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Exploring Macro and Micro Challenges in University Policy and Practice in Zimbabwe: A Case of the Academic Staff Appointments, Grading and Promotions System

By

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Declaration

I, Rumbidzai Mashava, hereby declare that no potion of the work referred to in this thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification at any other university or institute of learning.

Signature:

Acknowledgments

In a study of this nature, one is indebted to many people who rendered support in various forms so much so that it sometimes becomes impossible to acknowledge them all. Yet all of them deserve my recognition for their contributions since, without these people, the study would not have been possible.

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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my beloved Parents who worked tirelessly in nurturing me to be what I am today.

Abstract

Zimbabwe's post-independence education system was created to do away with the unequal system of education created by the colonial system. Following political independence, it was hoped that, among other things, academic staff appointments, grading and promotions would be managed democratically. However, as the thesis shows, the management of these processes within public universities has diminished any of such hopes.

The study used an interpretive critical case study informed by micropolitical theory that was merged with Foucault's analysis of power and discourse. The study employed a variety of methods such as documentary analysis of archival records, policies, media reports, interviews, and direct observation. Data were analysed through thematic analysis. Although the findings of this study relate to two research sites, that is two public universities in Zimbabwe; this study is of the view that these results can be applied to universities elsewhere within a similar context.

This thesis critically explores how various interests interfere with the management of academic staff appointments, grading and promotions in public universities in Zimbabwe. One of the key issues this thesis explores is the macro (state) interests and how these affect the outcomes at public universities. In addition to the above, the thesis also discusses the various localised interests, micropolitics that also structure outcomes at the universities. It has been observed that when macropolitics and micropolitics are combined, they do influence practice in public universities. While micropolitics and macropolitics may have relative autonomy, ultimately, macropolitics (the state) wields power through permitting universities to have some degree of autonomy or curtailing it all together. To this end, this thesis found that institutional elites could implement policies to meet their micro-level interests, which create dual-functional systems, and such systems may adhere or circumvent the rules during recruitment, grading and or promotion of academic staff. Beyond this, the micropolitical activities of university leadership generate particular perceptions and responses from those that work under them.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AAB	Academic Appointments Boards
AAU	Association of African Universities
AB	Academic Board
BACE	British Advisory Committee on Education
BBC	British Broadcasting Cooperation
CAF	Central African Federation
CEOs	Chief Executive officers
COLAZ	College Lecturers Association of Zimbabwe
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
HUC	Humanities University College
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MHTESTD	Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development
MoHTE	Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education
NCHE	National Council for Higher Education
NUST	National University of Science and Technology
OA	Open Access Journals
PTUZ	Progressive Teacher's Union of Zimbabwe
PVC	Pro-Vice-Chancellor
RF	Rhodesia Front
SoTL	Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

SARUA	Southern African Regional Universities Association
TUZ	Technology University of Zimbabwe
UCRN	University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland
UDI	Unilateral Declaration of Independence
UNESCO	United Nations, Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNO	United Nations Organisation
UZ ACT	University of Zimbabwe Act
UZ	University of Zimbabwe
VAR	Video Assistant Referee
VC	Vice-Chancellor
ZANU PF	Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front
ZIMCHE	Zimbabwe Council of Higher Education

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Chapter one

Introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction

This study is an exploration of dilemmas in university policy and practice using the case of the academic staff appointments, grading and promotions system in two public universities in Zimbabwe. Scholars contend that in the colonial era, colonial governments maintained a keen interest in universities and ruled them with a delicate fist, allowing them freedom only when it mattered for the state, as was the case with the University of Rhodesia (Mambo, 2005; Ranger, 2013). They also note that in the post-independence period, states seem to have taken an interest in making the university reflect nationalist interests. The conclusion is that states have not left the universities to run independently even within the context of the neoliberal university. There are examples of stories about university practices and state involvement that have appeared in the media in recent years. News headlines such as ''Government standardises staff promotions at Varsities" (The Herald, 10 August, 2018), "Universities must respond to national interests?" (Sunday News, 23 April 2017), "Mugabe blocked lecture" (Zimbabwe Independent, 13 July 2012) and "UZ closed to mourn Mugabe (Daily News, 11 September, 2019) among others are a clear indication that the state in Zimbabwe has captured the universities.

On the other hand, there are also other observations that university leadership in Zimbabwe has also been able to design and implement policies that reflect local level interests. From these two scenarios, it is clear that Zimbabwean public universities, which are state owned, are spaces where both internal and external forces come into play. This reality has not escaped the attention of those interested in, responsible for quality assurance systems, and quality of education. I argue that such control exerted by these forces generates a particular educational system that is less than ideal and incomparable to other universities. The macro and micro-level interests that manifest within public universities contexts in Zimbabwe generate ambivalent perceptions and responses from academics. This chapter introduces the research problem, theoretical framework, significance of the study, limitations of the study and my position as a researcher. The last section provides an overview and outline of chapters in this thesis.

1.2 Context and background

Issues surrounding the management of academic staff appointments and promotions to ensure that universities survive and can deliver their traditional roles and mandates have seized academic organizations worldwide. Zimbabwe, just like other former British colonies in Africa, has a long history of university life going back to the days of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland under the British Empire. At that time, the British government established a joint 'multiracial' university college named the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1955 (Atkinson, 1972). The university council and a principal ran the University, which was the only university until Zimbabwe became independent in 1980.

While this university was meant to be multiracial, racial discrimination was however still an issue as blacks could not be allowed to assume academic positions (Ajayi, Lameck, Goma, & Johnson, 1996). In terms of racial distribution, the academic staff complement and students were predominantly white (Gaidzanwa, 2007). Similarly, racial inequalities also became visible in many areas of academic life. For example, white colonial professors could unilaterally make decisions about academic appointments, grading and promotions along racial lines without even consulting faculty members or the council (Chung, 2006).

With this background in mind, the post-independence government (now Zimbabwe) was expected to work through these irregularities by democratising the academic appointments, grading, and promotions system. Justice was also necessary considering that colonial history of the academic appointment and promotion processes within the colonial universities was primarily intended to endorse white supremacy. Thus, the advent of independence in 1980 and the enactment of the new legislation popularly known as the University of Zimbabwe Act (UZ Act) enacted in 1982 would have been deemed as a better opportunity for resolving and addressing past inequalities including skewed appointments, grading and promotions criteria advanced by the colonial government.

Over and above this, the general assumption held is that universities are autonomous organisms who have the academic freedom not including, but not limited to only teaching what they want but engaging with whosoever they want to and this is provided for in the UZ Act (1982). It is also worth noting that when developing policies relating to university education, the Government of Zimbabwe is guided by the desire to achieve equity and equality (Kariwo, 2007). Kariwo, however, notes that this vision is hardly realised because there are no stipulated mechanisms for its enforcement and or consequences for not implementing it.

The university education system in Zimbabwe has been undergoing severe economic challenges since 2000 soon after the country undertook the land redistribution project, which forced out whites from their farms. Since then, Zimbabwe has undergone severe economic challenges following economic sanctions by the world powers (MoHTE, 2010). Economic hardships have further forced Zimbabweans to immigrate to various countries for greener pastures and this has resulted in brain drain within universities. It is estimated that for the rest of Africa 23,000 academics leave the continent annually for greener pastures (Hoffman, 1995). In particular, it is argued that many Zimbabwean academics have fled the country due to poor socio-economic conditions and political turmoil since the year 2000 (Worby, 2010; Rutherford & Addison, 2007). The majority of Zimbabweans have been leaving, particularly for South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Mozambique (Worby, 2010). Raftopolous (2010) has also indicated that by 2007, over 80% of the Zimbabwean population was living on less than $2 per day that signalled difficult living conditions in the country. While literature demonstrates that Zimbabweans are possibly the largest migrant group in South Africa (Crush & Tawodzera, 2013), their exact number is debatable due to the lack of an accurate database of migrants and that the available data may be shrouded in emotions and politics.

This aside, generally there are high attrition rates within the education sector with Zimbabwean teachers constituting the largest group of migrant teachers in South Africa (DHET, 2013). DHET further observes that, by 2010, Zimbabwe supplied 61% of the migrant teachers in the RSA. Furthermore, the Progressive Teacher's Union of Zimbabwe (PTUZ) (2008) observes that around 35,000 teachers had left Zimbabwe by 2009 for Botswana, South Africa and the UK among other countries. Another account by De Villiers (2007) asserts that South Africa had already employed over 10,000 Zimbabwean teachers by 2004, out of which 4,000 were qualified science and mathematics teachers. Not all Zimbabwean teachers are generally employed in the education sector. Crush. Chikanda and Tawodzera (2012) for example, estimate that up to 47% of the migrant Zimbabwean teachers in South Africa end up working in other sectors but not in the education sector. Apart from teachers, Zimbabwean academics have also left the country for the diaspora in big numbers (Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Report, 2015).

Given such high staff attrition rates in Zimbabwe, universities are now finding it difficult to retain the qualified academic staff especially that the remaining few may be influenced to leave by their colleagues who are making a fortune abroad (Chetsanga, 2010). Besides this, the

emergence of young private and mission universities whose working conditions are better off than those of public universities are also drawing staff away from state universities making it hard for them to find quality staff for replacement (Kariwo, 2007).

Public universities are now using 'academic inbreeding', which means recruitment of graduates who have just obtained their Masters or Doctoral degrees from the same university to serve as teachers (Horta, Sato, & Yonezawa, 2011). While in many parts of the world, academic staff are highly recognised and admired by the public for their social status and the reasonable remuneration they receive (Molla, 2018), the Zimbabwean case has since 2000 not been as rosy as it is elsewhere.

A cross-examination of the above issues, tells us that Zimbabwean public universities are going through a period of turmoil. Several problems including high staff attrition that is depriving universities of quality academics; poor resourcing and discriminatory practices some of which are reminiscent of the colonial era should also be understood as the loss of quality of education and credibility in Zimbabwe's university education system. Besides this, state interference continues to add pressure on the universities through politically motivated appointments and promotions, which oftentimes compromise on academic freedom and human rights of staff and students.

Given these conditions and practices, one would have anticipated that Zimbabwe could have moved with speed to find lasting solutions to these problems beginning with those strategic decisions at the macro and micro level that would seek to promote fairness and justice within the public university context. One such condition would be to ensure that academic staff recruitment and promotions strategies are just and fair and regularised to ensure that the remaining few academic staff members remain committed to serving the system.

Likewise, Weber (1946) noted there must be detailed strategic criteria for managing appointments, grading and promotions within organisations if the process is to become neutral, competitive, fair, just, and free from interferences. Relative to this, Scully (1997), adds that the criteria ought to be based on law and justified by some ordinance or other statutory instruments. This done, the management of the process must be usually left to senior academics and human resource managers to facilitate the process in line with the existing cademic staff appointments, grading and promotions ordinance. The Vice-Chancellors (VCs) as the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of the universities are expected to scrutinise and vet the ordinances and

instruments, which govern the processes in all public universities as enshrined in the university acts, and objectively implement them. The relevant ordinance used in recruitement, grading and promotion is refered to as the Academic Staff Grading, Tenure and Promotions Ordinance 2002 (from here on refered to as the Academic Staff Appointment, grading and Promotions Ordinance).

In this study, I use appointments and promotions in the human resource sense. There are slight differences among the words recruitment, appointment, and promotion based on the context in which they are used. Recruitment is the process of selecting the best and most qualified person for a job while appointment represents assigning a job to an individual who qualifies. Unlike recruitment, appointments can be done with or without interviews through nomination or secondment. Promotions, on the other hand, maybe with or without interviews as long as the already employed staff within an organisation meets certain criteria that enable them to move to a higher grade. In other contexts, recruitment and appointment are used synonymously. For some, academic appointment represents assigning a job to the candidate who has qualified or has been recruited (van Den Brink, Benschop & Jansen, 2010). Appointments may also be made soon after a rigorous interview. The successful candidate who has accepted to take up the job is regarded as the appointed staff. This way, the process of appointment follows recruitment. In this thesis, appointment means the process of hiring individuals based on merit or following a rigorous selection process. Promotions, on the other hand, assume the definition given above in which a member of staff who is already employed within a university moves to a higher grade after meeting specified criteria. Grading involves transition from one salary scale to another, which is often higher.

The assumption is that by recruiting and promoting deserving staff, university business can be advanced and in the process, both staff and society can be well served. It is in the interest of every staff wanting to be appointed or promoted to see to it that the ordinance is followed objectively and fairly. It is also the expectation of all ambitious academics that they will be promoted or appointed to other positions meritoriously and that such an exercise grants them excitement, satisfaction and freedom (Sadiq, Barnes, Price, Gumedze & Morrell, 2018).

Since its establishment, the University of Rhodesia, now the University of Zimbabwe (UZ) has found itself in a dilemma when it comes to recruiting and promoting staff. This also appears to be the case with universities established in the post-independence period because they are now at the confluence between micropolitics and macropolitics. In other words, the universities are

pushed left and right by both internal academic and administrative practices and external political interferences. This is the case because some appointments within the university are political and not based on merit and procedure. Some appointments are purely based on merit and very academic.

The post of Chancellor according to the UZ Act (1982) is a political position that automatically empowers the council to inaugurate the state president as its Chancellor. The President also appoints the Vice-Chancellor (VC) after being interviewed by the council. This means that these appointees are naturally political and their political influence and power are felt within the university operations. It is normal for politicians to use their powers to abuse and use systems to the advantage of their political masters and these extend to misuse of university resources, laws, statutes and human resources to their advantage.

Internally, VCs are empowered by their university Acts adopted from the UZ Act of (1982) to hire, fire or discipline students and staff whenever they have met conditions or contravened laws and regulations. Though guided by laws and decisions of the councillors, sometimes VCs as political employees have used the powers invested in them to recommend or execute decisions that are unilateral, arbitrary, unlawful and irregular. Such decisions have been in staff dismissals, hiring and or promotion.

These are happening at a time when the universities are concerned with maintaining existing staff through a system of rewards and benefits amidst the socio-economic and political woes in Zimbabwe (Crush, et.al. 2012). What is not clear though is whether those tasked with the function of appointing and promoting are doing this objectively or not and or whether there will be political and personal influences or not.

These concerns in the context of the Zimbabwean public university education system are not new and scholars have often tried to answer these questions with minimal success given the complexity of the forces associated with them. This thesis is also motivated by the very same questions by focusing on two public universities, which I have intentionally named the Humanities University College (HUC) and the Technology University of Zimbabwe (TUZ) simply for ethical purposes. A detailed description of these universities as research sites is provided in chapter 5 (section 5.7). Suffice to say that these, as young universities, have enjoyed a long-term relationship with the state that appears to have deep interests in them. Interestingly, political nationalist elites leading universities seem to have political interests as

they dictate who should be promoted or appointed regardless of the university laws and regulations. It is not surprising though that academic staff at both the HUC and TUZ appear to be anxious and uncertain about their future, which probably affects their possibility for effective service delivery, and the quality of education offered therein.

The challenge though is that it is not known whether appointments, grading and promotions are indeed managed according to the ordinance (laws) in place, or whether these processes are managed in ways that reflect the interests of the state. It is also not clear whether top political appointees within these universities exploit the existing ordinances to the advantage of the entire university and society or simply to that of the state and its political stooges.

While the relationship between the state and public universities in Africa has long been researched (Crush, et.al. 2012; Lebeau & Mills, 2008; Eisemon & Salmi, 1993 & Mackenzie, 1986), the nature of this relationship is still not clear, its ecosystems and how each influences the other given the differences in power relations. It is also not clear how academics perceive this relationship and how they react to such a relationship especially its influence on academic staff appointments, grading and promotions processes. In seeking clarity on these issues, the study uses insights from Zimbabwe's public universities, the HUC and TUZ.

1.3 Research problem

Following Zimbabwe's independence in 1980, the University Charter had to be repealed and replaced by the UZ Act (1982). This was believed to be capable of addressing the needs of the new nation that had just emerged from the past ills and inequalities perpetuated by the colonial regime of Ian Smith and his associates.

Prior to independence, only one university, the University of Rhodesia catered for both Nyasaland and Rhodesia. This university because of its wide spectre and catchment, expectations did not fully represent the needs and interests of Zimbabweans. Thus, university education policy and practice had to be changed soon after independence to make the system more democratic and just. For the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) government, the shifts meant that the system became people-centred and committed to eliminate injustices and inequalities (Kaseke, Gumbo, Dhemba, & Kasere, 1998).

