

**Clifford Chitupa Mashiri**  
**DPhil Research Proposal**  
**University of Zimbabwe**  
**POLAD 07/06/11 (1230 words)**

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**The area of investigation**

**Towards a new theory – a critical analysis of the militarization of Zimbabwe’s elections (2000 – 2011) and the implications for good governance.<sup>1</sup>**

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Electoral administration is ‘the organisation and conduct of elections to elective public (political) office by an electoral body’.<sup>2</sup> Four institutional requirements for democratic elections as proposed by Birch (2008b) are: inclusivity, impartiality, openness and transparency.<sup>3</sup> Accordingly bodies charged with electoral administration in Zimbabwe have been criticised for being exclusive, not transparent, ineffective, non autonomous, institutionally weak and politically partisan.<sup>4</sup>

A notable development relevant to the proposed study is the phenomenon known as ‘the militarization of elections’ which is viewed by some academics as ‘one central means employed to ensure the long-standing incumbent President Robert Mugabe wins all elections’.<sup>5</sup> Other analysts have linked militarization to high levels of violence and ‘thievery’ in the parliamentary elections held in June 2000, presidential polls held in March 2002 and in the 2008 June presidential run-off.<sup>6</sup>

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1 UNDP, Governance for Sustainable Human Development, a UNDP policy paper 1997, pp 2-3 identified the 8 major characteristics or ‘principles’ of good governance as participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, equitable and inclusive, effective and efficient and follows the rule of law.

2 Adele Jinadu (1997) ‘Matters Arising: African Elections and the Problem of Electoral Administration’, African Journal of Political Science Vol.2 No,1,1-11

3 Sarah Birch , ibid.

4 See, e.g. John Makumbe, ‘Theft by Numbers – ZEC’s Role in the 2008 Elections’, Defying the Winds of Change (ed) Eldred Masunungure, 2009, Weaver Press, Zimbabwe, U.S. tells Zimbabwean poll body to ‘do the right thing’, Tuesday, 01/04/08; ZESN’s post 2008 electoral report; and NDI report on the Zimbabwe 2000 parliamentary elections.

5 Jephias Mapuva, Militarisation of Public Institutions, Flawed Electoral Processes and Curtailed Citizen Participation: The Case of Zimbabwe, The Journal of Legislative Studies, Vol.16, Issue4, 2010 pages 460-475

6 Patrick Bond and David Moore (2005) Zimbabwe: Elections, despondency and civil society’s responsibility, Newsfromafrica.org, 08/04/05 [online]. See Defying the Winds of Change (ed) Eldred Masunungure, 2009, Weaver Press.

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According to Chitiyo<sup>7</sup> the 2002 presidential elections were run as a military operation. A national command centre (NCC) was established, initially at the Sheraton Hotel, but later relocated to Manyame Air Base near Harare airport. The Electoral Supervisory Commission (ESC) was staffed with retired and serving officers, with Colonel (Rtd) Sobusa Gula-Ndebele appointed as head of the ESC for the duration of the elections. Two of the six members of the ESC were army staff, and the management of the electoral process was run as a military operation. Not much had changed in 2008.

Although, there was a brief “renewed faith in the power of the vote” in the March 2008 harmonised elections which saw the MDC winning a parliamentary majority, and Morgan Tsvangirai receiving more votes than any other presidential candidate, it was ‘undermined’ by the presidential run-off. According to Tendi and Alexander,<sup>8</sup> the 2008 presidential run-off went a long way toward “laying bare the deeply problematic nature of both the liberation–struggle logic and the militarised means by which Zanu-pf sustains its claims to power. During the 2008 polls, opposition supporters were murdered in cold blood by suspected state agents or Zanu-pf sympathisers according to HRW.<sup>9</sup> Zanu-pf was blamed for 82% of the violence, while the MDC/other category accounted for 1%.<sup>10</sup>

Arguably, Zimbabwe’s features globally on electoral manipulation:<sup>11</sup>  
**Electoral manipulation involves far more than selected deviations from the norm of ‘free and fair’ elections. Heavily manipulated elections typically entail the harnessing of electoral institutions to ends radically different from those envisaged by democratic theory. Far from being mere window-dressing in authoritarian and semi-authoritarian settings, elections are often made to play a key role in maintaining authoritarian regimes.<sup>12</sup>**

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7 See Knox Chitiyo’s ‘Zimbabwe Security Sector Reform’, 2009:9

8 Blessing Miles Tendi and Jocelyn Alexander (2008) ‘A Tale of Two Elections: Zimbabwe at the Polls in 2008’, [concernedafricascholars.org](http://concernedafricascholars.org) [online].

