious Council of Uganda’s (IRCU) together with the Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC) played a very significant role of planning to have televised presidential debates before elections and monitoring of election activities. This implies that the church in the whole world monitors not only electoral activities but also all that the government does. Monitoring government activities is crucial so that the church is able to confront the government well informed.
According to Githigaro (2012), Faith-based organizations play many different roles in a society, and one of the role is advocacy. They offer some early warnings during humanitarian crisis. Church organisations partners with global, regional and local organizations for effective advocacy and fundraising activities. The church has been advocating for a homemade and people driven constitution in Zimbabwe and for the inclusion of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission in the constitution and it achieved.

Not only has the church been advocating, monitoring, and providing services to the people, but since time immemorial the church have been teaching and preaching peace, love, forgiveness, reconciliation, justice and tolerance. This is the mandate of the church from a Biblical perspective. Despite all these processes used by the church conflict escalates. These processes has been marred with many challenges as discussed below.

2.2.3 Church and its challenges in peacebuilding

In the churches efforts to bring about sustainable peace, Nyenya (2016) postulated that one challenge that the church had was its leadership. Church leaders in Zimbabwe lacks the good knowledge of the concept of political activity, hence their views limits participation to only influencing politicians and leave politics. It will be ideal for church leadership to understand political activities so that they would be in a position to correct the politicians when they cause instability. It is very difficult to advise or advocate for something that you do not understand. Church leadership should empathise with the politicians before any effort to influence them. According to Githigaro, (2012), another challenge that the church faces in its effort to build peace is that some individuals and groups have reservations about working with someone believed to be having a different opinion in peacebuilding. Peacebuilding demands many resources that include financial resources and expertise so that it becomes a
success; this has been the challenge with the church hence it ended up siding with the political elite to get some financial support. The financial support would come with conditions and the church became polarized on that note. Lack of financial independency is destructive especially when aiming at being relevant to the people.

2.3 Chapter Summary

Violent Conflicts are a result of frustration of basic human needs, according to Burton (1990). Contemporary conflicts are relationship and identity conflicts according to Lederach (2002, 2005). This chapter reviewed the literature on conflict, peace building and the role of the church in Zimbabwe. There was also literature review on the participation of the church in Sudan, and South African conflicts, and it was successful in its efforts. Conflict Transformation Theory by Lederach and Human Needs Theory by Burton are the theories that guided the research understudy. The following chapter will look at the research design and methodology.
CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction
This chapter outlines the research methodology used in the study to investigate the research problem. The researcher provided information on population, sample and research instruments used to collect information from primary sources. There was an outline on the collection and analysis of data. The research methodology used was qualitative as it allows studying things in their natural setting and thereby producing a thick description. The researcher considered some ethical issues by assuring participants of confidentiality during and after research. There was verbal consent that the researcher obtained from informants before participation in the research.

3.1 Research Design
Research design is an overall plan used to connect the conceptual research problems to the relevant verifiable research. Wyk, (2012). In other words, a research design guides the researcher to what data is required, what method to use when collecting and analysing data, and how this answers research questions. This research is a case study, Harrison, (2017) says that, a Case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a case over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information. The sources of information include observations, interviews, documents and
reports. The choice of a case study approach was because ZCC in partnership with other organisations initiated several peacebuilding programs in Zimbabwe, but there is no literature on its actual role, the challenges and opportunities it had. Therefore, the researcher felt it was an opportunity to study this particular phenomenon to contribute to the ever-expanding literature on the role of church-based organizations in peacebuilding. To the best of my knowledge, nobody had studied this, and this study intends to bridge the literature gap. The researcher obtained the verbal research consent for the case study from the General Secretary of ZCC. This being a case study, participants were selected by virtue of the positions they held in Zimbabwe Council of Churches and the role they played in various peacebuilding interventions undertaken by the organization. The researcher adopted structured in-depth interviews, questionnaires and content analysis as the study’s data collection methods.

3.2 Research Methodology
A research methodology according to Pavan and Kulkarni, (2014) is a way of solving the problem systematically and in proper manner. This implies that whenever conducting a research there should be techniques used in order to find a solution. In doing a research, the choice of a technique must have logic and therefore, in order to do justice to the research objectives for this study the researcher used qualitative research methodology. Dodo (2018) says that a qualitative methodological approach emphasises on narrative and descriptive results and applied exploratively. The study sought to explore the actual role of ZCC as a church organization in peacebuilding processes in Zimbabwe, the challenges and the opportunities it had. Therefore, to achieve that goal, the study needed to focus on descriptive narratives, which explain relationships between variables. Qualitative research approach focuses on the quality rather than quantity of the data. It generates a deep understanding of meanings, processes, and reasoning. Rahi, (2017) argues that qualitative method helps in that
the researcher can get to the depth of the problem and have as much detail as possible on a particular topic. The researcher therefore used qualitative research methodology because there will be open-ended questions to probe informants leading them to respond in their own words in a natural environment without manipulation. The researcher chose to use qualitative research as it allows probing participants with other questions to get as much information as possible without manipulating participants’ environment.

3.3 Population and Sample

Rahi (2017) says a population refers to all people or items that the researcher wishes to understand. Kindy, Shah, and Jusoh, (2016) defines a population of a research as the people who appeal to the interest of the researcher in generalizing the outcomes of the research. It is therefore upon these people or items that the researcher will be able to generalize the results of the study. The ZCC personnel were the targeted population for the research. In addition, church pastors and laity of churches affiliated to the ZCC were under study. However, realising that, churches affiliated to ZCC are many and it is not practical to involve everyone in the research, the researcher used the following criterion to have informants.

1. Key informants from ZCC - these are former and current leaders of the organisation with a vast knowledge on peace building and are directly involved in peace building programs.

2. Pastors and church members (Laity) - these are church leaders, men and women affiliated to ZCC who preach and teach peace, forgiveness and reconciliation and are also involved in peacebuilding activities.

3.4 Sample
Bordens and Abbott (2002) as cited by Kindy, Shah, and Jusoh, (2016) defines a sample as a set of respondents selected as representative individuals from a large population. This implies that a sample refers to a subset or group of population. It is not very practical to do justice to a qualitative research study by having a very large population and be able to get the quality information required in order to make inferences. Therefore, out of the whole population the researcher chose a few individuals competent enough to contribute mainly because of their knowledge in the study area.

3.4.1 Sampling Size

The Sample size for the research is 25 and the reason for choosing a small sample was the qualitative nature of the study. In qualitative studies, what matters most is the quality of information provided by the informants rather than the quantity. This being a case study, the sampling techniques employed by the researcher, that is judgement sampling and snowball sampling made it possible for the researcher to be involved in decision making. The decision made by the researcher included the choice of who can contribute well to the research as an informant. Below is a sample frame for this study.