To achieve equality and social order, the university recruitment and promotion procedures were changed through a new Act, UZ Act (1982) to ensure that excellence, equality, equity, and

social justice were upheld within these universities. This was in contrast to the system that was in place during the colonial government, which was based on racial discrimination mainly targeting blacks. Within the colonial education system, blacks could not easily be appointed or promoted as academics based on their skin colour and as an affirmation to the myth that anything black is evil, dull and retrogressive.

In the case of the new Act, it ensured that only those who were qualified should be appointed and promoted in line with the provisioned laws and regulations as a means of ensuring objectivity, equality, and justice for all. Affirming this claim, the UZ Act (1982) Chapter 25:16 Subsection 5 submits:

> No test of religious or political belief, race, ethnic origin, nationality or sex shall be imposed upon or required of any person in order to entitle him or her to be admitted as a member of the academic or administrative staff, employee or student of the University or to hold any office therein or privilege thereof.

From this extract, we see an Act, which assures staff that appointment, grading, and promotions processes will be transparent, equitable, fair, and just regardless of any social, political, and racial categories. By structuring the recruitment and promotions criteria that way, the framers of the policy had assumed that the business and roles of the universities would be promoted to best serve the needs of society. However, it is not clear whether those tasked with the implementation of these ordinances were able to execute these tasks objectively and competently or not. This is true considering that human beings usually have political and personal interests that may interfere with the implementation processes hence compromising the objectivity of the whole process.

Research on the matter has shown that academics are dissatisfied with the way the Academic Appointments, grading and Promotions Ordinance is being implemented (Zvobgo, 2015). In a study on determinants of job retention in public universities in Zimbabwe, Chivandire (2017) established that public universities were unable to use promotions as a job retention strategy because they lacked fair and consistent promotional policies. Mupemhi and Mupemhi (2011) also found out that public universities found it difficult to honour the benefits associated with promotions such as sabbatical and contact leave. Currently, there is very little research on what happens in the daily experiences of academics in terms of appointments, grading and promotions. Existing research has mainly focused on human resource concerns such as getting

academics qualified for the job by acquiring PhDs (Garwe & Mudavanhu, 2015); staff retention strategies employed by universities (Mapolisa, 2015; Ndudzo, 2015); staff development programmes and their uptake (Chabaya, 2015) and job satisfaction and retention (Moyo, 2013). There is hardly any in-depth research to establish whether the excellence ideology (indicative of meritocracy), which public universities propagate, is reflected in processes of appointment grading and promotions of academic staff.

This work seeks to understand whether the state (macro-level) and or the institutions (micro-level) exercise caution whenever undertaking academic staff appointments, grading and promotions activities. The study seeks to address the gap in the literature by exploring dilemmas in university policy and practice with a specific focus on academic staff appointments, grading and promotions in public universities. Furthermore, it examines the interplay between the macro and micro-processes involved in academic staff appointments, grading and promotions.

The basis of the study is to unpack and develop an understanding of the macro and micro level interests that may influence academic staff appointments, grading and promotions appraisals. It is also about understanding the perceptions and reactions to the management of academic staff appointments, grading and promotions among the academic members of staff. The study also seeks to understand the influence the state and top university management has on the management of academic staff appointments, grading and promotions appraisals and how such decisions influence job performance and output. The assumption is that now, the role and extent these two, (micro and macro factors) play in influencing the appointments, grading and promotions decisions are tricky and not very clear due to the absence of well-focused research at this level.

My argument is that, these two elements have the significant potential of circumventing the appointment and promotions procedures to best serve their personal and political interests and that such events have the potential to compromise on the quality of university education as well as stifling equality and justice within the universities.

The section below formally outlines the aims and objectives of the study.

1.4 Aims of the thesis

An overarching aim of this study is to explore the dilemmas in university policy and practice using the case of the academic staff appointments, grading and promotions system in public universities in Zimbabwe. The study also aims to address the gap identified by van Den Brink et al (2010: 1460) who argued that the implementation of academic staff appointments, grading and promotions protocols, the actors involved and micropolitics that can distort these policies may have undesirable consequences but are not often fully investigated. Thus, the study seeks to contribute to an in-depth understanding of the manner in which top university managers implement academic staff appointments, grading and promotions ordinances and how academics respond to these processes in their various forms. The thesis is also interested in understanding how and why the state controls public universities.

1.5 Research objectives

The objectives of the study are to:

- establish how colonial interests influenced the establishment and running of the universities.

- examine the influence of micro and macro-level interests in the appointments, grading and promotions of academics in public universities.

- evaluate how academics perceive and react to the manner in which academic staff appointments, grading and promotions decisions are made.

- analyse the implications of internally and externally induced malpractices on universities and society as a whole.

- suggest solutions to the problems arising from these processes to ensure that appointments, grading and promotional procedures are meaningful, objective, and effective to foster fairness and equality.

1.6 Significance of the study

This work is significant at three levels: knowledge, theory, and policy.

At the level of knowledge, this study develops an understanding of the variety of influences that surround academic appointment, grading and promotion in public universities. This is important because public universities often make claims to excellence leading to the assumption that academic appointment and promotion processes are not problematic and that they are technical. Besides, the thesis also contributes to the current academic literature on policy implementation in public universities by developing an evidence-based critique of the malpractices involved in academic staff appointments, grading and promotions processes in public universities in Zimbabwe.

Secondly, the work is also significant because it provides a contemporary theoretical understanding of the academic staff appointments, grading and promotions processes. Before this, the theoretical understanding was that academic appointments, grading and promotions are meritocratic as suggested by Weber (1946) and Scully (1997). However, this study, suggests that these processes are fairly contested with issues of power relations looming in the background. The promotion sphere is a micro-macro space in which different actors try to manoeuvre each other based on hierarchy and spheres of influence.

Thirdly, the study is significant from a policy perspective. The study lays bare the malpractices surrounding academic staff appointments, grading and promotion processes in public universities. From the findings, the study makes recommendations on how these processes can be meaningfully executed to promote equality and fairness. By doing this, the study assists policy-makers to better manage these processes which affect the morale of young academics upon whose future hangs in the balance between building academic identity and or pursue a complete path within or without Zimbabwe and these are the bedrocks on which Zimbabwean university education is built around.

1.7 Insider researcher

The literature on qualitative research has often emphasised the multiple roles, positions and identities, the researcher possesses which are inextricably linked with the research process and its outcomes (Husserl, 1970). Acknowledging one's social positionality and subjectivities is important in qualitative research because it does not only point to the rigour of methodologies but also indicates how the data was co-constructed by the researcher and participants (Brisbois & Almeida, 2017).

…researchers must strive to understand both the complex subjectivities and social locations of themselves and interviewees in the research process. This understanding, in turn, must underpin the representations of interviewees and knowledge claims in the documentation of the research (Conti & O'Neil, 2007: 67).

The process of sharing reflections on the research process with the readers is known as epistemic reflexivity or just reflexivity (Henwood, 2008). Epistemic reflexivity is associated with the work of the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. From Bourdieu's point of view, the principle of epistemic reflexivity provides the researcher with a way of understanding one's naïve view of the object of study and consequently managing one's situatedness and dispositions inherited from one's field (Bourdieu,1996) to avoid bias.

Reflexivity implies that the researcher should point out the prejudices "and situatedness of all knowledge and how seeing always involves seeing from somewhere" (Henwood, 2008:49). Thus, due care was taken throughout this study to understand how past influences had affected the way in which data was understood, interpreted and analysed. Throughout this study, I was an employee of a public university in Zimbabwe. Thus, I could describe my role in this study as that of an insider researcher (Merriam, Bailey, Lee, Kee, Ntseane & Muhamad, 2001). This way, I enjoyed different levels of insiderness and experiences. At one level, I was an insider in the professional sense as I belonged to the same group as that of the research participants. Clegg and Stevenson (2013) have observed that much of the research in higher education is carried out by academics that are conversant with the systems. However, scholars who present that no researcher has a static status (Hayfield & Huxley, 2015) have constantly interrogated the insider and or outsider dichotomy. Thus, Mercer (2007) suggests that since these boundaries are thin, there is variability in the statuses of the researcher.

This means I was an insider because I shared similar experiences with the research subjects who belonged to my university. Thus, I was most likely intimated to the interviewees I had worked with for many years. This relationship, however, presented a challenge in that some participants gave responses on the understanding that I was already familiar with the issues and maybe this made some of them withhold some details. For other participants, familiarity might have increased their insecurity because they felt that they had divulged far too much than would make them comfortable (Watts, 2006). This might have created ethical dilemmas. At any rate, issues of appointments, grading and promotions usually have proved to be quite emotive for most of the participants.

I can also argue that I was an insider within my faculty only, where I conducted some of the interviews. However, this was not the case with other faculties where I was less familiar with participants. Similarly, at the other university where I conducted the study, I remained an insider in the sense that I was an academic working in another public university. Conversely, I was an outsider since I was not working at this university. Thus, throughout the fieldwork, I enjoyed changing levels of insiderness and outsiderness and this could potentially help improve the level of reliability and credibility of the findings.

As an insider, I could deeply get involved in the field that I knew. In that regard, I was thus "… a fish in the water, part of the habitus, with a feel for the rules of the game" (Clegg & Stevenson, 2013: 7). I was not only familiar with the topic, but also some of the participants, the university system, its procedures, and policies among other things. Pre-understanding, a common feature of qualitative insider research proved beneficial to me because it guided the choice of participants and helped in framing interview questions. Due care was taken to ensure that the final product was not an illustration of the things I already knew about the university education system in Zimbabwe.

At the same time, insider status created serious problems. By researching in a familiar setting and within my institution, I was likely to be biased (Mercer, 2007). Thus, I was faced with the difficulties of "breaking with the inside evidences" (Clegg & Stevenson, 2013:7) which could lead to subjectivity and preconception. Insider evidence may have influenced the way I understood the experiences of the participants, the meanings that I constructed, and the way I ultimately interpreted. These problems in qualitative research are widely acknowledged in the literature (Diefenbach, 2009). However, I acknowledge that whatever problems my insider role created, the study led me to reject the positivist stance, whereby the researcher must gather data and interpret it in a disinterested manner (Brannick & Coghlan, 2007).

The study, thus, adopted an interpretivist stance where the researcher and participants jointly constructed knowledge (Husserl, 1970). Hence, I allowed participants to review the work before the final product to be sure that I fairly represented their views and to check for errors, in what is called member checking (Houghton, Casey, Shaw & Murphy, 2013). This increases the validity and reliability of qualitative research findings and conclusions. Throughout the study, I did not compromise ethical issues relating to seeking permission from gatekeepers, confidentiality, and anonymity that can create challenges for insider researchers by my insider status (Toy-Cronin, 2018).

1.8 Limitations of the study

I had to conduct the study within a limited time. This created a constraint in the methods used. This meant that longitudinal studies could not be considered and possible. An additional constraint relates to the sample size. A study of all universities in Zimbabwe including private institutions would have been ideal in that it could yield data that are more generalisable and comparable. Presenting a critical case of two public universities only, meant that data could not be generalised to other public universities. Case studies generally have the limitation that results cannot be generalised beyond the particular case (Yin, 2009). The use of a survey would have provided a broader picture of the management of academic staff appointments, grading and promotions processes in public universities and would allow for generalisation of the findings. However, the results of this critical case study can still be applied to universities with similar contexts as is argued in chapters 5, 6, and 7.

1.9 Chapter overview of this study

Chapter 1 is what we have just covered mainly focusing on the background, problem statement, rationale, objectives, research methodology and limitations.

Chapter 2 discusses the logic behind the establishment of colonial universities. The historical discussion is in line with Klein and Myers' (1999) principles of interpretive field research, whereby researchers are advised to seriously reflect on the social and historical background of the research locations in ways that make readers understand how the problem under examination came about.

Thus, this chapter contextualises the whole study and argues that colonial interests were a key driver for the establishment of universities in Anglophone Africa. In addition, those interests determined the nature of university policy and practices. The chapter also draws from a range of literature over many decades on colonial university education establishing that the problems of the post-independent university in Anglophone Africa stretch far back to the colonial days when universities were established for the benefit of the colonising power.

In this chapter, I argue that colonial authorities controlled universities to reflect their interests. This legacy has continued to haunt post-independence states. The chapter further seeks to unveil the colonial interests that led to the establishment of colonial universities and how these were an influential force in directing university practices. Furthermore, the chapter examines

post-independence university education in Zimbabwe including the emergence of neoliberalism and its effects on the academic profession.

Chapter 3 scans the literature as well as empirical research studies on academic appointments, grading and promotions to establish a suitable conceptual framework for the study. In addition, the chapter examines the meritocratic ideology assumed in academic appointments, grading and promotions processes, the criteria used in academic appointments and promotions, and the macro and micropolitical factors that influence academic staff appointments, grading and promotions. It further examines policy processes and their implications for policy implementation within public universities.

In Chapter 4, theoretical insights from the literature review on academic staff appointments, grading and promotions are drawn together to formulate a theoretical framework, and claims, which direct the trajectory of the study. Processes of academic appointments, grading and promotions are highly political, riddled with conflicts and contestations with issues of power and interests looming in the background. Therefore, a theoretical framework that focuses on power and personal interests highlighted how university leadership and the state can implement policies within public universities in ways that advance their interests. Furthermore, the chapter highlights the outcomes of the exercise of power, which is revealed in the way academics respond to the machinations of the state and university managers. The chapter ends with a critique of Foucault's theory of power and discourse followed by a summary.

Chapter 5 discusses the methodological aspects of the study in detail. The chapter describes and justifies the design that I used, sampling techniques, data collection methods, and why I considered them appropriate. In addition, the chapter looks at the post fieldwork experiences, how I selected, coded, and analysed data. Furthermore, the chapter brings out the challenges that I faced during the study and the learning experiences derived. The chapter shows that the overall design and the methods of collecting data used were the best suited for this kind of study. Of necessity, issues concerning the validity and reliability of field data in the context of qualitative research are discussed. The chapter ends with a section on ethical considerations and a summary.

Chapter 6 deals with large structural factors that influence university practices. It examines ways through which postcolonial states control universities to make sure that they reflect post-

colonial interests and agendas. The chapter indicates how the state employs a variety of strategies to ensure its continued presence in public universities in a bid to ensure that the practices reflect its interests. These strategies are legislative, political and economic. Legislatively, the state creates overarching legislation that limits the function of the university and interferes with the appointment and work of university leadership. Politically, the chapter shows how the state uses manpower instruments to coerce the appointment of people in different strategic positions apart from interfering with the circadian business of the universities. Economically, the chapter discusses how the state uses funding or economic support to influence how the university goes about its normal business, and how the government provides lofty packages to VCs to keep them functionally tied to the cause of the state. The last section discusses the impacts of state influence on university education in Zimbabwe.

Chapter 7 discusses micro-level interests that influence the appointments, grading, and promotions of academic staff demonstrating that the leadership across public universities has its interests. It also shows how local level interests influence the way institutional managers implement the regulatory mechanism. In this way, they cause policy shifts and misalignment with practice. The interests can also be characterised as individual and collective. In every case, these interests force the top university management to implement rules and regulations in ways that favour them. In the end, people who are promoted, appointed, or demoted as the case may be, are those who advance or not advance either the collective or the individual interests of top management. In this chapter, I argue that promotions, grading and appointments are done to manage the interests of powerful people at the university and state levels. However, this has implications on the quality, standards, and performance of the universities.

Chapter 8 examines academics' expectations from the appointments, grading, and promotions systems and their lived experiences. Furthermore, it discusses how the pervasive management of promotions produces particular perceptions from those affected. The chapter shows how academics respond to the malpractices surrounding the implementation of academic appointments, grading and promotions ordinance. It demonstrates that those whose applications for promotions are not successful turn to a variety of poverty alleviation strategies to change their situation, while others turn to consultancy work, private teaching, and other miscellaneous activities that can give them income. It also shows how academics have mounted different forms of resistance to change the system so that it could respond to their immediate

and long-term interests. The chapter also presents the perceptions of staff on promotions, recruitment and their reactions to the processes. The chapter further discusses how disgruntled staff react to teaching, research, and their entire roles in scholarship.

Chapter 9 ties everything together. The chapter summarises the findings of the study, against each objective. It also concludes and discusses the theoretical, methodological, and policy implications of the study. It draws evidence from literature and fieldwork and makes recommendations on what can be done to improve the management of academic staff appointments, grading, and promotions in Zimbabwe, and how the university can function in the interest of all stakeholders. A conclusion ties up the study, making sense of what the study signifies for ongoing scholarship on power relations, interests and the university.