9 Human Rights Watch, ‘Perpetual Fear: Impunity and Cycles of Violence in Zimbabwe’, March, 2011 (abstract).

10 Solidarity Peace Trust, ‘Prospects for a new beginning in Zimbabwe’, Saturday, August 2, 2008 p1

11 Sarah Birch (2007) Electoral Malpractice and Electoral Manipulation in New and Semi-Democracies, University of Essex, p.9 Sarah Birch, ‘Conceptualising Electoral Malpractice’, University of Essex, 2008b p3 of 36

12 Sarah Birch, ‘Conceptualising Electoral Malpractice’, University of Essex, 2008b p3 of 36

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This sentiment is echoed by what analysts saw as a 'brazenly intrusive and expansive role of the military/security complex in the run-off election and the consequent omnipresent fear that enveloped the whole country.'<sup>13</sup>

**Justification of the study**

Bratton's research in Sub-Saharan Africa showed an elective affinity between free elections and improved governance.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, the electoral experiences of 2000, 2002, 2005 and 2008 coupled with the rhetoric for 2011 elections, make it imperative for an empirical study such as proposed in order to understand this 'militarized form of electoral authoritarianism' which some analysts believe will outlast Robert Mugabe's political career or biological lifespan.<sup>15</sup>

This particular study is very important because detailed scholarly attention to militarised electoral administration in Zimbabwe is generally sparse save for a few focusing on specific elections e.g. Eldred Masunungure's 'A Militarised Election' as part of *Defying the Winds of Change* and Blessing Miles Tendi & Jocelyn Alexander's.<sup>16</sup>

The study will bring new insights to an understanding of the alleged simultaneous militarization and rigging of elections that provoked a domestic and international outcry.<sup>17</sup> It is feasible and falls within POLAD's research interests and should be successful because the researcher is highly motivated to achieve his goal in the next three years using the necessary knowledge and skills acquired over the years since obtaining a distinction for his Dissertation and a Merit for his part-time Masters in Public Administration (MPA) degree at UZ in 1991

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13 Eldred Masunungure, *ibid.* p1 of 19; also see Blessing Miles Tendi and Jocelyn Alexander (2008)

14 See Michael Bratton "Do Free Elections Foster Capable Governments? The Democracy-Governance Connection in Africa," 2008, *Afrobarometer Working paper* 104.

15 Michael Bratton and Eldred Masunungure, *Zimbabwe's Long Agony*, *Journal of Democracy* - Volume 19, Number 4, October 2008, pp. 41-55

16. Masunungure's 'A Militarised Election' will provide a vital point of reference and best practice for a detailed study of militarization of elections since 2000.

17 For example the National Development Institute, the Commonwealth Observer Group, the EU, the African Union and the SADC among others.

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**Relevant Theory**

Key theoretical frameworks applied universally to the study of electoral administration are: (1) diffusion of policy innovations, (2) principal-agent theory, (3) the "tools of government" approach, (4) management theory, (5) implementation theory, and (6) network theory.<sup>18</sup> The proposed study will use an eclectic set of models for analysing Zimbabwe's militarised elections.

**Conditions for democratic policy accountability**

Zimbabwe's elections have fared badly on three principal conditions for democratic policy accountability through elections, viz: inclusiveness, policy-directed voting and effective aggregation.<sup>19</sup> Examples include the disenfranchisement of non-residents and the 'unrooted' and 'totemless'.<sup>20</sup>

Like in other less democratic countries Zimbabwe's electoral practices have left indelible footprints in legal, perceptual, 'best practice', and normative models of electoral malpractices.<sup>21</sup>

Similarly, mandate theory has been advanced to justify the rulers' claim to hold office as 'legitimate mandate to govern' through the fair winning of a democratic election.<sup>22</sup>

**Four alternative electoral economies** applied in Zimbabwe and of course in other countries are: Stylized democracy, Classic clientelism, State capture and Classic authoritarianism.<sup>23</sup> Stylized democracy was more evident in the post independence 1980 elections for realising policy accountability of office-holders as public servants. Classic clientelism fits in with what Bracking saw as the further rapid accumulation by an expanded economic elite during ESAP.<sup>24</sup> State capture lends itself to the economic empowerment debate and its

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18 George Guess, *Dysfunctional Decentralisation: Electoral System Performance in Theory and Practice*, p8 of 34).