3.4.2 Sample Frame

Figure 3.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>QUANTITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ZCC Personnel</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youths from ZCC member Churches</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women from ZCC member churches</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastors from ZCC member churches</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former employees of ZCC</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.4.3 Sampling Procedure

Kindy, shah, and Jusoh, (2016) define sampling as the act, process, or technique for selecting a sample. Further to that definition, Gentles, Charles, Ploeg, and McKibbon, (2015), defined sampling in qualitative research as the selection of specific data sources to address the research objectives. Sampling is an important component of any piece of research because of the significant impact that it can have on the quality of the results. The aim is to select a sample that will be representative of the population about which the researcher aims to draw conclusion.” In this study, the researcher used a judgement and snowball sampling method. Judgment sampling and snowball sampling techniques are a type of non-probability sampling. Judgment sampling also known as purposive sampling technique is a process whereby the researcher uses own judgment in selecting a group of people with knowledge about the problem. Snowball sampling technique refers to a situation where the researcher makes initial contract with a small group of participants who are relevant to the research topic and then use them as referrals to contact others, Rahi, (2017). In this study, the researcher used own judgment in selecting informants assumed to have knowledge in peacebuilding. Those selected included personnel from the Zimbabwe Council of Churches, Pastors and lay leadership in ZCC member churches and former employees of ZCC. Lay leadership included youths and women.

3.5 Data collection
According to Murgan, (2015), data refers to available information, facts, observation or measurements that may be in form of letters, numbers, or material. The researcher would collect data in order to come up with answers to research questions and testing the hypothesis. Data collection therefore, as Murgan would say, is the process of collecting and measuring information on variables of interest in an established systematic manner that enables one to answer stated research question, test hypothesis and evaluate outcome. There are two forms of data collection sources, that is, primary and secondary sources. Information from primary sources is first hand because is yet to be interpreted by the researcher. Information from secondary sources is second hand because it is data collected and interpreted by others. Primary sources include the use of interviews, questionnaires, and observation, whereas secondary sources included academic books, journals, and newspapers. The researcher in this study used both primary and secondary data collection sources and these are:

• The researcher distributed questionnaires to Church members and church pastors who are members of churches affiliated to ZCC. The researcher collected questionnaires after a week giving them ample time to respond to the asked questions. The researcher identified five pastors and gave them questionnaires, six youths and six women received some questionnaires.

• The researcher made appointments with eight key informants from ZCC and former ZCC employees’ for in-depth interviews.

• The researcher used content analysis as another instrument of data collection, that is, the researcher used books, documents and reports relevant to the research problem.
3.5.1 Questionnaire

According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012), questionnaire is a “general term that includes all data collection techniques in which each person is asked to respond to the same set of questions in a predetermined order”. Questionnaires are helpful in descriptive or explanatory research. The researcher developed questionnaires basing on the research design, research objectives, and research questions in order to collect data for this research. The self-administered questionnaires were hand delivered and collected after a week when they were completed. The one week gave informants ample time to respond, thus allowing them to respond on their own time. No identification was required on the questionnaire therefore they freely answered the questions. Seventeen informants whose churches are members of ZCC got questionnaires. The questionnaire had 15 questions enabling the researcher to make an informed analysis on the information collected on church-based peacebuilding in Zimbabwe.

3.5.2 In-depth Interviews

Alshenqeeti, (2014), defined an interview as an extendable conversation between partners that aims at having ‘in-depth information’ about a certain subject, and through which a phenomenon could be interpreted in terms of the meanings interviewees bring to it. In this case, the conversation will be between the researcher and the informants. Interviews can be structured, unstructured and semi-structured. Structured interview is composed of predetermined questions, which requires immediate and direct responses. Unstructured interview is an open-ended interview, which gives freedom to both the interviewer and the interviewee. The interviewer will be able to probe the interviewee to elaborate on several issues. Semi-structured interview is even more flexible than the unstructured interview. It allows the interviewer to get more detail through probing the interviewee to expand on responses. The researcher used pre-established questions to maintain focus during the
discussion. Key informants from ZCC participated in the interview in order to get a detailed information of the subject under study. The researcher employed structured in-depth interview for it is helpful to gather valid and reliable information that is relevant to the research questions. From the responses during interview, the researcher was able to formulate other research questions helpful to get all the detail relevant for this research.

3.5.3 Content Analysis

United States Accountability Office, (2013) defined content analysis as a systematic analysis of texts that includes books, documents, photographs and even newspapers. Content analysis is an approach to quantify qualitative data by methodically arranging and comparing items of data to summarize it. Multitudinous amount of data collected by the researcher during research from newspapers, documents, reports and books need to be reduced into small meaningful parts. The researcher in this study was able to collect documents and reports from ZCC offices with information of what they have been doing and what they had planned to do during the period under review. This helped the researcher to test the hypothesis in this research.

The use of questionnaires, in-depth interviews and content analysis as research instruments helped the researcher to triangulate the findings and realising the weaknesses of each of the employed instruments

3.6 Validity and Reliability

3.6.1 Reliability

Reliability and validity makes the research to be generally acceptable. Validity and reliability are crucial characteristics of any assessment especially where the outcome is of great importance to the researcher and the informant. Kindy, Shah, and Jusoh (2016), argues that
"Reliability is the extent to which the variables or set of variables is consistent in what it measures. This implies that if the same study were to be repeated using the same instruments under same conditions, it should produce same results. Reliability depends on the strength of the instruments used in research. The researcher was careful enough in choosing the research method and research instrument in order to yield reliable results.

3.6.2 Validity

John, (2015) says validity of a test refers to the extent to which it measures what it must measure. Alonge (1985) as cited by John, defined validity as what the test measures, how well it does so and what can be inferred from it. The validity of a research also requires the use of appropriate instruments so that it measures what it must measure. The use of correct instruments will therefore lead to valid results. Validity is in two categories, that is, internal validity and external validity. Internal validity questions the credibility of the research findings on the actual role that the ZCC played, the challenges it faced and the opportunities it had in peacebuilding. Whereas external validity questions the generalizability of these research findings to other civic society organisations in the country. Validity in this study pertains to the instruments used in data collection.

3.7 Data presentation and Analysis

In a qualitative research, data analysis, according to, Flick, (2013) is the classification and interpretation of linguistic (or visual) material to make statements about implicit and explicit dimensions and structures of meaning making in the material and what is represented in it. It means that the collected data is organized and structured in order to extract a meaning out of it. The analysis of data occurs simultaneously with data collection. In this research, the researcher coded and presented collected data in themes. The aim in this data analysis was to arrive at generalizable statements by comparing information from informants. Data collected
through interviews was analysed using narratives. Data on questionnaire was analysed using tables and narratives.