1.10 Summary

This preliminary chapter has introduced the study through a discussion of the situation regarding academic recruitment and promotions in post-independence Zimbabwe and raises questions on whether or not the current system is capable of performing to the expectation of the stakeholders. Furthermore, it provides a snapshot of the situation in the colonial period. The chapter sheds light on the objectives guiding the study, the problem statement, the aims, and the significance of the study. The chapter also discusses the limitations of the study, summarises the theoretical framework used and reveals the researcher's positionality. The next chapter reviews literature on the development of universities in Anglophone Africa, and how these were established for the benefit of the colonial government, as such, with practices that reflected the colonial interests. Furthermore, the chapter examines university education in post-independence Zimbabwe.

Chapter Two

Development of Universities in Anglophone Africa: A background

2.1 Introduction

The chapter is contextual and seeks to present the logic behind the establishment of colonial universities. Furthermore, it attempts to lead to an understanding of how broadly that legacy influences current practices within universities in other former British colonies but more specifically, in Zimbabwe. Furthermore, it explores the tensions between the desire to make universities relevant to the needs of society in general and those of politicians and the demands of neoliberalism and globalisation. The chapter draws from a range of literature from over many decades on colonial university education. In doing so, it indicates that the problems of the post-independence universities in Africa stretch far back to the colonial days (Lulat, 2003). Lulat further observes that colonialism is a major driver in the evolution of university education in Africa; hence, scholars must examine it in full to understand the politics behind education. By studying the establishment of universities in the past, the interest in this chapter is not in understanding the past *per se* but finding a way of conceptualising the current state of post-independence universities in terms of policy and practice. Thus, from what the literature revealed as well as my university experience, I did see colonial vestiges as having an impact on the way universities in post-independence Africa now function. Furthermore, the chapter establishes that globalisation and neoliberalism have intensified pressure on academics within public universities in terms of what their institutions expect them to deliver.

2.2 University education in British Tropical Africa put into perspective

University education in Africa emerged towards the end of the colonial period in the late 1940s and early 1950s, within the broad context of a shift in British colonial policy. It emerged in the backdrop of powerful interest groups who were keen to exercise influence on education policy in British colonies in Africa. Such colonial powers included governors, missionaries, white settlers in Kenya and Rhodesia, local African pressure groups, and the Advisory Committee on Education who had the blessings of the colonial office (Whitehead, 2007). Thus, one can speak of the tension of colonial education in Africa.

A multiplicity of players including missionaries, philanthropists such as the American Phelps Stokes and Carnegie Foundations, international organisations such as the League of Nations, and groups of educated Africans pushed for African education of diverse types for varied

reasons (Prevost, 2017). The British colonial office, previously antagonistic to African education, only began to show interest in education following reports of the Phelps Stokes Commission in 1922. Even within British society itself, people did not share the same ideas, motives, and interests in the education of the natives (Jons, 2016). Colonial officials in the colonies often had their perceptions that differed significantly from public opinion and the rest of the actors overseas. The turnaround in British policy was necessitated largely by dominant forces within and beyond the colonies, an issue I tackle later in the chapter.

The early universities were not mere universities existing to advance science in an unfettered manner. Rather, they were 'colonial universities' which had to perform specific functions as opposed to those in the metropole. They were to be involved in addressing the human resource needs of the imperial power, as well as ensuring the perpetuation of British hegemony beyond independence. Most of the avant-garde scholars of African university education (Mkandawire, 2014; Assié -Lumumba, 2011; Zeleza, 2006; Lulat, 2005; Sall, Lebeau, & Kassimir, 2003; Nwauwa, 1999; Ajayi. et.al., 1996) agree that the historical roots of African universities have a relationship with the current state of university education, hence the need to comprehend the socio-historic circumstances that led to their development. One is bound to agree with Makunike's (2015) argument that the nature of a university is determined by its past and setting.

Furthermore, it is argued that the European roots of African Universities constitute a real problem in efforts by African leaders to see universities as instruments for development (Thaw, 2007; Assié -Lumumba, 2006). This is based on the view that university education was built on the models of their European prototypes (Teferra, 2014; Ochwa-Echel, 2013; Sall & Ndjaye, 2007; Ashby, 1964). Universities struggle to find their place in the context of this history. It can be established that many of the problems universities currently face were constructed into the system right from their foundation (Pedersen, 1997). This suggests that universities are very conservative.

In this perspective, the University of Rhodesia cannot be viewed in isolation because the reasons that underpinned the establishment of universities in Anglophone Africa fell within the common logic of colonialism with the same institutions, ideas, and actors resurfacing throughout the narrative (Lilford, 2012). Although the focus of education varied with geography and local realities, colonial education was overall contaminated and inadequate (Lulat, 2005). Brown (1964) illustrates that in West Africa where there was a small settler population, the kind of education that was offered better-prepared Africans for leadership

positions. This was not the case in Central Africa and Southern Rhodesia, specifically where the colonisers were keen to protect their interests and, thus, promoted education for subordination or cultural imperialism (Carnoy, 1974).

The above section sets the context for university education in Anglophone Africa. It sheds light on the interests that determined the nature of colonial education. In the section below, I take on board the argument that the concept 'university' was not foreign to Africa .The section unpacks the legacy of the pre-colonial university and shows the disconnection between that legacy and the current university education system in Anglophone Africa.

2.2.1 Pre-colonial universities in Africa

Literature suggests that there were existing pre-colonial and pre-modern institutions that can be characterised as universities (Lulat, 2005; Abdi, 2011; Ki-Zerbo, 1990). As Teffera (2014:5) notes, "education in its highest form" existed in Africa before European colonisation. The university colonialists brought did not borrow anything from the ancient tradition (Ashby & Anderson, 1966).

There are also ongoing debates on whether these early institutions, which are harbingers of the modern university in Africa, were universities or not (Mamdani, 2016). Furthermore, Mamdani reveals that the source of the complexity emanates from the difference between the framework of institutional learning which developed in North and West Africa and that, which originated in medieval Europe where universities evolved as 'universitas.' Universitas is a Latin word for 'corporations' and these institutions represented a corporation of teachers and students wherein those who were involved in the teaching and learning were principally families and individuals (Mamdani, 2016: 69).

Ajayi, et.al. (1996), however, suggest that the origins of the university as a community of scholars with a universal focus emerged in the last two centuries BC and AD in Egypt. Although the question of whether pre-colonial African institutions were universities or not may be an issue of endless debates, Assié -Lumumba (2005) and Lulat (2005) concur that, whatever these were, they fulfilled purposes like those of European universities and colonisation hindered their development and visibility.

British colonisation has thus been blamed for affecting that legacy, leading to the decline of those institutions and the rise of the myth that there was no university education in Africa

before the British came. The myth also suggests that colonialists had simply to design the universities in line with their models because there were no universities in Africa to emulate (Betts, 2004; Duara, 2004; Hargreaves, 1973; Ashby & Anderson, 1966). Scholars have described such a perception as Eurocentrism and white supremacy that was pervasive and perpetually manifested itself in different forms.

Relative to this, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015: 20) argues:

> ...these assumptions have existed as condescending worldview that attribute history to Europe, complete and sovereign being to Europeans; confer the right to judge others to Europeans as well as racial superiority to Europeans…

This extract assumes that Eurocentrism perceives the British Empire as responsible for the beginning of civilisation including the development of university education in Africa. More so, due to Eurocentrism, some Europeans maintained the position that Africans lacked a worthwhile education to avoid justifying why they should impose foreign models of education. Ajayi, et.al. (1996) also argue that it is wrong to assume that Africa lacked higher forms of education before colonisation because there is sufficient evidence to suggest that such forms of education ever existed. Other scholars have taken the stance that European models were adopted because Africa has had no incessant university tradition (Yesufu, 1973).

In this regard, the British began the process of defining what a university education system should look like and the purpose it must serve. This scenario is not a surprise because imperial powers paid no attention to pre-colonial forms of education and anything that was pre-colonial, such structures and systems were considered primitive, barbaric, and retrogressive (Ogot, 2009). Where pre-colonial forms of education existed, they simply dismissed them as religion or rituals, useless, unworthy, illiterate, and a barrier to the project of modernity (Stambach, 2010; Wa Thiong'o, 1986). Importantly, those that practiced them were considered primitive, witchdoctors, magicians, or simply quacks (Reagan, 1992; Fafunwa, 1974).

Others have also argued that those who dismissed pre-colonial forms of education forget to realise that Africa was the first to know literacy, and had a schooling system well before the invention of the Greek alphabet and that the concept of 'university' preludes colonisation (Mazrui, 2005; Ki- Zerbo, 1990). For instance, there were Islamic centres of learning in Ancient Egypt; the Qairouine University at Fez in Morocco and Al- Azhar in Cairo among others as well as centres of academic studies in the case of Timbuktu in Mali (Hoffman, 1995;

Kwapong, 1972). Furthermore, Mazrui (2005) argues that Timbuktu and Al-Azhar evolved into dual universities catering to both the religious and secular worlds. Yesufu (1973) reveals that the University of Sankore in Timbuktu was famous for the study of law and medicine, while a university education also existed in Ancient Egypt, which specialised in religious training and medicine.

Teferra (2014) also reveals that Al-Azhar in Egypt was the World's first university. Zeleza (2006) contend further that universities emerged in Europe long after the schools of learning had been established in Africa, that even during the African Middle Ages there had been centres of learning akin to universities at Jenne, Gao, Niani, and Timbuktu, which contained the best information on a variety of subjects including rhetoric, logic, medicine, and astronomy.

Abdi (2011) similarly points out that Senegalese scholar, Cheikh Anta Diop, has successfully shown the world using the case of Mali, that Africa established a lively intellectual tradition, learning institutions, and libraries well before colonisation emerged. Asante (2009) adds that the great Nile Valley Mystery Schools explored all sciences and arts in a much more effective way than current universities would do. This history dispels the myth of the absence of higher forms of education before colonisation and points to the idea that Africa has had an intellectual tradition and inheritance to draw from (Marah, 2012). Disregarding the light touch influences from the north and the Far East, perhaps because of trade, early institutions appear to have evolved from within the African social fabric and thus, served their purpose of teaching and learning. They were repositories of information, trained individuals into the professions, and produced Islamic intellectuals among other functions. The universities also produced skills necessary for trade and commerce. However, as noted by Lulat, no matter how relevant these institutions were, colonialists simply replaced them with European schools, whose roles were in contrast with the long-term interests of African states (Lulat, 2005). Arguably, the slave trade, missionaries, and colonialism disrupted the developments in indigenous education further and it is to these that I turn to in the next sections.

2.2.2 Impact of the slave trade and colonialism

The slave trade, which M'baye (2006) defines as the involuntary relocation and auction of Africans of all ages to Europe and the Americas persisted from the 1440s to the 1850s. From an economic point of view, Hopkins (2009) supports the view that the slave trade led to a reversal of fortunes for Africa. Critiques of the slave trade, such as Rodney (1972), argue that through the slave trade, Africa lost development opportunity because it took away the skilled

work force that could have stirred development. By the same argument, one can infer that the slave trade took away some teachers, scientists and students. Drawing from Historian J. D. Fage's argument on the effects of the slave trade on Africa, Thompson (2008) concludes that there was stagnation in Africa's medical knowledge for three-hundred years. The insecurity that the slave trade induced meant that survival became the major preoccupation (Nunn, 2008), thus education lost priority. Slaves were captured in situations of anarchy, violence, and torture: the threat of capture inhibited Africans from doing their usual business (M'baye, 2006) and made it impossible for them to consolidate their educational institutions (Assié -Lumumba, 2005). These arguments point to the idea that the slave trade created conditions that made it difficult for the early institutions of learning to subsist. M'baye (2006) argues that the slave trade triggered the brain drain confronting Africa, a trend that has driven away many skilled academics.

With the advent of colonialism, ancient universities were not rekindled; neither their institutional form nor curricular content was adopted (Mamdani, 2016) because their functions were not in tune with that colonialism demanded and were replaced by European imports which suited the coloniser's interests. Some argue that transplantation is not an anomaly because universities are mobile as indicated by their history (Tanaka, 2009). Gubara (2014) notes that universities that had been there before like Al- Azhar were transformed to suit western standards. It is widely argued that colonisation destroyed the Afrophone forms of education that had developed in Africa (Teferra & Altbach, 2004). British colonial policy in the early years of colonialisation transferred the responsibility of education to European Christian Missions who introduced a different form of education with an emphasis on salvation and shaping Africans to make them more acceptable to the colonial system. Besides, education was used as a technology of rule where recipients seized to derive benefits such as survival skills and other societal benefits, which Africans had previously enjoyed. In addition, the introduction of European models of universities marked the birth of western intellectual hegemony and the suppression of knowledge bodies emergent from the global South, setting the framework for the North-South binary in knowledge production (Bassil, 2011). As van Rinsum (2002:32) succinctly puts it, "The Western academic discourse with its own specific epistemological and institutional apparatus, finally acquired such a dominant position in the late-colonial and postcolonial era that other systems of knowledge became dominated by it." The argument points to the colonial legacy and how the current universities continue to be affected by it. Even if indigenous institutions had fully developed by the time the British

decided to establish universities in Africa, it is a contradiction to think that the colonial masters would have adopted indigenous models. Such models would certainly not be in tune with the university education that colonial logics demanded: one that served their immediate interests and colonial futures (Ochwa-Echel, 2013; Ajayi et al, 1996). The argument points to the idea that colonial universities had to safeguard neo-colonial interests as shall be observed in the latter part of the discussion. The next section focuses on early nationalist demands for university education, the development of state-controlled education before the Second World War, and challenges in the conception of university education. The section also reveals ideas, concepts and models embedded in the British discourses on colonial education before the Second World War.

2.2.3 Calls for university education before the First World War

Calls for university education in Africa emanated from below as opposed to the myth that colonial authorities chose to establish universities after the Second World War. The western-educated elite, including the Creoles of Sierra Leone owing to their long history of contact with western civilisation induced by the slave trade, had long made demands for a West African university. Among those who called for an African university were James Africanus Horton (1835-1883) of Sierra Leone, Professor Edward Wilmot Blyden (1832-1912) of Liberia especially between 1860 and 1900 (Nwauwa, 1999). Horton, an Edinburgh educated medical doctor believed that the British colonialists should spearhead the development of university education in Africa, which he envisaged as a source of nation building and advancement. Horton was thus instrumental in the transformation of Fourah Bay College established by the Church Missionary Society in 1826, into a university that was affiliated to the University of Durham in 1896 (Hargreaves, 1985).

Furthermore, Horton envisaged a western type of university education in terms of curricular and content. Later after James Horton, Blyden called for an African university with a focus on African traditions and languages, a conversation that other educated West Africans such as Casely Hayford and Nmamdi Azikiwe of Nigeria came to advance (van Rinsum, 2002). The Blyden- Hyford model of a university would then clearly depart from the European tradition and was likely to be more relevant and decolonised. West Africans demanded a West African university to meet the needs of the people including liberation from colonial rule (Mama, 2003; Coe, 2002; Wandira, 1977). Colonial officials and missionaries ignored these calls for a university on the pretext that there were no financial resources (Nwauwa, 1997). However,

Hargreaves (1973) believed that British officials were indeed sympathetic to the calls for university education but sincerely lacked the financial recourses to implement the request. Nwauwa (1999) further emphasises that colonial governments opposed the calls for a university to protect their officials from competition with Africans, while missionaries shot down the efforts because university protagonists called for a nonspiritual education under government control.

Thus, the demands for university education by Africans, which went beyond the First World War and intensified towards the Second World War, indicate that they were not passive subjects. Africans were able to debate not only the existence of western education but also its form, content and consequences (Summers, 1994). It is clear therefore that different groups held varying ideas about university education in the colonial period and sought to use whatever form of education they envisaged to further their interests. The discussion below explores the challenges involved in the conception of university education.

2.3 Emergence of state-controlled education and challenges in university education

Education was not on the colonial agenda before the First World War because the British government was suspicious of the 'misfits' it could potentially produce (Stockwell, 2008). The British attitude towards native education was directed by the aspiration to avoid the repetition of the 'Indian disease'. The 'Indian disease' referred to a situation which arose in 19th century India, where the British allowed the expansion of English-medium academic education resulting in the emergence of a 'Babu' or a semi-educated class that disliked manual jobs in preference for white-collar jobs in the government, culminating in a revolt when the jobs proved unobtainable (Lee, 2007; Whitehead, 2007). Lugard, the colonial governor for Northern Nigeria developed the doctrine whereby universities were viewed as forerunners of an insubordinate middle-class intelligentsia not content with colonial rule (Windel, 2009; Simon, 1998; Duff, 1966). Thus, the policy blunder had to be avoided in Africa, hence the strategy of leaving education mostly in the hands of Christian missionaries of different denominations who were on an evangelising and 'civilising' mission (Omolewa, 2006; Beck, 1966). The obsession to prevent the Indian experience led to the development of adapted education and guided by British policy on education in all the colonies resembling state-controlled education, which utilised homogeneous curriculum (Madeira, 2005). The section below is devoted to this education policy.