19 Sarah Birch 2008b p14 of 36

20 Sarah Bracking Ibid.

21 Sarah Birch, *Conceptualising Electoral Malpractice*, 2008b, p 5 of 36

22 Percyslage Chigora and Elinah Nciizah, *Elections and Vote Rigging/Electoral Fraud in Zimbabwe: An Analysis of the 2000-2008 Parliamentary, House of Assembly, Senatorial and Presidential Elections*, Midlands State University, 2008, p5 of 16.

23 Chigora & Nciizah, Ibid

24 Sarah Bracking, Ibid.

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appeal to the 'young Turks'. Of the four, it could be argued that the model of choice in contemporary Zimbabwe is classic authoritarianism, because its ideal in signalling the strength of the regime's control on power. However, combinations are not rare.

### **Research Objectives**

The proposed research seeks to determine if there is a link between militarised elections and the progressive increase in vote rigging experienced in Zimbabwe's general and presidential elections since 2000.<sup>25</sup> It will seek to develop a new theory of electoral corruption and contribute to good political governance.

### **Key Research Questions**

1. Why has Zimbabwe's electoral administration become militarised since 2000?
2. Is militarization of elections an electoral malpractice?
3. Is there a link between militarization of elections and other electoral malpractices in Zimbabwe e.g. vote rigging?
4. Why have pre-poll, polling day and post election malpractices remained unresolved since 2000? (see appendices 1-3)
5. What are the implications for good governance and posterity?<sup>26</sup>

Key variables: militarization of elections, electoral malpractices, good governance

### **Research Methodology**

The proposed study will uphold the norms of scientific enquiry.<sup>27</sup> The study will uphold research ethics and take into account the experiences of other researchers.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> See Figure 1 Specimen SPSS questionnaire  
<sup>26</sup> Solidarity Peace Trust, *ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> See Lee G Burchinal (2008) *Methods for Social Researchers in Developing Countries*, Ahfad University for Women [online] <http://www.srmdc.net> (accessed 16/02/10).

<sup>28</sup> See Matlosa, 2005:12 and Chikwanha et al.,2004; Logan, Fujiwara & Parish, 2006:6; Chitiyo, 2009:12.

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The research will use both quantitative and qualitative methods of collecting and analysing the required data generated from own primary research collected through interviews and questionnaires using **Word Capture** and **SPSS Data Collection Interviewer** software (see Figure 1: Specimen Questionnaire)

A sample of individual respondents in Zimbabwe and abroad will be randomly selected to obtain their opinions on militarised elections and other electoral malpractices as well as their implications for good governance. (See Appendices 1-3).

Additional questionnaires will be administered to a randomly selected sample of civil society bodies to gather their views.

Appropriate secondary sources of information will be used through library research.

### **Timescale of the research**

Year 1	2010-2011	Research proposal Summary of planned work;
Year 2	2011-2012	Description of work undertaken Report on on-going work.
Year 3	2112-2013	Thesis outline, setting out chapters and structure; Submission of the Thesis; Appointment of examiners and arrangement of oral examination.

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**Appendix 1**

**An index of Zimbabwean electoral malpractices: 2002 (ZESN)**

1. The Registrar General improperly removing persons from the voters' roll<sup>29</sup>
2. Clandestine registration of voters after the close of voter registration<sup>30</sup>
3. Restrictive residency and citizenship requirements for voter registration<sup>31</sup>
4. Prohibiting civic organisations from among other things, conducting voter education. Tendai Biti – the General Laws Amendment Act 2002<sup>32</sup>
5. The illegal use of military personnel as staff on the Electoral Supervisory Commission<sup>33</sup>
6. The unconstitutionality of Section 158 of the Electoral Act (delegates legislative power to the president to amend or suspend any provision of the Electoral Act)
7. Reduction in number of urban polling stations resulting in queues of as many as 4,000 people waiting to vote.<sup>34</sup>
8. Violence including intimidation, torture and murders largely perpetrated by z/pf youths<sup>35</sup>
9. Corrupt and illegal practices
10. Voter fraud
11. Vote rigging
12. Polling irregularities
13. Presidential amnesty for political criminals
14. Registrar General's refusal to allow the MDC to inspect the voters'roll
15. Registrar General's refusal to provide the used ballot papers for inspection – MDC's discovery requests
16. Printing of extra ballot papers
17. Unequal access to the state-controlled media
18. Destruction of identity cards by Z/pf youths
19. Restrictions concerning the accompanying of ballot papers
20. Establishment of illegal road blocks by Z/pf youths
- 21. Delimitation of boundaries**