3.8 Pilot testing

In trying to check if, the questions are comprehensible, if the wording was good, and to check the reliability and validity of the interview and questionnaire questions the researcher conducted a pilot testing. Bartlet, (2013), says once the survey was complete testing was scheduled. A pilot testing is very crucial in pre-testing research instruments. This implies that once the researcher completed formulating interview questions and questionnaires, there is need to have people who will act as representatives of those to be participants in the research. The researcher decided that youths and adult members of United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe in Mutare who are university students would act as the population in this pre-testing stage. The reason for choosing these was that they are relatively easy to contact since they are members of the same church denomination with the researcher. Although they are members of the same denomination, they are still a unique people in terms of age, level of education, understanding and perceptions. Pre testing research instruments helped to determine if the items produced the kind of information needed.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

In every discipline there are ethics, these ethics help in distinguishing between what is right or wrong, what is acceptable and what is not acceptable. In research, an ethical consideration refers to moral standards that the researcher should value in every stage of research design. Cooper and Schindler (2008) cited by Matika, (2014) defines ethics as “norms or standards of
behaviour that guide moral choices about our behaviour and our relationships with others”.

For the purpose of this research, the researcher will focus on three principles of ethics and these are principle of justice, principle of beneficence/non-maleficence and the principle of autonomy.

**3.9.1 The principle of Justice**

Justice in research demands that all participants should receive a fair treatment. This implies that no participant receives a better treatment than others do and all information provided is valuable. Every participant has a right to fair treatment and privacy. Participants were encouraged to know that the researcher would not share information provided for the study without their consent. The researcher made it a point that the study was conducted in the participants’ most comfortable environment where there was no intrusion of privacy. There was respect of participants’ confidentiality. Owonikoko, (2013).

**3.9.2 Principle of Beneficence and non-maleficence**

The principle of beneficence in doing research means, “do good” and the principle of non-maleficence means “do not harm”, Owonikoko, (2013). Thus, one should do well to and should not harm research participants. Participants deserve all the assurance that the information provided is only for study. The researcher explained to the participants that their contributions were for academic purposes only hence no harm for giving out valuable information on the subject understudy.

**3.9.3 Principle of Autonomy**

Owonikoko, (2013) noted that in the principle of autonomy participants to the research have the ability to make their own decisions hence that must be respected and recognized, while
the autonomy of the vulnerable is protected by preventing imposition of unwanted decisions. This principle of autonomy emphasizes on the practice of informed consent, whereby participants make their own decisions whether to participate in the research or not. The researcher explained the topic to the approached participants listed and asked if they are comfortable participating in the research. The researcher further explained the purpose of the research to the participants, and that there will be no remuneration offered. The researcher explained that participants are free to withdraw at any stage of the research. Participants gave their verbal consent to take part in the study.

3.10 Chapter Summary

A Case study research design was described in this chapter and the qualitative research methodology was described as well. The principles of justice, beneficence/non-maleficence, and autonomy ensured that the informants were secure ethically. The researcher gave an explanation on data collection plan and data analysis procedure. Chapter 4 focuses on data presentation, data analysis and discussion of findings.
CHAPTER FOUR
DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

The chapter incorporates the outcomes and findings of the study carried out using questionnaires, structured in-depth interviews, and content analysis. It starts with presentation of findings from research, discussion of findings and conclude with the analysis on the findings. Presentation of research findings will be according to the objectives of this study. Therefore, the summary of findings will be the source of final research conclusions and recommendations in chapter five.

4.1 Summary of Respondents

The targeted informants for the research were 25, and the researcher managed to contact all informants. Seventeen questionnaires were distributed by hand to pastors and church members from the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe, Church of Christ, Presbyterian church, Anglican Church, Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, the United Methodist Church, United Baptist church and Salvation Army. Of the questionnaires distributed, six youths, six women and five Pastors from different churches received the questionnaires. The researcher had In-depth structured interviews with key informants from the Zimbabwe Council of Churches that is, three former personnel and four current personnel. One research book by ZCC, one report article by ZCC secretariat and two books were analysed as part of content analysis.
Table 4.1: Responses from key informants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Targeted Informants</th>
<th>Actual informants</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ZCC Personnel</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former ZCC personnel</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youths from ZCC member churches</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women from ZCC member churches</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastors from ZCC member churches</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table above shows that 92% of the targeted informants responded which therefore gives the researcher a fair conclusion from the responses. The researcher could not access all the targeted 25 informants for some informants suddenly had other commitments, which were beyond the researcher’s control. For example others travelled out of the country. Some who received questionnaires did not respond to the questions saying they had busy schedules.

However, the researcher feels that the responses made are significant enough to make a fair conclusion. 16 informants who responded to questionnaires and 7 interviewed to make 23 of the targeted 25 participants make the analysis made by the researcher balanced.

4.2.1 Involvement of the Church in Peacebuilding

A significant number of respondents agreed that peace is generally the absence of any form of violence that is direct or indirect violence. This agrees well with Galtung’s notion that elimination of all forms of violence such as direct, structural and cultural results in sustainable peace. One Bishop who is a ZCC official during an interview says that, “as ZCC
we believe that the absence of violence is a key pointer toward peace although the absence of violence is not the only factor that defines peace. There also has to be social cohesion among people.” (Interview 15/08/18). The church advocates for elimination of all forms of violence. This advocacy by the church at times must be confrontational without fear or favour. The church must be prepared for any consequences.

Few respondents on questionnaires says, peace refers to a situation when people with different opinions, goals, background, sex, race and political parties accept and respect each other and be able to live in harmony. This is in tandem with Lederach’s notion that contemporary conflicts are identity or relationship conflict. Therefore, to be able to live united, people need to be reconciled and forgive each other.

Very few respondents says peace is the presence of justice and respect of everyone’s right and need, this agrees with Burton’s notion that if peace is to be achieved, people’s basic needs must be addressed. Failure to address the rights and needs results in furtherance of violent conflicts. One key interviewee from ZCC says, “Peace refers to a situation when social, political and economic needs of an individual are not frustrated”. (Interview 10/09/18) This agrees well with what Burton would say that people’s needs are key to the attainment of lasting peace in a society. Every human being needs political security, economic security, social security, cultural security, environmental security and personal security and food security. If the church is able to help so that people’s needs are not frustrated then there will be peace. Many people have confidence in the church as the voice of the voiceless majority therefore, it must advocate for peace. At the same time, the church as a charitable organisation must provide services needed by people for the government alone cannot do it.
One informant during an interview said that, “Politicians are the most difficult people to understand, although we had a chance for dialogue with the government it was dialogue on their terms”. (Interview 07/09/18). The government set conditions for a dialogue with the church. This then forced the church not be what it should be because of the conditions set. The condition was for church to agree with what the government want. The church managed to dialogue with key players in violent conflicts in Zimbabwe. Key players to violent conflict in Zimbabwe included the war veterans, political players, and national youth service popularly known as “Border Gezi”, ruling ZANU PF party in 2000, government state agencies like the police during Murambatsvina in 2005.