2.4 British colonial education policy

British colonial education policy has been a subject of debate for a while (Whitehead, 2005). One of the trans-planters of colonial universities, Ashby and Anderson (1966) also reveals that before the First World War, the British did not have a formal education policy for its African colonies. Whitehead (2005) also points out that the imperial education policy after 1858 was to leave education to market forces. Other scholars advance the thesis that there was no official policy on education in British colonies until the 1940s (Borsali, 2016; Kallaway, 2012) and that what prevailed were commonly agreed principles between Britain and those colonialists on the ground (Windel, 2009; Whitehead, 2007).

The narrative suggests that the official policy was not to educate the natives. Whitehead, for example, refutes the idea that it was a deliberate policy on the part of the British not to promote education for the natives. Whitehead further argues that the empire was too huge and diverse for effective control and that the only thing close to an education policy was the setting up of an Advisory Committee on Education in Tropical Africa in 1923 (Whitehead, 2007). However, Teffera and Altbach (2004) identify common features of colonial higher education policy as including limited access and targeted training for a few who would serve in the colonial administration. This could explain why Africans from the colonies were admitted into British universities whilst university education was not promoted on the African soil.

Although colonial administrators were expected to implement the guidelines from the colonial office, in practice they were at liberty to comply with them or not and the colonial office made no financial provision for policy implementation (Nwauwa, 1997). Thus, policy largely depended on individual territorial administrators whose priorities in some cases did not include education (Whitehead, 2007; Nwauwa, 1999). The situation created varied educational conditions among British colonies in Africa with the control element being the only general framework. While education in West Africa better prepared Africans for self-government, the situation was different in Rhodesia and Nyasaland. In those regions, whites transmitted an inferior education to keep Africans on the margins and avoid the Indian experience (Kuster, 2007). Similarly, educational development in other central African countries like Malawi, Zimbabwe and Zambia was extremely poor compared to West Africa because there were more settlers there who still wanted white supremacy. Thus, British apathy concerning education was deliberately designed to create passive and loyal natives. Beck (1966) further suggests that the most important event in the history of education in Africa was the publication of the white

paper on Educational Policy in British Tropical Africa in 1925 by the British Advisory Committee on Education (BACE), aimed at expanding native education in preparation for self-government.

The publication officially marked the emergence of education policy for the colonial government. When education fell under state control, it had to be elitist because that characterised the nature of education in the metropole (Whitehead, 2007). Ashby (1964) also contends that the British had to move from complacency to protect their image after a pioneer of African liberty, Burghart Du Bois, held the first Pan-Africanist Congress in Paris in 1919 at which he implored colonial powers, among others, to provide education for its colonial subjects. After the First World War, the major concern for the colonial government shifted from how to secure the empire to how to govern it (Kallaway, 2005). This meant that education had to fall under scrutiny to ensure efficient management of the empire.

In Rhodesia now Zimbabwe, the colonial government became more actively involved in the education of Africans and introduced two government schools. In addition, it opened the first secondary school for Africans in 1939 (Kuster, 2007). Ironically, and given its stress on native subordination, missionary education was to prove a threat to the colonial government in that the few Africans who received the 'bookish' education emerged to challenge the colonial system. Hence it was condemned by officials for 'de-trabilising' or 'de-nationalising' Africans (Yamada, 2008), referring to educated Africans who lost contact with their culture, which was viewed as dangerous.

Religion later became the basis for protest because Africans realised the contradiction between what missionaries preached and the way they were treated by the colonialists. While missionaries preached equality of man before God, colonialists insisted on treating Africans as inhuman and as objects (Wa Muiu, 2010). Thus, the question regarding the form of education suitable for Africans became topical in the 1920s. This was common in those contexts where Africans resisted missionary education for what it was (its practice-based approach), and the European realisation that western-trained African elite demanded more political rights to be independent (Bude, 1983).

The predominant discourses between the first and second world wars revolved around the need for Britain to develop an education policy that would permanently address 'the native problem'

(Windel, 2009; Beck, 1966). Thus, there were perceived and real threats that determined the direction of British education policy and practice. In the colonial circles, the problem was thus defined as how best to administer and maintain a rural society (considered as pausing no threat to the coloniser); at the same time conserving the kind of society created by the policy of Indirect Rule. This was a society characterised by the absence of the educated from state bureaucracy, and maintenance of a pseudo-African aristocracy that helped the colonialists govern the populations (Kallaway, 2012).

In Lugard's book, *The Dual Mandate for Tropical Africa* published in 1922, which became the manual for British colonial policy between the first and second world wars, Indirect Rule comprised the doctrine through which decentralisation, adaptation to local conditions, and respect for the native authorities was a way of educating the natives for self-rule (Madeira, 2005). For Lugard, there was a need for an education policy that would define an education system suitable for Africans. Colonial officials debated the content and consequences of that education as part of wider debates on how their interests could been safeguarded.

To demonstrate the delicacy surrounding native education, Thomas Jesse Jones, prominent educator and director of the Phelps-Stoke Fund advised that it was detrimental to educate Africans "…away from their place in the colonial scheme arranged by Western Civilisations for Africans" (Jones, 1925 cited in Yamada, 2008: 23). Thus, at the peak of indirect rule (1900-1940), efforts by the educated elite and nationalists to have a university were stifled by British officials who feared that their tenure would be threatened by the emergence of an African educated class (Fajana, 1972). There were always contradictions in the British colonial policy regarding the education of the natives. While the state did not promote African education in the colonies, natives could acquire British and American degrees overseas for the service of the colonial government (Roberts, 2016).On the other hand, colonial students in British universities were cultivated as future leaders of post-colonial states and even organised themselves into student movements opposed to racial discrimination (Stockwell, 2008). This was indeed a contradiction because locally, university-trained African elites were viewed as a threat to the colonial project. For the colonial administrators, education was a tool for social control while to Africans it became a value, and not just the education itself, they believed that their participation in colonial state affairs and their liberation depended on educational expansion (Fajana, 1972). It is clear from the above discussion that British colonial policy was aimed at avoiding university education to preserve the status quo and create passive citizens.

Thus, a less threatening form of education that would keep Africans in their place was preferred.

The above discussion will foreground the section below on the Phelps-Stoke Fund and education development in Africa. The discussion shows that the nature of education to be given to natives was consistently informed by the desire to protect colonial interests.

2.5 The Phelps-Stoke Fund and the development of adapted education

The Phelps-Stokes Fund, an American Philanthropic organisation specialising in the education of Black Americans in 1920 sent a Commission to investigate educational conditions in West, South, and Equatorial Africa at the request of the British government. Increased racial tensions were emanating from mission educated African nationalists in East and Southern Africa (Yamada, 2008; Ashby, 1964). Jessie Jones, the Architect of adapted education, led the Commission and believed that adapted education could work among the colonised peoples of Africa. The commission, which produced its first report in 1921 and the second in 1924, was comprised of individuals serving in different missionary capacities; experts in industrial education and colonial education officers (Brown, 1964).

The Commission felt that Africa needed industrial schools like Hampton (Virginia) and Tuskegee Institutes (Alabama). A former student, ex-slave and Afro-American educator, Booker T. Washington introduced these schools. Washington believed that the Tuskegee model could improve race relations in the United States and Africa (Watras, 2015). The motivation for adapted education also emerged from the work of Michael Saddler, a prominent British educator whose publication in 1901 of an essay, *The Education of the Coloured Race* praised the industrial schools at Hampton and Tuskegee. Sadler cited in Watras (2015) described the education as practical, morally inspiring, and compassionate on the basis that it involved trades, agriculture, domestic arts for women and basic literacy. Thus, it prepared Afro-Americans to be self-reliant with no need for urban employment. Adapted education revolved around notions of black inferiority and mental ineptitude and was believed to be ideal for Africans (Marah, 2012; 1987). The Phelps-Stokes Commission further argued for the introduction of educational adaptation before western education was transferred to the colonies. The British government made the position into policy in 1925 through the 1923 Advisory Committee on Native Education in British Tropical Africa with the publication of a white paper on, *Education Policy*

in British Tropical Africa (Quist, 2003: Wandira, 1977), and it remained a British policy on education in Africa until independence (Omolewa, 2006; Bude, 1983).

In Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Malawi, white settlers similarly had fears towards the development of African education in general so they avoided creating a 'Babu' class. They thus did everything possible to inhibit the development of secondary and higher education for the natives on that excuse (Lungu, 1993). The 1899 Ordinance had already been endorsed a racially segregated system of education in Zimbabwe and industrial training for blacks had been instituted by the 1903 Ordinance (Zvobgo, 1981). The ordinances curtailed the development of secondary and university education.

In West Africa, adapted education was popularised by James E. K. Aggrey of the Gold Coast who became the 'Booker T. Washington of Africa' with Achimota College and its adaptationist curriculum, as the flagship of British education covering courses from kindergarten to university (Steiner-Khamsi & Quist, 2000; West, 1992). It is argued that the policy on adaptive education was neutral and that the development of education for the masses; the promotion of education for women and adults; gearing education towards agriculture in line with the livelihood patterns in Tropical Africa and the development of higher education became the primary aims of this curriculum.

However, adapted education in practice meant that education had to be adjusted to the agrarian life of Africans to prevent dissension and aspirations for white-collar jobs and urban drifting (Ruddel, 1982). Thus, there was always a dissonance between the stated policy and practice in terms of how education was offered to the natives. This disconnect was caused by the desire to protect colonial interests. Another key principle guiding education in the inter-war years was the notion of colonial self-sufficiency; the idea that colonies should not be a burden to the British tax payer (Borsali, 2016). The approach allowed for the establishment of a few technical schools with the objective of staffing Africans in junior positions such as crafts and trades in the colonies (Persianis, 2003). These included Makerere College (established in Uganda in 1922), the Gordon Memorial College, and the Kitchener School of Medicine (founded in Khartoum in 1924) which offered an extension of adapted education (Wandira, 1977).

The above background clarifies the British position concerning all forms of education in its colonies in the period before 1945, and begs the questions: why the turn-around after the Second World War? What triggered the policy shift? To answer these questions, one needs to

examine a multiplicity of events before and after the Second World War, within and outside Africa, which induced the turnaround in British foreign and educational policy.

2.6 The origins of colonial universities in the 1930s

Attempts to initiate colonial university education began by the James Currie Commission, which was engaged to examine the possibility of establishing universities in Africa. Sir James Currie who chaired a departmental committee on education in Africa in 1933 recommended the establishment of real universities to protect British status in Africa. Currie also recommended the upgrading of Makerere technical school to a full university (Ashby & Anderson, 1966). Colonial governors who argued that the expansion of primary and secondary education should take precedence even though in Britain university education started before secondary schooling (Lilford, 2012) ignored these recommendations.

This period saw the colonial government in the Gold Coast and Nigeria, opening the foundation of a university department at Achimota College in Accra 1929, and a medical college in Yaba in 1934, Fourah Bay College in Ibadan, 1929 with the view of developing intermediate human capital in different colonies. This was due to varied reasons that ranged from the need for low-level personnel to African demand and the availability of progressive colonial administrators (Lulat, 2005). Within the British society, some sincerely pushed for the establishment of universities in Africa for the socio-economic benefit of Africans such as the intelligentsia. These included J.H. Channon, a Professor from Liverpool University who was seconded to the colonial office. Channon later forecasted the development of a colonial university as the basis for the intellectual development of Africa (Hargreaves, 1973).

In East Africa, the De La Warr Commission, appointed by the secretary of state for colonies in 1937 to inquire into higher education in East Africa, was the first initiative by the British government to look at the establishment of higher education in Tropical Africa. It recommended the development of universities such as Makerere University of East Africa to avert the danger of having Africans flocking into American institutions where they could be 'radicalised'. The Commission also wanted to address the demands by the Baganda (Ugandans) for university education; an appeal, which according to the Commission, British authorities could only ignore at their own risk (Nwauwa, 1993).

The Commission also made recommendations for the development of higher education in Kenya and Tanzania (Yates, 1964). The pressure to establish universities in the 1930s also

came from American educated Africans who, upon return, could not be absorbed in the employment market because of the policy of Indirect Rule and had been radicalised (Nwauwa,1997). To some extent, Indirect Rule required that a few Africans be educated to ensure that those in the reserves were well administered and tax collection efficiently executed (Cloete, Bunting & Maassen, 2015). From these views, it was clear that university education in colonial Africa was envisaged to serve colonial purposes hence their establishment after the Second World War.

2.6.1 Policy shift and creation of colonial universities in Anglophone Africa

In the period after the Second World War, there was a political paradigm shift within colonial powers. One prominent thing was in terms of discourse, which changed from the form and content of education most appropriate for the natives in safeguarding the goals of the colonial enterprise to engaging in modernisation in preparation for self-rule. It increasingly became clear to colonial powers that they would have to relinquish colonies eventually (Lulat, 2005) and that they turned to universities to help them create the work force they needed (Nwauwa, 1993). The de facto policy of offering only technical or vocational education as propagated in Phelps-Stokeism changed with universities being established in Ibadan and Legon in 1948 (Mills, 2004).

British universities, traditionally indifferent to the development of universities in the colonies, went into partnership with the colonial office to establish "long term imperial intellectual partnership" in 1941 (Borsali, 2016: 26), which was not a relationship of academic equality but an assertion of British intellectual hegemony. However, Hargreaves (1981) believed that the partnership was beneficial to all parties. The British government created an Inter-University Council for Higher Education Overseas in 1946. It comprised of representatives from British universities and the colonies to facilitate co-operation with colonial universities, recruit staff, provide technical advice, and promote the development of overseas universities. The colonial development policy later facilitated the establishment of colonial universities.

This principle meant that the imperial state had to facilitate the politico-socio-economic development of its subjects in preparation for self-government (Kelemen, 2007). Thus, the reforms initiated by Macdonald in 1938 presupposed the need for a class of well-educated Africans to run the new state (Pearce, 1984). The call to improve the welfare of the colonised was to some extent induced by the international community such as the League of Nations after

1918 and the United Nations after 1945, which increasingly took an interest in the welfare of the colonised, apart from local demand (Assié -Lumumba, Mazrui, Dembele & Lumumba – Kasongo, 2013).

Under the Colonial Development Policy, detribalising the Africans was viewed as conceivable and was deliberately planned (Pearce, 1984). The policy of Colonial Development and Welfare of 1940 and 1950 marked a departure from the doctrine of colonial self-sufficiency and had implications for the improvement of education, including university education, as a way of improving social services. Unlike before, when plans were uttered without a budget allocation, money was deliberately set aside for colonial development and more specifically universities, largely known as the Asquith colleges (Ajayi, et.al. 1996).

The policy was not a representation of generosity on the part of the imperial power but a survival strategy (Zeleza, 1985; Rodney, 1972). Kelemen (2007) also contends that the welfarist policy was motivated by an economic concern where improvement of welfare was expected to result in increased production. Zeleza further argues that the rise of the United States as a superpower in the capitalist block post-World War 2 further necessitated that the severely weakened imperial state restructures its economy to survive the American threat by making the colonies more economically viable.

Apart from international politics, Kallaway (2012) suggests that British policy towards university education was also shaped by events within the colonies such as increased nationalist activities. The participation in the Second World War by colonial subjects from Africa on the side of the allies alongside their 'white masters' cast doubt on the myth of the whiteman's, supremacy and invulnerability such that upon return to Africa, African soldiers were more resolute to push for independence (Babou, 2010). These blacks had seen by themselves how the so-called immortals (whites) feared or retreated cowardly and or died by the gun hence disputing the myth that these whites were too smart and immortal.

Furthermore, Lulat (2005) suggests that the war forced Africans to rethink their contradictory position, whereby they had fought for the freedom of their colonial master in the Second World War but remained colonised at home. More importantly, the war also triggered an anti-imperialist stance within the British public. Within the metropole itself, intellectuals criticised the basic features of colonialism and called for African empowerment through the provision of

university education, and in this way, contributed to the founding of the University of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (Jons, 2016).

The newly formed United Nations (in 1945), with its emphasis on human rights and self-government, helped build an international consensus against colonial rule (Babou, 2010). Thus, a means of training the African elite, in an acceptable direction away from the influence of left-wing ideologies (Soviet Russian influences), had to be found (Zimudzi, 2007). Under such a threat, it was better to train Africans locally than overseas, hence the need to establish local universities in the colonies.