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29 See Tsvangirai v.Registrar General, HC 12092/2001, High Court Order, 31 December 2001, at 1

30 See Tsvangirai v. Registrar General, SC76/2002, Judgement SC20-02, 4 April 2002, at 7-8

31 See Registrar General v.Tsvangirai SC 30/2002 Judgement (SC12-02), 28 February 2002, at 20

32 See Biti v Minister of Justice SC 46/2002 Judgement (SC102002).Sustained but the provisions were reintroduced by RG Mugabe through SI 41B of 2002 No.13

33 See Tsvangirai v.Electoral Supervisory Commission HC 2182/2002 Urgent Chamber Application, 1 March 2002 (application not proceeded with after RG Mugabe amended Electoral Act on March 5, 2002 through Statutory Instrument No.41B of 2002, Number 13.

34 See Norwegian Election Observation Mission, Presidential Elections in Zimbabwe 2002, at 2 (2002).

35 See See Showano v. Mudzengerere, HC8120/2000, Makoni East Election Petition Judgement, 23 October 2003, at 18-21; also see Tsvangirai v Mugabe, HC 3616/2002 Petitioner's Heads of Argument, 13

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Source: Adapted from Election Observer Reports including ZESN

**Appendix 2**

**2005 Pre-poll Conditions**

In their pre-2005 election observations, the South African religious leaders and civil society monitors found conditions which did not present prospects for free and fair elections as follows:

- politically biased legal framework;
- a confused electoral system open to rigging;
- independence of Supreme Court judges in serious question;
- impartiality of the Electoral Commission seriously in question;
- Freedom of association denied;
- Freedom of information denied
- Opposition campaign rallies often banned by police;
- Independent media hounded;
- SW Radio Africa closed-down and electronically jammed;
- Zimbabwe television news programming politically biased;
- Open democratic space for civil society extremely limited;
- Access to media by all stakeholders extremely limited;
- Equal opportunity for all parties to contest the election; seriously maligned;
- Rule of law seriously compromised;
- Veracity of the Voters' Roll challenged;
- Failure to update and provide accessibility to the Voters' Roll;
- Full participation of all citizens to express their right to vote seriously compromised;
- Failure to locate polling stations in neutral and safe places;
- Impartial counting of votes at polling stations questioned;
- Impartiality of polling station officials seriously questioned;
- Police, military, CIO and public service employees accredited monitors of Election process;
- Failure to accredit national and other election observers and monitors;
- Some foreign journalists denied entry permits;
- Local journalists 'gagged' on pain of prosecution;
- Food Security used a political weapon;
- Access to international humanitarian food aid denied;
- Access to international humanitarian medical care denied;
- Independent international observer teams denied entry permits;
- Voter education by civil society groups effectively banned;
- Failure to provide constitutional and legal guarantees of freedom and rights of citizens;
- Threats of violence & intimidation by youth militia, police, army, CIO and other government agents.<sup>36</sup>

**Source: Adapted from the Solidarity Peace Project, Out for the count, 2005**

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36 Solidarity Peace Trust, 'Out for the count', 2005 p21 of 122