One informant during interview asked the researcher, “Are you aware that ZCC contributed so much to the current constitution of Zimbabwe. We participated through a document entitled ‘The Zimbabwe We Want’. ZCC also participated in the constitution making process at one time through the NCA. It advocated also for the inclusion of the peace and reconciliation commission in the constitution. The idea of this inclusion was the realization that past experiences needs closure to avoid future violent conflicts. Constitutionalism is one key tenet for democracy, and ZCC became part of the making of a people driven constitution. The researcher from the above information collected has a feeling that the church is fully aware of its moral obligation to be there for the majority in whatever means. Preaching mercy, justice, truth and providing for the needs of the people agrees well with Lederach’s holistic approach to peacebuilding and Burton’s Human Needs Theory. Having been able to dialogue with key players was an achievement by the church despite the conditions set for them.
4.2.2. Towards a peaceful Zimbabwe

Participants acknowledged that the process of peacebuilding should not be restricted to specific time. The process can start before, during or even after conflict. Other informants were of the opinion that the process of peacebuilding should start before conflict. From the responses made, it shows that the church generally agrees that building peace is a process and not an event. The church also understands what peacebuilding is all about. There are times when research into the potential causes of conflict is necessary and address before conflict. There are times when conflict erupts unexpectedly therefore, the process of peacebuilding can start during conflict. Negotiations, mediations or dialogue can status during conflict to end conflict. After conflict also can be an opportunity to look back at the causes of previous conflict and address those sources to avoid future conflicts.

The researcher feels that the fact that the church knows that peacebuilding is a process that can start anytime, it implies that more teaching on peace is essential anytime even utilising the pulpit in church to cultivate the spirit of peace in people. This follows that the majority of the population, (more than 80%) in Zimbabwe are said to be Christians.

4.2.3 The church as a polarized entity

The researcher gathered from respondents that the largest percentage of respondents on questionnaires strongly agree and agrees that the mushrooming of other organisations that seem to support the political elite was a challenge and continues to be a challenge to the effective advocacy for peace. Many people now regard the church as a divided community. Other church organizations ends up openly siding with those regarded as perpetrators of violent conflict. This affected the operations of ZCC as a church organization. Only a very small percentage of the informants disagrees that mushrooming of other church organizations
that sided with the political elite was a challenge to the effectiveness of the ZCC. The political elites always will use a divide and rule strategy only to make the church ineffective in its effort to influence for justice and peace.

Another key ZCC interviewee added that “we are aware that some organizations are just projects created to divide the church by those with political muscles so that people loses confidence in the church”. (Interview 13/08/18). It will end up seemingly; the church is polarised to speak with one voice. The political elite will then side with those organizations that seem to agree with what they want. The informant went on to give an example that, whenever Zimbabwe is about to have elections politicians will affiliate themselves with a church organization and that organization will bless the politicians and speak on their behalf. They affiliate with organizations that will never be against them. This has caused the ZCC to be side-lined and seen as doing nothing that could bring about peace.

A significant number of informants say that church leadership had become partisan for personal gain to the extent of compromising church position. Informants strongly agree and agree that church leadership had become partisan. While a sizeable number says that, they are not certain. In an interview with one former ZCC official he said, “We know some of us as former leaders of the organization ended up being card carrying members of a political party and openly supported a political party. Without mentioning names, some of us benefited from land reform program. This costed our credibility as ZCC” (Interview 13/08/18). Mudarikiri, (2015) acknowledged that there were challenges that ZCC encountered in carrying out its mandate. “ZCC lacked enough resources to reach out in every place”. This then forced some leaders to act on behalf of a political party to get the much-needed support thereby ending up supporting the status quo. If the church is to be effective in its programs, it should work
closely with political leadership. Of which there has to be limits in working with the political leadership otherwise, the church will end up compromising. It is a fact that every individual is free to associate but as leaders, it should never be public knowledge for it will affect the image of the organization. ZCC lost a number of international partners during the time when its leadership became partisan. This weakened the organisation a lot because those partners used to support the organization to be able to carry out its activities.

There is a consensus among the informants that church leadership should never be partisan for that compromises the church position. The church leadership should not be so much into material gain at the expense of the truth. Leadership must be exemplary otherwise the church abandons its prophetic call of preaching justice, truth, peace, reconciliation, and forgiveness as Lederach would say. The researcher noted from the findings that the church has the capacity to bring about sustainable peace in Zimbabwe as long as its leadership speaks with one voice. The researcher is of the opinion that being partisan is not health for the church for the church must live what it preaches. The church must live a Christ like life, a life of saying the truth and stand by that without fear.

A very large number of the respondents indicated on questionnaires that it is true that members of the community belongs or affiliates to a certain political party. That affiliation by members of the community affected the peacebuilding processes by the church. In some instances, members of the community would start chanting political party slogans praising a certain leader of the party as if is the one initiating the process. That has affected the church in that it ended up selecting communities to distribute resources and avoided some communities. Another small group of the respondents says they are not sure whether affiliation by community members has affected peacebuilding processes by the church. The
reason for saying not sure might be because they actually do not know or they were afraid to
tell. In addition, a reasonable number of the informants said it is not true. Every member of
the community is affiliated to a certain political party therefore this can never be the reason
for the church not to carry out its mandate of providing for the people who are very much in
need.

Another key ZCC interviewee would not openly agree that political affiliation by members of
the community affected peacebuilding processes by the church neither would he say that
affiliation did not affect. It was a balanced argument. He said, ‘‘In some communities’ we had
a challenge of political affiliation by members and it really affected our programs but in
other communities, that was not an issue’’. The church through organisations like Christian
care distributed different items and started several programs to communities without any
hindrance.

4.2.4 Church losing focus

ZCC since its inception in 1964 has managed to stand for what is just. It could speak against
all evils regardless of who commits it. Politicians therefore infiltrated the organization to
divide and weaken it. The majority of the informants on questionnaires strongly agree that
there was infiltration in the organization that is why it was very cautious in whatever it says.
There was a lot of fear instilled in ZCC and its member churches and organisations that it was
no longer free to talk and carry out programs that seem to oppose the politics of the day. The
church preferred to seek the blessings or approval of the politicians of any program that it
wanted to introduce to benefit the majority. When the church wanted to distribute food items,
the politicians of the area had to give blessings and ended up politicising those items. A small
section of the respondents says that they are not sure whether there was infiltration in ZCC
and its member churches and organizations. In addition, a handful of respondents disagrees with the notion of infiltration as the reason why the church has not been very active or visible in carrying out programs that are of significance for peacebuilding.

One key ZCC official who is a board member noted during an interview that, “We suffered political infiltration as ZCC. The same people who were perpetrators of violence infiltrated the organization and that weakened us as an organization” (Interview 5/09/18). This crippled the church in that it could not bring these perpetrators to justice for fear of intimidation. The implication is not that politicians should not have to work in the organization or attend church services but because they are regarded perpetrators or as affiliates of a party responsible for violent conflict it instils fear in people. People will not be free to express themselves for fear of victimisation. From the above responses, it is true that infiltration has weakened the ZCC as an organization in its effort to bring about lasting peace.