As discussed above, colonial universities were designed to serve neo-colonial interests more than African needs. Nwanuwa (1997) contends that the decision to establish colonial universities summarily included opposition by critics of the empire within and outside the metropole; academics who pushed for the establishment of universities and the threat to the survival of Empire as evidenced by the West Indian riots. Apart from these, Nwauwa also adds the risk of educating natives overseas; distress over the growth of American sphere of influence; the Second World War; the emergence of the United Nations Organisation (UNO) and the reforms started by the British Prime Minister Malcolm Macdonald. Thus, an assortment of factors both within and beyond the colonies saw the imperial powers taking the initiative to establish colonial universities. The colonial government thus viewed the development of universities as a safety valve and a neo-colonial project.

2.7 Colonial universities as decolonisation projects

The development of universities in the British colonial empire emerged as decolonisation projects (Ochwa-Echel, 2014). They were different from those, which were established in the 1960s following the independence of countries, to train the emerging political elite and address the existing developmental needs (Fongwa & Wangenge-Ouma, 2015; Aina, 2010; Sall, et.al. 2003). It is in the context of decolonisation that the British government provided a budget for the development of colonial universities to be responsible for the training of local elites needed in modernising African states according to British standards (Hargreaves, 1973). Colonial administrators in London were sure that the preparation of Africans for self-government for which a class of educated Africans was considered vital, had to be guarded to ensure that it happened in the context of the British Empire (Nwauwa, 1993).

The colonisers and the colonised both perceived colonial universities as steps towards self-rule (Livsey, 2016). In much of the post-colonial literature, decolonisation refers to the retreat of British influence and transfer of power to African elites; an end of European Empires and or substitution of whites by blacks (Jons, 2016; Thomas and Thompson, 2014; Collins, 2013; Fanon, 1967). However, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015) and Grosfoguel (2007) seriously challenge the notion of decolonisation as the end of colonial rule and describe it as mythical because British colonial interests went far beyond the end of colonial rule. From the decolonial school, decolonisation is the process of revealing and eradicating all aspects of colonial vestiges, forms of domination and discriminatory legacies (Quijano, 2007). Decolonisation is equated with Africanisation of the academy (Nyamnjoh, 2019). This is the version it has pointed to currently in the Southern African context. When the British began the movement towards the provision of university education in their colonies, following the Second World War, they engaged advisory bodies for policy advice, and the Asquith Commission chaired by Sir Cyril Asquith and Elliot Commission chaired by Walter Elliot were engaged in 1943 (Hargreaves, 1981). I will now turn to these commissions in the coming section.

2.8 The Asquith and Elliot Commissions

The Elliot Commission had to report on the organisation and facilities of the existing institutions for higher education in British West Africa and to recommend future university development in the same region while Asquith Commission, was a more general body whose mandate was to formulate principles guiding the establishment of universities in British colonies (Lulat, 2005; Nwauwa, 1993). The Elliot Commission, recommended that any university the British established should not award a local degree but one affiliated to a British university to ensure that its qualifications would be recognised outside West Africa to avoid the Yaba experience (Livsey, 2016; Banya & Elu, 1997).

The experience of Yaba motivated a standard qualification equivalent to British universities because students had spent six and a half years studying for a locally provided medical qualification, which proved inferior and lacked international recognition (Ajayi, 1975; Nwauwa, 1993). The Asquith Commission was charged with the responsibility of outlining what a colonial university should be, plan for the development of higher education in the colonies, and set out modalities through which British universities could be taken on board to assist the newly established institutions (Borsali, 2016). The Commission's recommendations then became the basis of the establishment of universities in colonial Africa (Wandira, 1977).

According to the Asquith Commission, a university is the most effective way by which well-trained work force with leadership skills could be produced (Atkinson, 1972). Thus, it developed the concept of a university established for the sole purpose of preparing manpower needed in the post-colonial state and such universities were elitist (Ashby, 1964). The Asquith Commission also recommended that the new institutions be top of the range, residential, multi-faculty, autonomous; enjoy academic freedom, be centres for research, teaching, and learning (Atuahene, 2012). In 1945, the Elliot Commission submitted two reports, one majority report recommended amidst controversy, the establishment of three universities in Sierra Leone, Gold Coast, and Nigeria. The minority decision based on financial consideration of a single university at Ibadan in Nigeria was shot down (Duff, 1966). The Asquith- Elliot Commissions then led to the creation of 17 universities in the colonies (Steinmetz, 2013). The major weakness of these universities as observed by Livsey (2016) and Borsali, (2016) was that the encounter between the imperial power and Africa was not a meeting of equals as such; Africans hardly had the platform to push for the university they wanted given that there were no Africans on the Asquith Commission.

2.9 The Asquith Colleges

The Asquith colleges were the colonial universities established because of the work of the Asquith Commission. They included University College of Ghana, Legon (1948), University College, Ibadan (1948), Khartoum University College (1949), Makerere College and the University College of Sierra Leone (1960). The list also included the segregated University College of Salisbury (1953) later upgraded in 1955 after the Federation to become the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (UCRN) and the University of Rhodesia after the collapse of the Central African Federation (CAF), an amalgamation of Northern Rhodesia, Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland (Collins, 2013; Teferra, 2014; Lulat, 2003).

Unlike in West Africa where existing facilities for higher education were available to serve as a foundation for higher education, such facilities did not exist in Rhodesia, a setback that delayed the development of university education (Gelfand, 1978).The University College of the Gold Coast was established in Ghana in 1948. The Royal Technical College of East Africa became the University College, Nairobi, in 1963, and together with the University College, Dar es Salaam, and Makerere University College, they formed the Federal University of East Africa.

Nwauwa (1997) maintains that Ibadan, Legon, Fourah Bay, and Makerere were founded under colonial office authority and initiative. The colleges followed the British pattern and more specifically the London brand, which was, exported (Hargreaves, 1981). However, the model of colonial universities was not Oxbridge, because there was an assumption that the best students would be trained in the metropolis so colonial universities were established to train a small elite for the colonial government, a role which continued after independence (Mamdani, 2008; Sherman, 1990). The universities were fashioned in line with British civic universities in terms of their standards, curricula, and the social function they were to serve (Ashby, 1964). In terms of function, teaching and research were given primacy. The Asquith Commission recommended that the universities were to become 'university colleges' in a special relationship with the University of London (Coleman and Court, 1993).

This meant that colonial universities could provide London with syllabi relevant to their context and their staff became assistant examiners so that teaching was not divorced from examining. The special relationship also allowed graduates from colonial universities to acquire degrees from the University of London, which stood the chance of being internationally recognised (Baker, 2013). Makerere University was recommended as the template for the special relationship (Lilford, 2012). Thus, the University of London was endowed with a large intellectual empire, because Oxford and Cambridge univeristis had failed as models because of their religious requirements for prospective students (Logan, 1979). The institutions were to be established as university colleges symbolising the notion that they were not fully established universities, which could grant degrees of their own until they were mature enough.

The expectation that they would become fully-fledged universities after meeting the required standards created an illusion among Africans that their universities were not any different from those of the coloniser. Ashby (1966) criticises the Asquith Report for creating universities that were not properly adapted to the African situation by emphasising arts and sciences without focusing on professional studies like medicine. The major criticism was also that the commission reflected more of pre-war British opinion on education than post-war one. Duff (1966) similarly observes that since there were no Africans on the Asquith Commission, attuning universities to African culture was anathema, but the absence of professional qualifications could be justified based on costs and scarcity of relevant expertise. The Asquith Report did not discuss the practicability of imposing a foreign university structure that had

been developed to suit conditions in the metropole and this reality began to manifest in the 1950s and beyond (Logan, 1979).

2.9.1 Establishment of the University of Rhodesia

Up until 1956, when the University College of Salisbury (now UZ) after independence in (1980) was established, university education was sought outside the country at Fort Hare in South Africa, which was famous for educating black nationalists. A Royal charter of the University of Rhodesia and Nyasaland established the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1955, which became the governing instrument of the University until independence (UZ Act, 1982). The university was a product of the partnership with not only the University of London but also Birmingham University, which led to the development of a first-class medical school, a dream made possible by local individual donations, UNESCO, and British universities (Shizha & Kariwo, 2011).

The university was initiated by a volunteer organisation, the Rhodesia University Association, which saw the enactment of a bill for the incorporation and its constitution in the Southern Rhodesian Legislative Assembly in 1952. Ultimately, a commission chaired by Sir Alexander Carr-Saunders was appointed to report on the needs for higher education for Africans in Central Africa in 1951 (Carr-Saunders, 1961). Garfield Todd, Edgar Whitehead, who both served as prime-ministers and Sir George Davenport who became Minister of Education were instrumental in shaping the type of university to emerge in parliamentary debates and giving it a non-racial character (on paper). Politicians were, thus, instrumental in the development and ultimately the operations of the university. Right from its inception, the university was not free from political influences. Such influences were carried over into the post-independence period.

The Carr-Saunders Commission recommended, in addition to Asquith findings, the creation of an institution with high academic standards as in Britain, capable of attracting expatriates mostly based on university autonomy, with a curriculum like the British model, characterised by high entry requirements and specialist courses (Atkinson, 1972). However, as the discussion has revealed, the practices at the University of Rhodesia fell far short of the intentions for university education as was stated in the policy.

2.10 The University of Rhodesia: functions and practices

The University of Rhodesia, which first opened in 1957, was established to meet not only the knowledge, science, and research needs of Southern Rhodesia but also those of Central Africa and contribute to the development of intellectualism (Gelfand, 1978). The university was also created to meet the human resource needs of white Rhodesians who dominated the economy (Shizha & Kariwo, 2011). The location, Salisbury, rather than Lusaka was determined by the availability in the federal capital of related resources like rich libraries, archival and scientific resources, land donation, and precious minerals (Kirkwood, 1979). As recommended for all colonial universities by the Asquith Commission, the university was to be open to all humans indiscriminate of race, religion or creed (Atkinson, 1972). As such, the University of Rhodesia was founded as a non-racial institution. This meant that its academic appointment and promotion system was expected to be immune to the 'colour bar' that existed in wider society.

However, the university fell short of this ideal as very few Africans ever became qualified to gain entry into it (Ajayi, et.al. 1996). The racist nature of the University of Rhodesia was not a surprise given that Ian Smith; the then Prime Minister of Rhodesia created a state, which was an imitation of apartheid (White, 2011). Founded in a very racially segregated society the 'colour-bar' that characterised public life manifested itself within the walls of the university (Ranger, 2013). It was, thus, a contradiction to expect the university to be non-racial and inclusive.

 Rhodesian front politicians demanded a separate university for Africans following the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) on the pretext that the behaviour of African students was disgraceful (Mlambo, 1995). As Mungazi (1989) notes, education was one of the strategies that the colonial system used to exert control on the African population. In addition, Ajayi, et.al. (1996) argue that there was a conspicuous absence of the African voice in the running of the University of Rhodesia. Thus, the expected curricula transformation became impossible because African staff at the professorial level were hardly recruited, though qualified.

According to MacIntyre (1985), an activity would qualify as a practice if it nurtures in the individual goodness or virtue. Thus, as a practice, university education should promote a certain kind of human qualities such as intellectualism, preference for democratic ideals in addition to fostering universality among others. Other than these human traits, university

practice would involve all the work that they do. In the context of Anglophone Africa, university practices were designed to produce graduates who could serve the colonial government efficiently and remained useful even in the post colony. Hargreaves (1973) aptly titles one paper '*The idea of a colonial university*. The assumption in this title is that European universities were not just universities but 'colonial universities' presupposing that in some way, the university in British Africa was conceived differently. The understanding had to change because there was a commitment on the part of the imperial powers, to perpetuate British intellectual, political, and cultural hegemony. In the eyes of a Nigerian intellectual emerging from colonialism, Dr. Onoge cited in Hargreaves (1973: 26) a colonial university is "one which paid greater attention to its standing in the eyes of foreigners than the relevance of its activities to the needs of its own country." Colonial universities thus had to fit into the British template of education because there was a requirement that they would only become fully-fledged universities independent of London when their standards approximated those of British universities. Teferra and Altbach (2004) contend that colonial higher education policy had some universal elements such as its limited access, low participation rates, limited academic freedom, autonomy, and limited curriculum, which mainly emphasised arts, and law that aimed at creating African elite that could serve colonial government more efficiently. Though modelled on British ones, colonial universities were also not extensions of universities in the metropole (Steinmetz, 2016). Thus, Mazrui (1975) dismissed them as extensions of the metropolis and conduits of European cultural domination. Efforts were made in every way to make colonial universities mimic the Ox- breed model including halls of residence, library facilities, fountains, and examinations (Hargreaves 1973; Ashby 1961). The idea of equivalence was applied beyond curricula to include symbolic practices such as the wearing of academic gowns to lectures, grace at table, and other mannerisms in British affiliated universities (Sawyer, 1973). Hence, in some way, there was a relationship between colonial universities and those in the metropole.

2.10.1 Standards and curricular

Africans who had acquired degrees in Britain admired the 'excellence' of the British institutions and wanted similar 'standards' as those prevailing in London. Through such demands, they contributed to the reproduction and expansion of European education into Africa (Assié -Lumumba, 2016). Africans felt that any university education that was not similar to European standards would not be ideal because to them an African curriculum had the problem

of diluting the worth of their degrees and was thus not tolerated (Banya & Elu, 1997). Ashby (1964) points out that, at the time of independence, colonial universities in Africa inherited a legacy that exhibited three key attributes considered the whole mark of the British system: autonomy from the state, the quest for excellence, discipline specialisation and elitism in terms of function. However, this observation was contradictory to the actual practices on the ground as evidenced by the case of the University of Rhodesia discussed in sections 2.10 above, 2.10.2 and 2.10.3 below.

Colonial universities came into being from a model heavily influenced by religious institutions during the medieval period, whose founders lacked a clear societal mission for the university thus the disconnect between universities and society popularly known as the ivory tower, a detachment they still suffer from (Ochwa-Echel, 2013; Wangenge-Ouma &Langa, 2010). Thus, they inherited a university philosophy whereby its function was understood as the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake (intrinsic value) leading to a universal gold standard of scholarship (Yesufu, 1973). The British import of education as a model of a university was inevitable in Africa given local pressure from the educated elite who warned that any diluted version of a university would not be tolerated. Thus, academic staff at the colonial universities had to be imported to ensure that British standards were maintained (Steinmetz, 2013; Logan, 1979). These academics were on hefty salaries and leave conditions competitive enough to attract them as expatriates (Hargreaves, 1973).

There was a determination on maintaining British standards (also lightly viewed as international standards) to a point where the relevance of the university to the Africans themselves was put in doubt (Nhonoli, 1973 cited in Wandira, 1977). The preoccupation with the maintenance of high standards as similar to those of British calibre led to the resilience of a colonising epistemology in post-colonial African education, which downplays African creativity and knowledge bodies (Nyamnjoh, 2012).

Lulat (2005) postulates that being a colonial project, colonial universities were bound to perform functions that were opposed to the real interests of Africans such that the irrelevance of curricular, elitism among other ills is not a surprise. At independence, the University of Rhodesia for instance, needed a complete overhaul to make it relevant to the needs of Zimbabwe (Chideya, 1982).

2.10.2 Colonial university governance structure

The constitutions of colonial universities imitated those of British universities comprised of Council (non-academics) at the apex, in charge of financial affairs, property, and daily running of the university, including policy implementation. Below it, the Senate made up mainly of professors, responsible for academic affairs such as appointments followed by faculty boards and various committees from which university business starts, with the Senate as the final decision-making body (Ashby & Anderson, 1966). The mode of university governance during colonial Rhodesia can be described as state control. Studies on university governance systems in Africa (Saint (2009; Gaidzanwa, 1994) characterise state control as made up of the following features: use of Acts of parliament; state dominance in governance issues; state funded institutions; senate and university administrative structure headed by a VC while deans head faculties and the existence of councils delegated to manage universities.

Colonial governments often ignored the constitutions by flouting university autonomy and academic freedoms. In demonstrating this behaviour, Duff a member of the Elliot Commission commented concerning the University of Rhodesia "black Africa has never laid such violent hands on a university as white Rhodesia did" (Duff, 1966: 44).

Neave and Van Vaught (1994) observe that the imposition of European models of education created serious challenges of adaptation because the higher education systems were not congruent with the social structure and culture of the newly independent nations, and thus tended to induce social and political conflicts. Thus, the imported model of education hampered the development of a university organisational system relevant to local needs. Because of the inherited prejudices, post-independence states in Africa have looked at universities with hostility and have had to conveniently make them part of the ideological apparatus of the state (Sall, et.al. 2003; Zeleza; 2003). The British model of expensive publicly financed and low output institutions was exported to the colonies (Eisemon & Salmi, 1993).