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**Appendix 3**

**Zesn pre election observations from 6<sup>th</sup> to 29 Feb 2008**

1. People turned away from registering as voters due to shortage of stationery;
2. Restrictive registration of voters in Harare e.g. need to collect registration from ZEC Head Offices in Harare (transport and economic problems)
3. In Mt Darwin South no registration of voters until 13<sup>th</sup> February because registration receipt book was not available (Elections were due to start on 29 March);
4. Youths failed to register for lack of proof of residence;
5. In Guruve South, Zanu-pf supporters were denying voters access to inspection and registration centres on suspicion they supported MDC;
6. Names of candidates entered on wrong databases by the ZEC e.g. Fidelis Mhashu of MDC-T appearing under the MDC-Mutambara database causing confusion
7. Some parts of the country 'remain' no -go areas for mostly opposition parties
8. CIO victimising Chief Mezani of Nyanga for allowing MDC-T to hold a rally in his village;
9. Political violence in Mutasa North (Zanu-pf youths at Katiyo Tea Estate reportedly attacked women going to attend an MDC rally;
10. Youths initially recruited to pick tea allegedly 'militarised' under the leadership of a Mr Madzima, the alleged base commander;
11. War veterans intolerant to MDC T campaign activities in Mberengwa North;
12. People forced to attend Zanu-pf rallies in Manicaland province;
13. ZEC officers not fully aware of details of the delimitation exercise
14. Inadequate voter education by ZEC e.g. on modalities of the harmonised elections (four elections in one day);
15. Inadequate training and resources for voter educators by ZEC;
16. Undue alarm caused by a ZEC brochure in Norton later withdrawn after claiming that proof of residence would be required in addition to identification documents;
17. Use of public resources in election campaign a prerogative of the incumbent e.g. vehicles, offices and schools;
18. Undue influence on the electorate – in Mash Central farming implements and inputs distributed only to Zanu-pf cardholders;
19. Chiefs in Mash East threatening to withdraw allocated pieces of land from those who would vote for the MDC (Rent-seeking) also your vote is secret?!
20. Intimidation of voters at a Zanu-pf rally held in Sanyati 'voting for MDC would spark another war of liberation';
21. Allegations of vote buying rampant in rural areas e.g. subsidised mealie-meal, cultivators, ploughs, fertiliser for Zanu-pf supporters;
22. Political violence and intimidation reported in Gokwe, Epworth and Hatcliffe;
23. Teachers forced to buy Zanu-pf cards in Midlands;
24. Threats to withdraw drought relief in Chirumanzu South (food-shortage area) if they did not vote for Zanu-pf;
25. Guruve District administrator threatened to repossess farms if they did not vote for Zanu-pf;
26. Bulawayo's Ward 17 residents warned against voting for the opposition or lose food handouts;
27. Voters in Bulawayo's Ward 17 warned there would be guards in the polling stations to see who they had voted for;
28. Binga South residents labelled 'sell-outs' and to miss on income generating projects for not attending a Zanu-pf rally held on 25/02/08;
29. One Davison Mupambi, a suspected intelligence operative allegedly beat and held at gun-point Henry Kanhema and Alberrt Matenga in Makonde for being MDC supporters;
30. In Matobo North, residents living in fear due to daily drills of youth militias undergoing training in the neighbourhood;
31. Sanyati GMB Manager wearing Zanu-pf regalia seen distributing maize under Operation Maguta;
32. Fani Phiri asked people at his rally in Kadoma Central on 23/02/08 to write their names so that they could receive maize, maize-meal and sugar;
33. ZESN civil society organisations ordered by ZEC to stop voter education;
34. PTUZ Teachers union members arrested and beaten up near Zanu-pf provincial offices in Harare for allegedly distributing fliers deemed 'inflammatory' by Zanu-pf;
35. Mr Godfrey Gumbo and Mrs Nziramasanga arrested and detained for five days for holding a house meeting for MDC candidates in Hurungwe North;
36. MDC-T denied clearance to hold rallies in Mashonaland Province;
37. Veiled threats and intimidation of opposition by Police Commissioner Augustine Chihuri;
38. Some traditional leaders e.g. in Chipinge South showing intolerance of opposition to Zanu-pf;

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39. Polling stations located in wrong constituency on the list published by ZEC on 8<sup>th</sup> March e.g. Victoria Pre-School listed in Ward 1 of Binga RDC is actually in Victoria Falls Municipality;  
 40. Discrepancies in the number of registered voters per polling station in different provinces.

Adapted from Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN) Pre-election update no 5, 6 February – 11 March 2008;

**Figure 1: Sample Questionnaire**

	5 Strongly Agree	4 Somewhat Agree	3 Neither Agree nor Disagree	2 Somewhat Disagree	1 Strongly Disagree
1.Zimbabwe’s electoral administration is militarised	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.Electoral malpractices including militarization of elections have not been addressed since 2000	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.There a link between militarization of elections and other electoral malpractices in Zimbabwe e.g. vote rigging	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4.I think the president has too much executive powers overriding all laws responsible for electoral administration in Zimbabwe	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5.Demilitarisation of elections without restructuring presidential powers and the judiciary will not bring an end to vote rigging and other electoral malpractices	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6.Militarising electoral administration will affect how we are governed and all future generations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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