The researcher concluded that a small fraction of the respondents who says they are not sure whether there was infiltration or not might implies that church members do not follow programs introduced by ZCC. Normally people do not comment because they really do not know or they are hesitant to share their mind. The infiltration was mainly the works of the perpetrators of violence especially the ruling party ZANU PF assuming that opposition political party MDC works with the ZCC. This was because organisations like the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) and Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN) have their roots in ZCC. Therefore, infiltration was just to instil fear to church and to divide it in to factions.

During an in-depth interview, one key ZCC informant, would say, “We must understand that
there was no political space for the church. The then president of Zimbabwe Robert Gabriel Mugabe could not accord the church the leeway to work towards the achievement of lasting peace. Mugabe would often encourage the church to leave politics to politicians and stick to prayer only”. (Interview 16/08/18). The treatment that individuals were getting for speaking against the president, or his policies were not friendly, people were abducted and killed or imprisoned and therefore it affected the church negatively. For example, Archbishop Pius Ncube of Roman Catholic was shamed for being too vocal against President Mugabe and his policies. This affected the relationship between the government and the church.

The researcher therefore would conclude that the church was very much willing to do what it is supposed to do but because of the above challenges, it failed to succeed. Although with those challenges, the feeling with many is that the church must not compromise its position. It must have forced the situation to allow them to do peacebuilding processes. The process of peacebuilding is not an easy task because it involves so much risk that includes direct confrontation with perpetrators of violent conflict.

4.2.5 The church and its moral authority

There is a very positive nexus between the church and the community therefore; it is in a better position to influence for peacebuilding. Many politicians are members of the church and they listen much when the church speaks because they know the church commands a huge crowd and it has the trust of many. Four key ZCC interview informants agreed that the church meets people on a weekly basis and therefore it is in a better position to convince people than any other organization. The church’s neutrality makes it commands a very huge following that can be convinced within a short space of time to live united. This implies that the church is in a better position to preach peace and its tenets as Lederach suggested justice, mercy, forgiveness, truth and reconciliation more often and make it be part of every person’s
life. The more people learn about peace, the more they strive to be peaceful. What is key from the responses is that all agree that the church is often in touch with people. An article by the secretary general of the ZCC on 27 August 2018, states that, “if the church is to be authentic or faithful to the state it has several ways. It can be detached from the state and stand aloof for fear of seemingly endorsing the status quo. Another way is for the church to be oppositional in its engagements and be on top of the mountain to point out the ills of the state”. The researcher therefore noted that the church by standing aloof should not be quite when things are wrong neither should it be quite when things are right. The church should not be an opposition to the state neither should it act on behalf of the state. The church must remain neutral to remain relevant to the situation. The church must guide the nation in every move.

Informants on questionnaires and during in depth interviews acknowledged that the church is one organization that is well connected internationally. Therefore, knowing its moral obligation to be there for the people the church can utilize that opportunity to source for expertise and it can easily access resources that could be useful in peacebuilding processes. Partnership with the international community could have changed the Zimbabwean community into a peaceful community knowing that many violent conflicts in Zimbabwe are identity conflicts and are also because of unequal sharing of resources. Experts in the area of conflict transformation are easily convinced if the church is involved in peacebuilding initiatives. Thus, Lederach and Burton emphasised on the need to share equally the available resources.

Key informants from former and current personnel of Zimbabwe Council of Churches shared the same view that the church had so many opportunities that it could have utilised in its
effort to bring about sustainable peace. A Bishop who is a member of the ZCC board says that, “the church is the most viable tool for peacebuilding for it houses all races, sexes, political party members. It also enjoys the respect of all parties.” (Interview 5/09/18). It means if the church can accommodate people of different background, then it can influence them to live in harmony with each other. They also shared the same opinion that all key players trust the church as a neutral institution who can reconcile conflicting parties. With all opportunities that the church had, it failed to utilise them.

From the interviews contacted, the researcher infers that the church is quite aware of the concept of peacebuilding, the issue of service provision by the church, reconciliation, justice and mercy was emphasised. This agrees well with what Lederach and Burton said were key to peacebuilding efforts. The researcher then questions why the church could not live up to its prophetic call. Maybe it is because of infiltration to the extent that other leaders were afraid to speak against the evils done by the political elite. The church had become partisan and been involved in its own internal conflicts making it difficult to speak against injustice when it has its own problems.

4.2.6 The church in peacebuilding

People’s participation is key to any community development needed. Few respondents on questionnaires said the church in its effort to deal with violent conflicts involved the community in peacebuilding processes. Another ZCC informant indicated during interview that, “after operation restore order in 2005; we were involved as ZCC in care giving together with Christian Care to those affected”. The communities did not participate much in the distribution of resources to people. Although the church might have wanted the community to participate in the distribution of resources, politicians interfered so that they get credit and not
the church. The church therefore ended up not doing much because of fear to be associated with a political party. Whenever there is political interference in church programs, the church will retreat for not wanting to be associated with any political party. The problem is that the church just retreat without stopping politicians from interfering for fear of victimisation.

Mudarikiri (2015) noted a number of interventions by ZCC in its efforts to build peace in Zimbabwe. Prominent of the interventions is “participation in electoral processes”. ZCC has tried so much to improve confidence in the voters by having election observers from the church. ZCC worked well with ZESN in monitoring and observing elections. ZCC deployed observers across the nation. Zimbabwe has experienced so painful periods before, during and after elections since the formation of a strong opposition political party MDC in 1999. A nation that is not united, peaceful and just can never be prosperous for it will always be in conflict. The ZCC noted in its 2018 survey that generally people have a very low confidence in the Zimbabwe Electoral commission in handling elections and the government itself. This is because of experiences towards elections. When people lack confidence, violent conflict is certain. ZCC has been participating in elections through monitoring and observing. This is one area that the Zimbabwe council of churches has been very visible as part of its role.

Respondents both on questionnaires and during in-depth interviews said that there was dialogue between the church and the traditional and political leaders. This implies that dialogue was one area the church seemed to have put most of its effort to deal with violent conflict. One key informant during interview indicated that, “although it was behind the scenes, we as ZCC and other church organizations contributed much to the formation of the Government of National Unity in 2009” (Interview 8/8/18). The church was able to help
bring rival parties to the negotiating table that ended by signing unity agreement between the then President Robert Mugabe of ZANU PF and Morgan Tsvangirai of the MDC.