2.10.3 Use of surveillance as a control mechanism

The British did not set up universities characterised by free inquiry and academic freedom, as was the case in the metropole. The colonial government ensured that academic freedom and academic autonomy were severely constrained (Altbach, 2005). This was a complete negation of the university recommended in the Asquith report supposed to be fully autonomous and academically free. Academic freedom has been defined as the freedom to teach, carry out

research, and write without fear of being dismissed or persecuted by the state (Mmari, 2008). In this sense, academic freedom would require that academics conduct their research and teach without limits. In teaching, it also entails that academics should have a voice in programme design and delivery. In research, academic freedom means researching topics considered sensitive without impediments.

Institutional autonomy is the right of the university to make its own decisions in all matters (Enders, De Boer & Wever, 2013). In this regard, university autonomy includes freedom to recruit and promote staff, autonomous admission policies, absence of ideological pressure in the form of religion or politics, and absence of state commands (Archer, 2017). Enders, et.al. (2013) go further to depict the various kinds of autonomy associated with decision-making processes within universities as including financial, governance, and policy autonomy, which are believed to be integral for effective performance. Thus, institutional autonomy, as a concept, is problematic because it is not only relative but also carries with it several assumptions as noted (Divala, 2008).

Although in principle the notion of university autonomy was propagated at the University of Rhodesia, the colonial government employed spies and informers and made use of surveillance to keep both faculty and students under check (Zimudzi, 2007). Draconian laws were instituted to deal with opposition and student activism following the militant Chimukwembe African student demonstration against the colonial state on 7 August in 1973 (Mlambo, 2005).

Many efforts were made to tame academics such that dissident academics that were either pro-socialist or sympathised with nationalistic movements such as the Historian Terence Ranger had to be deported (Ranger, 2004). Ranger (2013) briefly described the colonial university of Rhodesia as infested with spies and surveillance because it had to promote the interests of a racially segregated state system, and thus remained perpetually at loggerheads with those that opposed the system. In addition, Ranger testifies how the settler government deported other academics opposed to the system. Thus, certain predispositions about the university such as the notion of universities as sites of radical thinking and rebellion against the state were passed on (Thiaw, 2007).

Writing in the context of Rhodesia, Hodgkinson (2019) argues that the white nationalist government, the Rhodesia Front (RF) could not reconfigure the university principles of

multiracialism and academic freedom because of self-interests. Thus, the University of Rhodesia continued to provide a breeding ground for challenging white minority rule.

The above discussion has shed light on colonial university practices and the way they differed from the principles enshrined in the university constitution creating a gap between espoused policies and ground reality. A similar dilemma can be witnessed concerning public universities in post-independence Zimbabwe.

2.11   The University in Zimbabwe Post –Independence

When Zimbabwe attained independence from Britain in 1980, it only had one university, the University of Rhodesia now the University of Zimbabwe with a student population of 2.240 (Nherera, 2005). Thus, a radical educational transformation was at the topmost of the ZANU PF liberation manifesto because independence and education were inextricably linked (Sadomba, 2011). As was the case in most African countries, education was important in the liberation project (Otunnu, 2015). Thus, both policy frameworks and capacity building received significant attention after 1980. The UZ Act aimed at addressing previous inequalities in university education. Once independence was acquired, issues of social justice had to be addressed to assure the people that the struggle was not in vain (Oketch and Rolleston, 2007). Hence, education had to be transformed to ensure economic growth, the extension of democracy, and social equity. There was a perception that university education would be made free to make it more accessible to the African majority (Kanyango, 2005; Zvobgo, 1981). There was no expansion of universities in the first decade following independence; emphasis was on expanding primary and secondary education (Zvobgo, 1985). The expansion of primary and secondary education served as a precursor to the massification of university education including teacher training colleges and polytechnics which began in the early '90s (Zindi, 2006).

However, enrolments at the University of Zimbabwe skyrocketed. The policy of free and compulsory primary education created a heavy burden on the state, such that by the end of the first decade, free education had become unsustainable and this precipitated in 1990, the adoption of the economic policies of the Bretton Woods institutions, Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) to revamp the economy (Zhou & Zvoushe, 2012; Kanyongo, 2005).

2.11.1 Expansion of University Education From 1992 onwards

Independence had a profound effect on university education as was evidenced by the economic support received from donors in the form of bursaries and research grants from countries like Norway, Sweden, Canada, the USA and the UK (Manungo, 2010). More institutions were opened to cater for the unprecedented demand such that there were nine public universities with a total enrolment of 55.548 students as of 2007 (SARUA, 2009). By 2015 there were 14 degree-granting institutions in the country with a total enrolment of well over 36 000 students (Parliament of Zimbabwe, 2015). To date, the country has 14 public and 6 private universities. Building more universities was seen as an epitome of true freedom, which for many years the colonial master had denied Africans notwithstanding their demand for it (Assié -Lumumba 2016).

The government focused mainly on increasing access to education to address past imbalances rather than quality (Kariwo, 2014). Some scholars have questioned the logic of having several universities without adequate resources for them to function as universities (Shizha & Kariwo, 2011). As Mkandawire (2014) notes, liberation parties want to make history which can be reused when the need arises. This has been a quantitative increase with the qualitative side ignored. The move by the Government of Zimbabwe to increase access which was accompanied by the drive to Africanise the university was part of the broader transformations that swept across post-independence Africa since the 1960s (Mamdani, 2016). University education was prioritised and received state funding. Universities were viewed as engines of socio-economic development hence the concept of the developmental university discussed in section 2.14 below. Africans first held conversations about the importance of universities in Post-independence Africa in 1962 at the Tananarive (now Antananarivo) conference where the African university assumed specified roles including among others: the unification of Africa and work force training for nation-building (Yesufu, 1973).

2.12 The Developmental University and the Quest for relevance

As was the case in much of Sub-Saharan Africa, the joy of independence brought forward rising expectations in terms of the work of the universities. In Zimbabwe, as elsewhere in Africa, national development was envisaged in the context of the university because development theorists of the 60s and 70s advised that Third World countries could only develop through productive knowledge (Puplampu, 2005). Following independence, African leaders agreed that

their universities would have to become development engines responsible for the production of skilled work force, modernisation of the new nations, and addressing socio-economic challenges facing citizens (Mamdani, 2008; Wangenge-Ouma, 2008). This role definition was made in Accra in 1972 when the Association of African Union (AAU) hosted a workshop for African leaders (Yesufu, 1973). Even earlier, AAU at its launch in Kinshasa, Zaire in 1967 was guided by the theme "The University and Development", signifying that the developmental role of the university was a common vision between academics and politicians, thus, the entrance of politics into the university was in harmony with the African project (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2017: 67). Thus, most post-independence governments expanded their university education systems because educated people were viewed as a potential driver of development. University education was received with enthusiasm even among the people themselves because they viewed it as vehicle for social mobility and a decent lifestyle. Besides, there was a general assumption that universities should significantly contribute towards the development of the necessary human resources especially the professions and the civil service which colonial laws had curtailed (Cloete, Bunting & Bailey, 2018). The idea of the 'developmental university' emerged within this context (Coleman, 1986).

Sawyerr (2002) defines the developmental role of the university as the quality of knowledge that it produces. The idea of the developmental university resonated very well with politicians like Julius Nyerere of Tanzania and Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe who earnestly believed that African universities could spearhead the process of poverty alleviation and rural underdevelopment (Mkude, Cooksey & Levey, 2003). The concept of the developmental university was in line with the idea of the university third mission (Culum, Turk & Ledic, 2015; Singh & Little, 2011). It was also a way of making universities more accountable to society in general. From this perspective, states were mandated to steer universities in the development direction. Even after the collapse of the idea of developmental universities in the face of social, economic, and political challenges that rocked African universities in the 1980s (Falola, 2004), African states did not retreat from the university, rather they generally tightened their hold on these institutions to ensure that their broad interests were catered for. Ndlovu-Gathsheni (2017) argues that the role of the university as defined by the AAU remained sticky because it did not clarify the role of the state. Critics have also pointed out that the role of the university as defined at Accra would not mean that universities should become government departments but rather that they should play an advisory role in identifying and assessing the socio-economic and

political needs of societies (Daily News, 31 March 2019). In the few years following independence in Zimbabwe, contrary to expectation, education was not meant to dislodge the class structure. The new state perfected the system and even created a class of academics who stood for its cause as discussed below.

2.13 Co-optation of academics

Following the Zimbabwean crisis well documented in the literature, the state created a new class of academics Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2010) describes as nativist scholars (or regime enablers) who strongly allied themselves with the ruling elites and appeared on national television to defend its cause. Raftopoulos and Mlambo (2008) proffer that the nationalistic discourse which these academics paddled revolved around critical national issues such as land, a discriminatory interpretation of the history of the liberation struggle, collective labeling of whites, civic movements, and many others believed to be enemies of the state. Thus, part of the reason why the state co-opts academics is to control "acrimonious discourses" (Benatar, 2016: 383). According to Foucault (1972: 216):

> In every society, the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organised, and distributed according to a certain number of procedures, whose role is to avert its powers and its dangers."

The state seeks to control the damaging effects of academic work by controlling what academics can say and think in whatever context. Nyamnjoh and Jua (2002) point out that where this happens, the criteria for appointment, retention, and promotion of university managers and lecturers becomes loyalty rather than merit. From the literature, it emerges that African governments seek to make use of universities to justify their policies (Mkandawire, 2011). The argument is that academics have always played a key role in helping to keep politicians in power.

The university system privileges political loyalty than merit such that those appointed or promoted within them may not necessarily have the requisite skills. However, by co-opting academics into the state to control processes within the university, the state fosters intellectual mediocrity. Thus, the concern that if universities are controlled by the state, they simply cease to function may be true (Mackenzie, 1986).

Although the state has instituted control measures discussed in the above section, there are tensions induced by neoliberal globalisation that may make it difficult for the state it to maintain a tight hold on public universities and at the same time ensuring their functionality.

2.14 The Pressure of Globalisation and Neo-liberalism on Public Universities

The term globalisation and the discourses that go with it are highly contentious (Dodds, 2008). There is no universal understanding of what globalisation stands for, thus the term has carried different meanings to different people depending on their orientation. Globalisation involves different spheres of activity and interface, which include the political, economic, cultural, military, migratory, and environmental elements (Yang, 2003). The varied definitions of the term globalisation fall into two categories: those that focus on the increase of movement in people, capital, information and culture and those emphasising the escalation of market mechanisms (Dodds, 2008). In economic terms, globalisation is "a worldwide and systemic process where national economies have become increasingly integrated, interconnected and mutually interdependent" (Smeby &Trondal, 2005: 450). More broadly, Drahos (2017:249) has defined globalisation as the "processes of economic integration in which national markets were becoming a part of regional or global markets, in which multinational firms were dominant players".

Some have equated globalisation with "the universalisation of capitalism" (MacEwan, 1994:6 cited in Yang, 2003:272). These definitions focus on the interconnectedness of people across national borders suggesting that events in one part of the globe will have a worldwide effect on others. Indeed the spread of the dreaded COVID 19 virus attests to this argument. Universities are not only affected by globalisation but are its engines (Castells, 1994). Thus, transformations in the work of universities elsewhere have a bearing on what occurs within the public university system in Zimbabwe. Academics in the third world have to emulate their counterparts in the North in a system of knowledge production in which the North dominates for them to be recognised internationally.

Globalisation itself is not a new phenomenon. What is novel in the current trends is the dominance of neoliberalism (Kiely, 2005) hence the term neoliberal globalisation. Neoliberalism is a political, economic, and social brand of capitalism characterised by a pro-business and limited government ideology (Winslow, 2015). From the neoliberal logic,

governments should leave universities in the hands of the private sector to induce competition and therefore maximise efficiency and profitability. Thus, the work of the university is centred more on meeting the demands of the market rather than those of society. In showing how neoliberal universities seek to serve economic interests in opposition to the public good and emulate the institutional arrangements of corporations, Kenway, Boden and Fahey, (2015:262) accurately characterises them as:

> marketised, privatised, commercialised, franchised, corporatised, managerialised, vocationalised, technologised, surveilled and securitised, and increasingly individualised, infantilised and casualised.

Neoliberalism has meant that universities have to conform to the demands of the market. According to neoliberal economics, politicians have to cut spending on welfare such as health services and universities and therefore provide education on a user-pays basis as well as deregulating universities so that they can compete for clients who in this case are students (Yang, 2003). Apart from the deregulation of private enterprises, other features of neoliberalism include privatisation of assets, goods, and services, and the elimination of the concept of public good (Martinez & Garcia, 2000). Neoliberalism has also meant the expansion of the university to the market including private players such as the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, which established Africa University in 1992.

For academics, neoliberalism has meant that their value to the institution is measured in terms of their research output and grant funding secured (Da Wan, Sirat & Razak, 2015). The profit motive takes the centre stage for universities to survive, Slaughter and Leslie (1997), a trend also characterised as academic capitalism (Slaughter and Rhoades, 2004). Within this context, academic work has undergone transformation as it is measured in terms of metrics. It is audited, with academics becoming more accountable for their work in what Ball (2012) depicts as a culture of performativity. Academic outputs in terms of research generate two-fold benefits to the institution: money and a coveted position in the university ranking regime (Munch, 2014). Within this context, academics are under pressure to publish to meet the ever-changing and increasing demands for promotion and even entry into the university. As Ball (2012:19) accurately states:

"in regimes of performativity experience is nothing, productivity is everything. Last year's efforts are a benchmark for improvement-more publications, more research grants, more students."

In the third world, neoliberalism has been associated with the work of international organisations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The involvement of these organisations has meant that education policy is no longer a national affair but is formed and implemented in a global context (Al' Abri, 2011; Lebeau & Mills, 2008). The measures associated with ESAP which include privatisation and dollarisation of public university education induced a series of student and staff strikes against the government which further tightened its grip by introducing the University of Zimbabwe Amendment Act of 1990 (Chikwanha, 2009; Cheater, 1991). The net effect has been growing tensions surrounding the need to make public universities more compliant to discharge their mandates according to state expectations and the 'new' university which neoliberal globalisation demands. The tensions may make it difficult for public universities in Zimbabwe to claim their space in the global regime of knowledge production.

2.15 Summary

This chapter has shown us how universities developed in Anglophone Africa, and how colonial interests shaped their development. It has also shown how the state, over time, has controlled managerial operations including appointments, grading and promotions in universities. Furthermore, it has shown why the state is preoccupied with controlling public universities. This thesis seeks to understand the sense in which the post-independence state continues to have an oversight role in the management of universities even within the context of neoliberalism. Furthermore, the chapter discusses the pressure induced by neoliberalism and globalisation on academic performance an issue discussed in detail in the next chapter. The thesis seeks to unpack the local level interests that further moderate or amplify state legislation and policies. Finally, it examines the variety of perceptions and responses arising from these dual layers of control. In doing this, the thesis employs an example of two public universities in Zimbabwe figuratively named, the HUC and the TUZ. The next chapter reviews the literature on academic staff appointments, grading and promotions.

<center>**Chapter Three**</center>

<center>**Academic staff appointments and promotions: Insights from literature**</center>

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter examined the development of universities in Anglophone Africa, going back to the inter-war period when universities were propagated. Furthermore, the chapter explored university education post-independence and revealed the pressures that neoliberal globalisation presents for academics and the university. The question about university governance, whether universities operate on an objective basis, has attracted attention from many neoliberal and African scholars. This chapter reviews the literature on the extent to which universities are guided by policy in their practices. In other words, the review seeks to develop an understanding of whether the proclaimed ideology of excellence in university administration is matched by practice concerning academic staff appointments, grading and promotions or whether there is a gap between policy and practice and the basis for such possible variation. In reviewing the literature, I had several doubts and questions concerning the meritocratic ideology of public universities. My experience as an academic gave me the perception that the excellence ethos espoused by public universities did not necessarily match ground reality. I believed that many factors were influencing academic appointments and promotions other than merit.

3.2 Understanding inequalities in academic appointments and promotions

In understanding the inequalities in academic staff appointments, grading and promotions, attention is usually paid to the procedures and criteria applied, with the suspicion that either of the two is biased (Sadiq, Barnes, Price, Gumedze & Morrell, 2018). Universities construct academic promotions and tenure based on achievement in teaching, research, and publication (Nunn & Pillay, 2014). They operate in a global context; hence, African universities have been highly influenced by global regulatory frameworks (Sahlin, Wijkstrom, Dellmuth, Einarsson & Oberg, 2015). Thus, the requirements for academic upward mobility tend to be interrelated. Promotions are mostly linked to pay rise, job satisfaction, and retention, training opportunities and power (Orelus, 2013; Pittman, 2012; Yap & Konrad, 2009; Bihagen & Ohls, 2006).