The responses indicated that the church did very little in terms of teaching, preaching and praying for lasting peace. Churches could not be bold enough to teach peace and its tenets publicly maybe because there was infiltration by perpetrators of violence in the church hence fear gripped the church. This is despite the fact that the church has an obligation to proclaim peace, justice, mercy, reconciliation and forgiveness as Lederach emphasised: During an in-depth interview, one informant indicated that during the period under review (2000-2013) “ZCC initiated some peacebuilding and conflict transformation programs, trained pastors’, and laity”. The idea was to equip the church leaders so that they can also teach their congregants. In addition, Mudarikiri, (2015) says, “the ZCC in its effort to build peace in Zimbabwe trained 486 peacebuilders who in turn were required to train others in their denominations”. The situation on the ground tells a different story for those who received training did not do what they were supposed to do at the grassroots. Again, this might be because of fear of victimisation. Therefore, the message of peace did not spread as was expected.

Respondents shared that the church produced and published pastoral letters. The production and publication of pastoral letters is one way that information by the church could easily reach the majority of the population but seemingly, the church did not do enough in terms of this. The reasons again might be fear of intimidation. Lack of publications by the church concerning peacebuilding made the people to conclude that the church was doing nothing when its people were victims of conflict. Heads of Christian Denominations (HOCD) would issue pastoral letters on behalf of the church and ZCC is a member of that body.
Respondents on questionnaires say that one area that has been of strength to ZCC is mediation. The church tried its best to mediate between the ruling ZANU PF party leader and the MDC party leader. It failed in 2003 but it worked in 2009 leading to the formation of a GNU. In 2003, there was some mediation effort between the then president of Zimbabwe Robert Gabriel Mugabe of ZANU PF and Morgan Tsvangirai of the MDC. The church initiated the process of mediation. One informant during interview said, “We as the ZCC initiated the process of mediation between Robert Mugabe and Morgan Tsvangirai in 2003, whether it worked or not I cannot tell”. (Interview 10/09/18). The implication is that the church has been doing something but with challenges to its success. The idea was to bring to table the two rival parties to reach an agreement for the sake of peace in the country.

A key ZCC employee pointed out that, “In 2006-2007, the ZCC together with other church organisation under the banner of HOCD came up with a document that aimed at gathering information from the people” The document was codenamed “The Zimbabwe We Want”. The document touched on several issues that had a lot to do with peacebuilding. It implies that ZCC actually participated in what could have brought lasting peace in Zimbabwe. Unfortunately, the Zimbabwe We Want document died a natural death because it had a lot that the government of the day was not comfortable with hence it was politicized. Nevertheless, importantly, some of what is in the document was adopted part of the current Zimbabwe Constitution.

The researcher after gathering the above information noted that the approaches that the church used in its efforts to peacebuilding were not enough; that is why conflicts continued even after the programs and interventions by the church. The church has so many ideas that
can yield positive results towards a peaceful Zimbabwe but a lot needs consideration other than just having programs.

**4.2.7 Relevance of the church in peacebuilding**

The church should maintain its respect with the people for it to remain relevant always. Participants responded on questionnaires that it is key for the church to produce some relevant literatures that are useful in theological colleges and churches. The interview respondents who voiced that literature is good for people echoed this idea also. For example one respondent, who is a former ZCC official said *“our problem is that we do not have people who are good at producing literature as ZCC, we are waiting for you who are studying maybe you will help the church in this area”* (Interview 06/08/18). Many people these days enjoy reading especially Christian literature therefore having that in colleges and churches will help instil in people a deeper understanding and respect for peace. The church should be relevant to the challenges that people are facing and give them hope and solutions through literature.

The church is for the people therefore it should identify problems and then find solutions to the challenges that different groups of people are facing. The church also must introduce programs that empowers woman and youths. Informants during in-depth interview said that, *“our political leaders are using our children to perpetrate violence for a little amount of money or beer and they agree because they lack occupation with any project that sustains them”* (Interview 08/08/18). This agrees well with what literature says, *according to Gwariya, (2015) two organs that the ZCC created from inception in 1964 is the Youth development organ and the laywomen’s training. Implementation of these organs is*
questionable, for it could have helped in the provision of occupation for youths and women who are the most affected during conflicts.

According to ZCC research, (2018:7), “the ZCC envisions a united, peaceful, just and prosperous nation in which all Zimbabweans live under holistic salvation as according to John 10v10. I came that they may have life in its abundance”. The question is how is ZCC going to fulfil this vision? The answer is that it must initiate programs that call for unity among people regardless of one’s background, race, sex or political affiliation. The researcher therefore infers that the idea is to get these groups occupied for they are the most affected groups during conflict. Political leaders have realised the gap hence they abuse the youths for their personal gains. If therefore the church introduces programs that occupies them it will agree with what Burton said. Every person need economic security and food security. The same applies to woman empowerment programs. Woman represents the majority of the population in the country. Hence empowering them means reducing conflict for they will be able to provide for their families.

The church should strive to engage all stakeholders that are normally involved in violent conflict. Since the church has direct access to all stakeholders, it should not fear anyone but take the advantage of respect by all stakeholders and engage them for peacebuilding initiatives. In engagements, the church should remain non-partisan and exercise professionalism if it is going to be relevant in its effort to bring about lasting peace. The church must issue public statements so that people knows what is happening. It is not enough to act behind the scenes because the church is a public institution within a society therefore people need to know what is happening rather than guessing.
According to Gwariya, (2015) **ZCC from its inception in 1964 had several objectives and in order to fulfil the objectives, it created several organs. The organs include, the general secretariat, the urban evangelism department, and relief department later became the Christian Care, the current affairs committee, bursaries/scholarship committee and project committee.** The researcher noted that the ZCC had a vision to deal with all potential sources of violent conflict. Christian care was responsible for service provision, and trained people in self-help projects. Christian care provided the basics of life that Burton in his Human Needs Theory talked about. Failure to get food, self-help project and other programs results in conflict between the ordinary people and the perceived to be in a position to provide those basics. ZCC educated people by giving scholarships for those in schools. Gwariya noted that ZCC used to confront the government whenever it feels the government was not doing justice to the people. For example when the government wanted to introduce a one party state in 1990, ZCC confronted the government against the idea for it will be against the tenets of democracy, which include freedom of association and political security.

The researcher from the information provided for in other books and research by ZCC and a recent article by the ZCC secretariat noted that ZCC has an obligation to stand for the people, guide the people, and provide for people. The organization has been involved in several initiatives but with many challenges. What the books, article and research by ZCC says is in tandem with the information collected on questionnaires and in-depth interviews. The researcher is therefore of the opinion that ZCC has been trying to do a lot but have not been able to utilise every opportunity that it has for peacebuilding.

What informed this research was the Conflict Transformation Theory by Lederach (2002) and Human Needs Theory by Burton (1990). The church has an obligation to preach justice,
mercy, truth, and reconciliation. The truth and reconciliation commission cannot be effective in its mandate in the absence of the church as a participant. The state should work hand in hand with the church and other key players in service delivery if ever-lasting peace is to be realised. Zimbabwe has sad memories of a history of violent conflict that claimed the lives of many people and hence, the call for a long-term commitment in establishing a sustainable peace infrastructure. The process of peace building involves researching for non-violent ways to transform violent conflicts to positive conflicts so that all parties are satisfied with the results. Resolving conflicts is key to Zimbabwean experienced conflicts rather than just settling conflict, as has been the case.