In the context of Anglophone Africa, professors command authority because they sit in decision-making committees of the university such as the senate, and in some cases, they comprise members of the promotions committee as well as the university council. Because

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these committees are comprised of people who have different political interests, there is a strong need for bracketing to ensure objectivity. To this end, altmetrics, which is an alternative way of measuring academic productivity and performance through blogs, news coverage, and social media may be in the offing in the future to ensure that human influences are minimised (Patel, 2016). Perhaps, this will work the same way video assistant referee (VAR) is now working in football in trying to complement human shortfalls in making decisions.

3.3 Assessment criteria for academic staff appointments and promotions

In the section below, I will discuss the criteria for academic appointments, grading and promotions, which universities employ. These generally include research productivity, teaching, and academic citizenship.

3.3.1 Research productivity

Traditionally, tenure and progression to any grade have always been determined by the research productivity of that staff (Hesli, Lee &Mitchell, 2012; Morley, 2014; Wilson, 2011). In the context of the neoliberal university, more weight is given to research and obtaining grant funding rather than teaching and community service in promotion decision-making (Cleary, Horsfall, Walter., 2013; Olowu, 2012; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). Academics are expected to become entrepreneurs mobilising financial resources for research, publish, and patent their products (Da Wan, Sirat, & Razk, 2015). The ideology has also permeated in African universities (Mamdani, 2007). Thus, academics are valued more for the contributions they make to their universities rather than to their disciplines (Morley, 2005).

The demand for research productivity as criteria for promotion has been aggravated by the global university ranking regime in which universities are hierarchised based on academic publications that confer prestige (Leal, 2018; Blackmore, 2016). Thus, outstanding researchers are prioritised compared to excellent teachers (Raazia, 2018).

The challenge in measuring teaching ability objectively and reliably has made universities to use publications more as a measure of productivity because publications can be objectively measured, as they are objects of knowledge (Liao, 2017). The H-Index is often used, referring to the number of papers one has published and the number of citations of their papers. However, the emphasis on research and publication as a major criterion for promotion has become a subject of debate internationally (Altbach, 2015; Chalmers, 2011).

In many African universities, the publication of research in peer-reviewed journals is a requirement for upward mobility but it is often downplayed because of lack of funding. The emphasis on research as criteria of academic promotion is problematic in Africa as well as in other parts of the developing world. The now universalised publish or perish mentality is not sensitive to the realities of academic life in the developing nations faced with many factors that hinder research. These factors include lack of mentoring, lack of funding and poor remuneration leading to survival on consultancy work, inadequate time for research due to large teaching loads, among other challenges (Mushemeza, 2016; Kilonzo & Magak, 2013).

The peer-reviewed international journals, which, by regulation, some African universities require their academic staff to publish in to be promoted, heighten the "epistemological dominance of the developed countries" and symbolises academic dependency (Omobowale, Sawadogo, Eveline, Sawadodo- Compaore, Ugbem 2013: 15). African scholars have also revealed that most well renowned publishers of academic journals and books are based in western countries (Zeleza & Olukoshi, 2004; Mamdani, 1993). To ensure the quality of publications, universities have now formulated publishing rules to regulate the publishing business. This has given rise to the emphasis on international publishing which is in some way equivalent to western journals (Omobowale, et.al. 2013). It is widely acknowledged that knowledge production in Africa takes place in the context of asymmetrical power relations (Arowosegbe, 2016).

Oyinlola (2013) characterises academic dependence as a skewed structure of knowledge production and transmission in which developed countries exercise dominance over peripheral countries. This practice is exactly what decolonial scholars have regarded as neo-coloniality of power (Quijano, 2007; Mignolo, 2000). Coloniality or neocoloniality of power refers to ways in which social scientists and philosophers in Latin America characterise as "…the phenomenon by which a rigid hierarchy between different knowledge systems exists in the world" (Castro-Gomez, 2007:428). Coloniality thus eliminates the possibility of knowledge produced via Southern published journals that can hardly pass on the so-called 'excellence' range. Besides, it disadvantages African scholars who can hardly get their work published in the internationally acclaimed journals.

In their study on globalisation and scholarly publishing in West Africa, Omobowale, et.al. (2013) established that academics resorted to paying Asian Journals to overcome the difficulties involved in publishing with internationally acclaimed journals, as a way to meet the

requirements of promotions. The pressure to satisfy the requirements for promotion by having quantifiable outputs has led to academic misconduct and malpractices. Such misconduct has manifested itself through publishing in predatory journals, which have escalated since 2010 (Beall, 2013). The term 'Predatory Journals' was coined by Jefferey Bealle, a librarian at the University of Colorado Denver to refer to publishers who abuse the open-access facility and make authors pay to get their articles published without going through the normal peer-review process, in violation of science (Quek & Teo, 2017; Berger & Cirasella, 2015). Predatory open access (OA) journals exist primarily for profit not the dissemination of knowledge and advancement of scholarship (Berger & Cirassela, 2015). Bealle published a list of journals claimed to be predatory and called it Beall's List. However, the list has since been taken offline because of pressure from critics (Kimotho, 2019). Whichever is the case, the notions of predatory or non-predatory journals are contentious ones, because whoever sits as the assessor of journals like everyone else is human thus has personal and political biases.

The majority of academics who publish with these dubious journals are inexperienced researchers seeking promotions often from the developing world (Xia, Harmon, Connolly, Donnelly, Anderson & Howard, 2015). Most academics are attracted by claims to peer review, shorter peer review periods, and the fake metrics advertised by the publishers. In this regard, promotion based on publication in predatory journals is a disaster for both the university and the individual. At the level of the university, the result is a decline in institutional ranking and prestige while at the level of the individual it can produce a quack or 'zombie' professor. Academics who publish in predatory journals are not willing to wait until they have a sufficient and uncontested number of publications before they apply for promotion (Weyland, 2015).

In some cases, academic appointments and promotions guidelines are silent about where academies should publish their work, making it easy for them to take the most productive route. To avoid publishing in predatory journals, universities can monitor publications and establish a recommended list of genuine publishers.

At other times, authors have argued that it is justified to publish in a journal that does the job well but within the quickest time given the emergence of technologies and self-publishing models. They hold this position because the majority of traditional journals may take between one to three years before they publish a simple paper of about 20 pages. These conditions do not only aggravate the debates surrounding the notion of predatory and none-predatory journals but they also complicate the proposition that publications should be used as the basis for

academic staff promotions as they border on the questions of ethics, truth, morality, intention and reality. In the section below, I will turn to a more detailed discussion on teaching as a measure of scholarly work.

3.3.2 Teaching

While literature suggests that more weight is given to publications in consideration of appointments and promotions, other scholars view the core business of the university as research and teaching and believe that these should be given equal emphasis as indicators of scientific achievement and important criteria for promotion (Cloete, Bailey, Pillay, Bunting & Maasen, 2011; Biggs & Tang, 2011; Castells, 2001). To give weight to teaching as criteria for promotion, others have supported a recourse to the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) (Leibowitz & Bozalek, 2018; Vardi & Quin, 2011). SoTL originated from the seminal work of Ernest Boyer on *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate* published in 1990, in which different forms of scholarship are discussed in trying to address the teaching-research predicament (Boyer, 1990). This line of thinking has led to the emergence of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning as relevant to promotion (Chalmers, 2011). At universities that consider teaching, assessment of teaching criteria is problematic because they lack exactitude (Subbaye & Vithal 2016).

Some studies show that teaching is mostly used in evaluating junior lecturers who are often involved in undergraduate teaching while senior academics are evaluated mainly based on research and publications (Parker, 2008). However, in some universities, one could be promoted to full professor via teaching only though with the risk that they become less marketable on the international market (Nunn & Pillay, 2014; MacFarlane, 2011). Across the continents, the more common forms of evaluating teaching for academic promotions are student and peer evaluations because they are considered objective (Subbaye & Vithal, 2015; Cashmore, Cane & Cane, 2013; Lee, Sugimoto, Zhang & Cronin, 2013; Chen & Yeager, 2011; Bayissa & Zewdie, 2010).

Writing in the context of Australian universities where gender inequalities have perseved, Winchester, Lorenzo, Browning and Chesterman (2006) established that promotion policies might create inequalities by excluding others. Altbach (2008) also noted the tensions that exist between the three major functions of the university, research, teaching, and community service make it difficult to assess the work of academics. In a qualitative study on the criteria used to

evaluate teaching and academic promotions at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Subbaye and Vithal (2016) established that the role of teaching in academic promotions was widely accepted because academics had participated in the development of the multi-dimensional and sophisticated criteria through the relevant university platforms. Academics are likely to support policies where they have a buy-in.

Murray (1995) as cited in Subbaye and Vithal (2016) confirms that for teaching to be successfully used in academic promotions, the criteria must be clear, commonly agreed upon and open to all. The observation implies that any top-down measures are unlikely to be acceptable to the academic community, which wants to be part of the overall process of decision-making processes in things that affect them.

3.3.3 Academic citizenship

While there are instruments for measuring teaching and research, there is none for service making it a fertile ground for micropolitics (Macfarlane, 2007). From a study on service and academic citizenship, Macfarlane revealed that power relations shaped internal service. Senior academics engaged in more satisfying and highly valued roles, while the less experienced academics were required to do more demanding, time-consuming, and less prestigious activities that contribute the least to promotion. Other than merit, the university must appoint an individual who is capable of doing "his duty to the university and the academic world as a loyal and responsible academic citizen" (Shils, 1997as cited in MacFarlane, 2007: 262). Academic citizenship or public service is associated with the civic tradition of universities which focused on linking university education with the needs of society in general, and the locality in which it is situated in particular (MacFarlane, 2007).In other contexts, academic citizenship is viewed as community engagement or community service (Glass, Dobemeck & Schwmitzer, 2011). Service may also include the work of faculty, especially within the university (internal service) and service to the community at large (community service). This aspect has largely been ignored in universities throughout the globe (Dempsey, 2010).

Shils (1997) cited in Macfarlane (2007) suggests that in academic appointments and promotions, universities should consider academic citizenship as an integral part apart from intellectual skills because they need individuals with a sense of duty and responsibility to the university and society. In terms of service, the work of the university is sometimes closely related to addressing societal needs including the economy. Some scholars have also

recognised universities as key to socio-economic development through knowledge production and skills for economic development. Thus, the notion of community service of universities is linked to these goals.

3.4 Challenges in using performance indicators

Debates about how scholarship should be measured have raged on for a while (Glass, et.al. 2011). In considering academic appointments and promotions, most universities give more weight to edited books while book chapters occupy a less prestigious position (Cohen, Cohen & King, 2018; Leal, 2018). The common publication template causes challenges because it tends to overvalue some aspects of scholarly work while downplaying others. The templet is also inapplicable to all the disciplines. As Hoffman and Radder (2015: 167) note:

> In the indicator game, a book of four hundred pages published by Cambridge University Press hardly counts…a three-page article does. The specific publication system of …the natural and life sciences has been forced upon the rest of the sciences, even where it does not fit.

The argument serves to show how the promotion game privileges journal articles more than books and reduce all scholarly work to a typed published page. Thus, work that is not in written formats such as a piece of art, a music piece, or architectural work would not earn promotion. The criteria for promotion are thus a hindrance to those academics that are innovative or have produced work of a high socio-economic impact on society (Wilson, 2011). Besides, the emphasis on numbers means that single groundbreaking research that can transform knowledge does not warrant a promotion. In the numbers game, one can thus publish as many articles as possible, which methodologically conforms to the expected standards without necessarily contributing to knowledge. Thus, it is important that apart from quantified publications, promotion criteria should focus on the benefits that research can bring to society and academia. Where publications in ranked journals become the *sine qua non*, possibilities for the appreciation of other scholarly work become limited.

Interpreting academic excellence in terms of quantifiable objects is likely to put pressure on academics to play the numbers game. Academics awaiting promotion are in so much hurry to meet the expected targets. Studies have also shown that participants seek to undercut the system by producing large quantities of published work, which is substandard (Liu, 2017). Thus, Halffman and Radder (2015:167), cynically advise that to further one's profession in the

"publication factory, one does not need to read many papers but to write as many as possible or at least attach one's name to them".

Scholarly work is increasingly judged based on external indicators such as wide readership, often called the Impact Factor, and consequently, publication in high impact factor journals has been prioritised. The impact factor denotes the average number of citations of papers in a specific journal over three years. The impact factor serves time in assessing the quality of academic work instead of evaluating individual articles. Given the North-South binary in knowledge production, academics in the South are likely to cite several western authors because that 'certifies' their work and makes it more credible even if it is published in local journals (Omobowale, et.al. 2013).

The argument is that work based on the citation of indigenous scholars, though well argued, is not salable. Thus, the citation index used for academic promotions in the context of developing countries is likely to bring disaster to the academics. Moreover, some journals demand citations of their papers as a necessary condition for publication suggesting that the impact factor is not always a reliable measure of quality (Vanclay, 2012). Increasing commercialisation of universities is leading academics into producing only what is marketable and acceptable by their universities (Muriisa, 2014).

Bibliometric indicators such as journal impact factor, citation rates, and H-Indexes, though used to measure research excellence, are problematic in that they tend to emphasise quantity and ignore the inherent contributions of the papers (Smith, Crookes & Crookes, 2013). Since bibliometric tools were developed by human beings to help judge articles, they are also prone to human manipulation just like VAR in football.

3.5 Academic staff Appointment practices and procedures

The term practice denotes "repetitive performance in order to become practiced: that is to attain recurrent habitual or routinized accomplishment of particular actions" (Jarzabkowski, 2004:531). Practices are thus normative behaviors that people construct and engage in. Practices place limits on what is socially acceptable or not. Thus, university practices in recruitments and promotions constitute the norms that guide decision-making.

Studies on recruitment points to a variety of practices such as open and closed recruitment procedures. In open recruitment or open competition, posts are open to all citizens and

advertised in newspapers, websites, and other media (Nielsen, 2016). However, even in the so-called open systems, VCs can use their powers to violate procedures (Ali & Brandl, 2018). On the other hand, van Den Brink, et.al. (2010) established that in Holland advertising was only done to create an impression of transparency otherwise applicants were identified before. Morley (2005) further describes appointment and promotions procedures as regimes of power that have both inventive and oppressive potential.

In closed recruitment, jobs are not advertised but target applicants with existing posts within the organisation or those within professional or informal network relationships (Baker, 2010). In some universities, deviation from the open recruitment system is often permissible in exceptional circumstances that are not defined in the protocols (Winchester et al, 2006). In cases where hiring committees may have a preferred candidate, deviations are used. Academic recruitment under closed procedures is determined by who one knows rather than competence (Sadl, 2009). Studies have also shown that blind hiring reduces the chances of bias in all forms (Krause, Rinne & Zimmermann, 2012). Vacancies under closed recruitment procedures tend to be very few because they are tailor-made for specific candidates who meet the requirements (Nielsen, 2016).

Academic in breeding continues to be used as a recruitment strategy amidst criticisms that it is detrimental to the modern university (Horta et al, 2011). Those who support inbreeding justify it on the basis that those with prior socialisation are the best people to employ because they are familiar with the institution's distinctive features and character (Aichinger, Fankhauser & Goodman, 2017). In addition, it is viewed, as a way of minimising risks in hiring, given that at the onset, very little is known about the scholarly potential of an applicant (Roebken, 2010). Others view academic in breeding as a political strategy to create within the system a group that can easily be manipulated (O'Connor, Montes López, O'Hagan, Wolffram, Aye, Chizzola & Tan, 2017). In breeding certainly negates the open and meritocracy ethos that universities seek to project. In other systems that are more transparent, international recruitment of staff is the norm (Baker, 2009).

The nomenclature for academic promotions is largely similar in most countries with candidates being required to have post-graduate qualifications, holding certain relevant experiences that relate to the length of service and scientific publication. Writing in the context of New Zealand, Baker (2010) reveals that recruetment into a permanent post and promotion within a university requires peer assessment of research, publication and teaching. In most universities,

appointment protocols often define who is eligible and how recruitment ought to be done in ways that ensure transparency often starting with an advertisement to attract the best candidates followed by the work of selection committees that employ specified criteria (van den Brink, et.al. 2010). The practices and procedures referred to above assume a transparent and fair process. In the section below, I turn to promotion practices and procedures.