4.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter focused on data presentation, discussion and analysis of the findings. There was a discussion on the role of the church in peacebuilding. The church has played a very important role in trying to build peace but with little success. The discussion included, involvement of the church in peacebuilding, towards a peaceful Zimbabwe, the church as a polarized entity, the church losing its focus, the church and its moral authority, the church in peacebuilding and relevance of the church in peacebuilding. The chapter outlined the challenges that the church faced in its efforts to bring about lasting peace and opportunities that the church had that could have been used and that have been used to bring peace in Zimbabwe. Presentation of findings was according to research objectives and research questions. Conflict Transformation Theory and the Human Needs Theory were highly relevant in research as they offered a framework in conducting the research. Chapter 5 will look at the summary of the study, conclusions and recommendations.
5.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the summary, conclusions and recommendations. The summary section focuses on the issues that emerged from the study that includes the role of the church in peacebuilding, the challenges faced by the church in peacebuilding efforts and opportunities it had. The study concludes by giving some recommendations to the government of Zimbabwe, to the Ministry of education and to the church. The recommendations based on the findings of the research concerning Church-based peace building in Zimbabwe and particular attention is on the role of the Zimbabwe Council of Churches.

5.1 Summary

The study sought to explore church-based peacebuilding in Zimbabwe. The exploration was through finding the role that the church has played and what challenges it faced in efforts to fulfil its role and what opportunities was available. The following objectives guided this research; establishing why the church should be involved in peace building, to assess peacebuilding processes employed by the church in Zimbabwe from 2000. In addition, it aimed to assess the challenges and opportunities the church had in bringing forth perpetrators of conflict to justice. The research shows that the church plays a significant part in efforts to establish lasting peace in Zimbabwe. The church is involved so much into programs for peace building but the effectiveness of the programs is debatable. Zimbabwe has been in so many conflict before and after independence and the church has been so active in trying to find lasting solutions to conflicts. The church participated so much during Gukurahundi conflict.
until the signing of the Unity Accord in 1987 between the then President of Zimbabwe Robert Mugabe of ZANU PF and the then ZAPU leader Joshua Nkomo. The church intervened during Operation Murambatsvina in 2005, during council, parliamentary and presidential elections 2000, 2002, 2005, 2008 and 2013. In 2008, the church also played an important role mediating between ZANU PF and MDC that then lead to the formation of GNU in 2009. During research, the researcher noted that the involvement of the church during the fast track land reform program of 2000 is passive and yet many white commercial farmers lost their properties and lives.

John Paul Lederach’s Conflict Transformation Approach to peacebuilding and John Burton’s Human Needs theory guided the research. The Conflict Transformation approach to peacebuilding emphasised on justice, mercy, truth and reconciliation. Peacebuilders need to understand the four dimensions to conflict that are personal, relational, cultural and structural. He also talked of the need to distribute the few available resources equitably to avoid violent conflict. The Human Needs Theory of Burton emphasised much on the fact that every human being has needs that should be met failure to meet them results in violent conflicts. The two theories were very useful in understanding church-based peacebuilding between 2000 and 2013, a period affected by several violent conflicts. It is the responsibility of the church to stand in between two conflicting parties or potential conflicting parties. The church preaches and teaches peace, truth, forgiveness and reconciliation, further to that the church should be seen providing for the needs of the people. That is word in action. The examined case studies of church-based peacebuilding are South Africa and Sudan. The church played a pivotal role in having the TRCs in South Africa, and the signing of the Peace accord between South Sudan and Northern Sudan in 1972. The aim was establishing sustainable peace between conflicting parties in the respective countries.
In conducting the research, the methodology used was qualitative. Questionnaires, structured in-depth interviews and content analysis were the research instruments in collecting data. There was the presentation of the collected data, its analysis and conclusions. Of important, to note is that traditional peacebuilding approaches alone are no longer viable they need to complement with new other approaches this is because the world is not static but dynamic.

The study revealed that the church’s involvement in peacebuilding processes is key. It played a very significant role in an effort to bring about sustainable peace in Zimbabwe. The church provided for the needs of the community through organisations like Christian care, which resonates, well with what Burton considered key to the attainment of lasting peace. The church participated in dialogue between the then President of Zimbabwe Robert Mugabe and the then leader of the MDC Morgan Tsvangirai resulting in the formation of a GNU. There were training programs by the church, there was advocacy for a people driven constitution through NCA, and advocating for the inclusion of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in the constitution, which John Paul Lederach says, is important for peace building.

However, the church encountered several challenges, which made it difficult to be successful in bringing sustainable peace. The challenges included, lack of resources, leadership of the church becoming partisan, mushrooming of other church organisation that supported the political elite, infiltration in the ZCC by politicians, there was no political space at the same time dialogue with the politicians had conditions. Besides, challenges, the church had so many opportunities which if it had used them possibly it would have achieved. Opportunities like, the church’s access to all key stakeholders in the perpetration of violence. The church is in direct contact with the community, and its connections with the international community. These opportunities could have and can still change the country into a peaceful country. The
main process that the church used in fostering for sustainable peace was engaging stakeholders for dialogue. The church trained local church leadership so that in turn it trains others on peacebuilding; the church distributed resources to the needy communities. It was found during research that the church should now produce relevant literature that will be used in colleges and churches for peace, the church also should issue public statements condemning all evil regardless of who committed it, programs for the youths and woman must be introduced for these are the most affected groups during conflicts.

5.2 Conclusions

There are conclusions made following the research question raised in this study. The following are the conclusions:

All stakeholders respect the church as an institution within the society. The belief among many people is that the church is a neutral institution that has the capacity to bring about sustainable peace in the nation. The church has been involved in several programs for peacebuilding. It is significant that the church be involved in peacebuilding because of that trust and its direct contact with the community and is listened to by all including perpetrators of violence. However, most people was of the view that the church should address divisions in the church so that it can speak with one voice. In addition, the church should introduce peace programs in educational curriculum in colleges so that ministers of religion when they serve local congregants they are knowledgeable in the subject of peacebuilding. The ZCC has a vision of a united, peaceful, just and prosperous nation in which all Zimbabweans live under holistic salvation and basing on that it must advocate more for sustainable peace through service delivery, and education. Many people trust the church to be in a position to bring conflicting parties together for a dialogue that leads to forgiveness and reconciliation.
Research has found that people trust the church can play a very important role in peacebuilding initiatives, but the church had challenges in its efforts to build peace in the country. Since most of the challenges had more to do with the relationship between the government and the church. It will be great if the church would first cultivate its relationship with the state and other civic society organisations. Yet that relationship should never make the church compromise its position. The continued engagement will make the church more relevant in its advocacy. The church again must improve in its communication with the grassroots people so that everyone will know what is happening between the church and the government. It is the churches’ mandate to preach forgiveness, truth, justice and reconciliation and these are keys in the process of peacebuilding, as Lederach would suggest.

The church in order to be successful in its peacebuilding endeavours its leaders must stop being partisan for it compromises the church position on violent conflict. Fortunately, the church has opportunities that it can capitalise on in order to bring lasting peace. The international community that it has some links with can help with expertise and even resources needed for building peace. The resources can help fulfil human basic needs as Burton noted. The church is welcome by all politicians and all key stakeholders in peacebuilding processes. It is also crucial that the church still commands a very large following and information can reach everyone in a short space of time. All these should be utilised for peacebuilding, development and prosperity. When there is no peace in a society, there will be no development and this has been the case with Zimbabwe.

The implication of the findings is that the church has been involved in peacebuilding processes. Several strategies have been useful to the church but mostly engaging conflicting parties for dialogue. The church contributed in a dialogue between the ruling ZANU PF party
lead then by former president of Zimbabwe Robert Mugabe and the late former president of the MDC Morgan Tsvangirai and other political parties which culminated in the formation of GNU in 2009 until 2013. This was after a serious electoral conflict had claimed so many lives of those who were opposition party supporters. In 2005, the church also used the strategy of giving out resources needed by the people affected by the operation restore order. The church provided shelter; clothes and food. ZCC did much training to equip church leadership. This implies that the church has used several processes but conflict persist after all that effort.

The researcher therefore infers that the church should produce and publish literature relevant to peacebuilding. These literatures should be available in theological colleges where ministers of religion train so that after training they can help communities understand and appreciate the need for peace as is prescribed in the Bible that, the greatest commandment is love. Where there is love there is peace. It is the church’s obligation to put the word preached into action. That means the church must embark on service delivery. People need food security, personal security, political security, environmental security, economic, health security and social security. Violent conflicts that Zimbabwe experienced since 2000 are relationship or identity conflicts as Lederach said. Provision of the above agrees with what Burton said would result in a peaceful society. The church should not avoid politics but it should never be partisan in order to be successful. The journey to a peaceful environment has always been tough but it is achievable in the end.

5.3 Recommendations

Following this study, the researcher made the following recommendations:
5.3.1. To the Government of Zimbabwe and all policy makers

The church-state relations and other policy makers need strengthening so that a peaceful environment can be realised.

5.3.2. To the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education

The church must seriously work to influence for the inclusion of Peacebuilding programs from primary school education, as well as in theological colleges where church leaders or ministers of religion train. To accomplish this, the church must assist in the production of relevant literature and publish for use in educational institutions.

5.3.3. To the church in Zimbabwe

The church should address its internal conflicts before it tries to deal with conflicts outside church. It should also know that it has the capacity to change violent conflicts in the country to a more peaceable environment through channelling its resources to rightful beneficiaries for peacebuilding.

5.4 The study recommends the following areas for future research

i. Policy making in Zimbabwe and the participation of the church as a key stakeholder in the process.

ii. The Church and Politics in Zimbabwe, challenges and opportunities in fostering sustainable peace and development in the country.
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*Zimbabwe Council of Churches Constitution*
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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE : REQUEST TO UNDER TAKE RESEARCH PROJECT IN YOUR ORGANISATION

This serves to advise that............................................Student Registration No. B......................................................... is a MASTERS IN PEACE AND GOVERNANCE student at Bindura University of Science Education who is conducting dissertation.

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

Yours faithfully

Muchemwa (Dr)
CHAIRPERSON – PEACE AND GOVERNANCE

16 JUL 2018
STRUCTURED IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

TOPIC: THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN PEACEBUILDING: THE CASE OF ZIMBABWE COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Introduction
My name is Liberty Maadza a Master of Science Degree student at the Bindura University of Science education. As a requirement for the attainment of an MSc Degree, one has to do a research and therefore I am currently doing a research for an MSc in Peace and Governance on the above-mentioned topic.

1. What is the organization’s understanding of peace?
2. Should the church be involved in the processes of building peace? Why?
3. What do you think is the role of the church in building peace? Why?
4. Has Zimbabwe been experiencing any conflicts between 2000 and 2013? Why?
5. Has the church been involved in peacebuilding in Zimbabwe from year 2000?
6. What was the role-played by the Zimbabwe Council of Churches in peacebuilding?
7. What do you think were the sources of violent conflicts in Zimbabwe?
8. Has the church been successful in advocating for justice over sources of conflict?
9. What opportunities did the organization had in an effort to bring about lasting peace?
10. What were the challenges faced by the ZCC in an effort to bring about sustainable peace?
11. What has been the relationship between ZCC and other Church organization in efforts to bring about sustainable peace in Zimbabwe?
12. Are there any programs for youths and woman that have been initiated by ZCC for peace?
13. What strategies has the ZCC been employing to peacebuilding in Zimbabwe?
RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

TOPIC: THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN PEACEBUILDING: THE CASE OF ZIMBABWE COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Introduction

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1. What is peace?

2. When should the process of building peace start in the life of a nation?
   A) Before conflict, B) During conflict, C) After conflict, D) Any time

3. During elections from year 2000 to 2013, land reform program of 2000 and operation restore order of 2005; the Zimbabwe Council of Churches has been visible enough in trying to establish sustainable peace in the country.

4. What opportunities did the ZCC have that are essential for building peace?

5. Were there any challenges that the Zimbabwe Council of Churches encountered in advocating for justice over the sources of violence? If yes, what are they?
6. The mushrooming of other Church organisations that sided with the elite was a challenge to the visibility of Zimbabwe Council of Churches.


7. Church leadership and other prominent church members allowed themselves to be partisan for personal gain thereby compromising church position.

A) Strongly agree B) agree C) Not certain D) Disagree E) Strongly Disagree

8. Political affiliation by members of the community affected peacebuilding processes by the church.


9. What strategy did the church employ in a bid to foster sustainable peace in Zimbabwe?

10. What programs did the Zimbabwe Council of Churches initiated between 2000 and 2013 meant to build peace in Zimbabwe?
11. Youths and women are the most affected groups during conflict. What programs did the Zimbabwe Council of Churches initiated that addresses the needs of these groups?

12. The church has a direct contact with the community; therefore, it is in a better position to influence for peacebuilding.


13. Politicians infiltrated Zimbabwe Council of Churches member churches thereby instilling fear to talk and carry out programs that seem to oppose the politics of the day.


14. The Zimbabwe Council of Churches and its member churches and organizations has been able to address issues to do with human security. E.g. Political, personal, economic, food, health, environmental and cultural security.


15. What strategies can the church employ in an effort to build sustainable peace in the country?