3.6 Academic staff Appointment, promotion practices and procedures

Sadiq, et.al. (2018) reveal that academics apply for promotions in response to an institutional call termed 'ad hominem promotion' as opposed to applications for vacant posts in which outsiders can compete. Conventionally recruitment and promotions within universities are the preserve of academics that set the relevant criteria within their departments and implement it on a committee level (Reynolds, 2006). Such a system of hiring and promotions can be characterised as decentralised and is associated with public university systems with a collegiate way of decision-making.

The value of an academic is increasingly being judged based on specific targets and indicators (Smith et al, 2013). For academics to be promoted, they have to prove themselves worthy of it by producing a dossier defined according to institutional policies and procedures. They also have to provide evidence that they meet specific benchmarks (Parker, 2008). Thus, for one to progress to full professorship, they must display a high degree of expertise in their area of specialisation. They have to submit a dossier, which is first evaluated by peers in the department for onward transmission to higher boards, within either the faculty or the university.

The general trend in universities is that academics work through committees, which is a form of academic self-governance and autonomy. The freedom for departments to hire and promote staff is a key facet of university employment systems (Sanz-Menéndez & Cruz-Castro, 2019). It is also possible that in some countries, appointment and promotion systems in universities will not be the same based on the Acts that established those specific universities.

3.7 Accountability and transparency in academic staff appointments and promotions

In their recruitment and promotion of academic staff, universities should be transparent and accountable to curb corruption and unethical practices. Long and Fox (1995) argue that the value of an academic should be assessed based on universal criteria that connote pre-established impersonal standards as opposed to particularistic standards which may involve the

use of irrelevant classifications such as sex. This means the processes require a lot of transparency and accountability in the way appointments and promotions are conducted. In terms of governance, accountability implies that leaders are answerable to stakeholders for their successes and failures. The term accountability is problematic because there are various conceptions. Edigheji (2006) for example, suggests two forms of accountability in higher education. Accountability in the narrow sense suggests that universities should prove that resources are used for purposes intended. It also implies that universities become liable for their actions and behaviours.

Accountability may also mean university leaders should be able to justify their decisions and actions. Within universities, accountability is managed from within and outside because academics use their power to challenge university administration. Similarly, the state ensures that universities live up to the expectations for them to qualify for a certain recognition and threshold of funding (Altbach, 2005). Da Wan, et.al. (2015) established that in Malaysian universities there was a lack of transparency concerning academic staff appointments, grading and promotions. Openness in the hiring and promotion processes enables outsiders to hold university management to account for their decisions. Universities try to enhance transparency in their procedures for recruitment by advertising vacant posts in the media to provide everyone with an equal chance to apply. Appointment protocols specify the kind of skills and competencies needed for the job.

However, van den Brink et.al, (2010) reveal that decisions regarding academic recruitment and promotions are not publicised, they are kept in files labeled 'confidential', with only the Faculty Dean and others privileged to access them. The assumption here is that universities follow the well-laid down procedures in both appointments and promotions processes. The next section examines the ideology guiding universities in their appointment and promotion practices.

3.8 Meritocracy and academic staff appointments and promotions

Scholars are rather divided regarding whether universities are meritocratic particularly in the Weberian sense of appointments and promotions of university staff based on merit and individual capability. To begin with, some hold that universities are meritocratic. The idea of meritocracy is considered a key principle in the way universities work and inform policies and guidelines for academic staff appointments and promotions (Nielsen, 2016). Recently researchers including (Nielsen, 2016) and Madan (2007) have argued that although universities

present themselves as meritocratic in the Weberian sense, only promoting people based on merit, their practices have deviated from the ideology.

Meritocracy is reflected in fluid "excellence criteria" which prevails in university systems based on which they purport to reward those whose academic achievement is best (van den Brink & Benschop, 2012). In the years that I have served the public university system in Zimbabwe, I have encountered claims to excellence by academics and institutions concerning processes of recruitment and promotions. The claims are also visible from university mission statements found on their websites. This led me to the decision to explore the academic staff appointments, grading and promotions system in state-owned universities intending to understand whether what they state in policy texts and websites necessarily transpires on the ground.

Parhizgar and Parhizgar (2007) argue that universities are meritocracies in the sense that academics are intellectual experts, recognised and rewarded based on their societal contributions. They further add that the correlation between the high level of intellectual characteristics and hard work, skill, and success is so convincing that we cannot conceive of our academic freedom without it. Indeed, some see this practice of shrugging off state influence in the management of universities as part of university autonomy. For example, Hrubos (2011: 348) notes that the university must be free "of all political, economic, and ideological powers" for it to perform its functions of creating and disseminating knowledge. Mistree (2015) proposes two basic conditions under which meritocracy thrives: where outside actors do not interfere with the recruitment and promotion processes and where an institutional culture of merit exists.

Li and Gore (2018) reveal that meritocracy denotes a society in which individual advancement is based on capability instead of class, family origin, wealth, right of the firstborn, or social and political affiliation. According to Allen (2011), meritocracy provides a fair unequal distribution of rewards. Meritocracy is anchored on the strength that it seeks to measure individual performance, indiscriminate of social and biological categories (Deem, 2009). Thus, the worldwide norm stipulates university appointments and promotions based on merit (Azman, Che Omar, Yunus & Zain, 2016). Some studies demonstrate that merit is an essential element in public universities because it is related to issues of accountability and transparency (Montes Lo´pez & O'Connor, 2018). The appointment and promotion of academic staff based on merit may significantly contribute to the overall image, excellence and effectiveness of an institution.

In general, faculty performance is closely related to its merit-based criterion in appointments and promotions (Hanley & Forkenbrock, 2006). The quality of a university can also be judged by the quality of its faculty. Respect for the process involved in academic staff appointments and promotions indicate, to a large degree, the respect of the rule of law by the university (Lawrence, 2013). The rhetoric of excellence, common in many universities also refers to merit and makes claims about quality (Readings, 1996). Quality should be seen in the caliber of academic staff and students hired. The pursuit of institutional prestige or reputation is the primary goal of a university, achieved through its secondary objective of attracting and retaining quality academics (Liao, 2017).

It is common within universities that, the hiring and promotion of academic staff is based on universal and impersonal criteria (Baker, 2010). The literature demonstrates the importance of a meritocratic system of appointment because it engenders objectivity, equality, and democracy. By ensuring the maintenance of professional standards in recruitment, an organisation will effectively implement policies that satisfy public interests (Olavarria-Gambi & Dockendorff, 2016). For Salmi (2009), there is a relation between university governance and the concentration of talent within a university. Thus, favourable governmental structures, create enabling regulatory frameworks, promotes academic freedom and strategic leadership, which advances excellence. Meritocracy in the context of a university means that everyone has an equal opportunity to advance and acquire rewards based on individual talent and or merit. This is the understanding embedded in academic staff appointments and promotions under the bureaucratic model of the university discussed below.

3.8.1 Bureaucratic model of academic appointments and promotions

The idea that universities must promote and appoint staff based on merit has been justified in the previous section. Additionally, Weber (1946) and Cohen and Brawer (2003) argue that it is based on meritocracy that the university can deliver on its mandate to transform society. Within the meritocracy discourse, emerges the issues of models such as the bureaucratic model. Berger (2002) describes the bureaucratic dimension of organisational model as one that emphasises rationality in the way decisions are made within the organisation. Weber (1946) defines bureaucracy as organizations with a pyramidal structure of authority, which utilises the enforcement of universal and impersonal rules to maintain that structure or authority and which emphasises the nondiscretionary aspects of administration.

The bureaucratic model of the university points to the existence of an array of bureaucratic elements within the university, which makes it possible to apply the Weberian model. The term bureaucracy, therefore, refers to a method of public administration (Bobbio, 1992 as cited in de Pinho & Sacramento, 2015). Baldridge (1971:7) points to the following arrangements within the university as indicative of bureaucracy: being created and regulated by the state; a hierarchical power structure, employees hired and promoted based on technical qualifications and appointed rather than elected. Baldridge adds other features such as; academics as bureaucrats the same way as Deans and VCs, following specific communication channels, the existence of bureaucratic authority relations and management guided by rules, policies, and procedures, clear division of labour, impartiality and decision-making processes that are bureaucratic. These attributes are akin to the bureaucratic organizations which African countries inherited (Ayee, 2012). The bureaucratic structure seeks to inhibit the existence of personal relationships that could result in nepotism and favouritism. In the bureaucratic model, academic staff appointments and promotions should be guided by the stipulated rules and procedures, with the best candidates selected using objective and universal criteria (Montes López, & O'connor, 2018). This means in Weberian bureaucracies, personnel recruitment and selection have to be merit based. Impersonality is a key element of bureaucracy because that ensures equal treatment of officials and insulation from corruption, nepotism and patronage (Ajibade & Ibietan, 2016). Impersonality is thus important because it fosters objectivity and universality. Similarly, the Weberian bureaucratic system that Zimbabwe inherited contained key features such as departmentalism, hierarchy of authority, transparent system of appointment, and merit-based promotions and subjection to impersonal rules (Makumbe, 1994).

Universities are hierarchical in their organisation, with a top-down administrative structure and as such are bureaucratic organizations according to the Weberian model. Hierarchy involves a clear division of labour, strict and standardised discipline, and control over human resources to prevent arbitrary decision-making by bosses (Höpfl, 2006). However, Babyesiza (2015) reveals that hierarchy in Ethiopian universities has not prohibited arbitrariness.

Management scholars argue that bureaucracy and its rules help to protect society from unethical behaviour and haphazard use of power and promote the rule of law (Hanlon, 2016). Contrary to this, Ikeanyibe (2017) argues that bureaucratic principles such as impersonality, universality, merit, and compliance are traits that are missing among Africa's public administrators. The

bureaucratic model of the university hence assumes that all the members of an organisation will follow the rules they have internalised and work towards the achievement of organisational goals. In the section below, I will examine some traditions that suggest a conflicting perspective.

3.9 Anti-meritocratic traditions and discourses

This group of scholars refutes the idea that universities are meritocratic. Those who see the internal governance of the university as political criticise the bureaucratic model on the basis that it does not reveal the informal structures of the university, the "organisational underworld" or the "micropolitics of organisations" (Hoyle, 1982: 87). Furthermore, bureaucracy has been criticised for proving an over-simplistic view of processes and its failure to acknowledge tensions that prevail within universities when juxtaposed with the political model proposed by Baldridge (1971). In this model, an array of campus actions including academic staff appointments and promotions are described as political acts. Unlike the micropolitical approach, the bureaucratic model does not explain the daily-lived experiences of organisational members.

The political model provides major insights for the study because concepts such as power and the idea of power relations as influencing processes within institutions are important. van den Brink, et.al. (2010) warn that the process of academic recruitment is not merely a technical exercise aimed at selecting the excellent candidate but it is also a political endeavour characterised by negotiations between different actors and embedded in power relations. Thus, micropolitics implies that stipulated guidelines are just there for window-dressing. This assumption refutes the idea that universities are meritocratic in practice. It blames political elements within university governance. The political model leads to a conceptualisation of organisational decision-making processes that are not guided by rules (Pusser, 2003).

Beyond the bureaucratic and political models, organisational literature argues that universities tend to borrow elements from different models such that they are prone to make decisions in a decentralised manner because they are loosely held organizations (Weick, 1976). Weick used the conception of a loosely coupled system to challenge the linear, over-rational understanding of universities (Mignot-Gerard, 2003). Tight coupling assumes that individuals show behaviours consistent with policy stipulations and organisational goals and expectations. It would thus mean that university leadership should appoint and promote members on a

meritocratic basis as expected. Weick further indicates that subsystems in universities are loosely tied together and not tightly as in bureaucracy models.

Loose coupling is depicted by the academic freedom staff have in their classrooms and other civil liberties, activities, and units (Small, 2017). Universities can therefore not be managed in a top-down fashion as is assumed in the bureaucratic models since they work with and through committees, boards and unions (Bleiklie, Michelsen. Krücken, & Frølich, 2017). Furthermore, March and Simon (1958) observe that despite the existence of policies and goals, decision-making processes are determined by the interests of members within the organisation in addition to other practical considerations.

Universities are also seen as organised anarchies (Cohen, March, Olsen, 1972) which means they do not follow a logical way of doing things. Their practices are circumstantial and are not clearly understood by members. This dispels the top-down characterisation of university systems and imply that recruitment and promotions are not managed rationally. Thus, Birnbaun (1988) argues that universities are 'cybernetic organisations' which do not need anybody to coordinate them or to enforce rules.

The discourse of meritocracy has been continuously questioned on the basis that academic fields cannot be purely meritocratic. The rhetoric of excellence and merit, though common in most universities, can be described as a rationalised myth (Nielsen, 2016). Besides, merit and achievement are in direct opposition to inborn privileges or those emanating from societal structure. Thus, merit as an ideology ignores the many factors that hinder the realisation of the very principles it seeks to uphold (Madan, 2007). Moreover, merit is problematic because it focuses on an individual's actions rather than looking at individuals in the context of their society from which they can draw resources at their disposal. This means the discourses on meritocracy make claims about technical efficiencies, which may not be real and promise equality whereby the best candidates are selected from a pool, which includes the entire population.

There is an illusion that processes of academic staff appointments, grading and promotions are done in an unbiased manner typical of the character of the school, which projects a liberal identity. As Madan (2007) notes, to question merit is to question the justice involved in academic staff recruitment and promotions. Meritocracy has also been criticised for

downplaying the influence of power relations in determining merit and emphasising individual capabilities as if the individual operates in a vacuum (Śliwa &Johansson, 2014). This means there are many anti-meritocratic practices, which play themselves out in processes of academic appointments, and promotions as some studies have shown.

For example, gender studies have shown how women academics are underrepresented and how their chances of promotion to senior positions are constrained (Morley, 2014; Hesli, et al, 2012). Subbaye and Vithal (2017) describe the glass ceiling as the underrepresentation of women in the most senior positions within universities. Studies have shown that social identity serves as a barrier to academic appointment, tenure, or promotion to senior positions (Bhopal & Chapman, 2019; Jackson, 2008). Scholars have also examined class differences in both recruitment and promotions. In such cases, promotion or recruitment processes become a mechanism of exclusion or inclusion. The poor publication profiles of successful candidates compared to those of unsuccessful candidates is evidence of the anti-meritocratic nature of the recruitment and promotion systems (Moss, 2012). Accusations of prejudice and bias in academic promotions have attracted public attention (Sadiq, et.al. 2018).

Menez et al (2008) argue that universities do not strictly follow the guidelines for academic promotions without bias. Many problems with the implementation of the hiring and promotion policies can lead to the distortion of meritocracy. Thus, academic staff appointments, grading and promotions are not simplistic; they are riddled with tensions (O'Meara, 2015 & Parker, 2008).

Precisely, larger micropolitical factors militate against the achievement of meritocracy in the hiring and promotion of academics (Morley, 2006). Social practices such as nepotism, gender, sexism, racism, patronage, politics, and class militate against the achievement of meritocracy. This means formally established rules, policies, and transparency processes may become useless when actors tactically try to protect their interests and biases. My argument is consistent with Meyer and Rowan's (1977) view that organisational structures, procedures, and practices function as an overriding myth designed to be rituals and ceremonies. Simply put, guidelines and policies are adopted symbolically to gain legitimacy but cannot guarantee realisation of the intention. Scholarly literature within neo-institutionalism has shown that objective and merit-based systems of evaluating academics produce inequalities rather than alleviate those (Knights & Richards, 2003). This is what Castilla and Benard (2010) have described as the

paradox of meritocracy. This paradox and dilemmas have led me into examining the micropolitics of academic staff appointments and promotions as shown in the coming section.

3.10 Micropolitics of academic staff appointments, grading and promotions

For academics, promotions are very significant for career progression while landing a university job is not only prestigious but ensures stable employment. Thus, van Den Brink (2011) observes that there are different practices on appointments, grading and promotions that drive the process.

van Den Brink points to a huge dissonance between what is stated in the policies and what takes place in the universities. Micropolitical factors indicate that the whole system is not straightforward, objective, and neutral as political interests of great magnitude drive it. Micropolitics relate to the informal structure of the university, which is often obscured and only becomes visible through analysing the relationships, daily practices, and the behaviours of the agents (Ball, 2012). Scholars extensively argue that informal practices adopted in employment, do contribute to the pollution of the meritocratic processes. From various literature, several themes highlight micropolitical factors and strategies that university leaders use during appointments, grading and promotions processes as discussed in the sections below.

3.10.1 Social networks

Social networks play an important role in human relations. Networks provide resources, information, and knowledge for job opportunities and other developments within the organizations or outside them. Social capital theorists argue that information and knowledge about university norms, expectations, access to gatekeepers, evaluation criteria, and emotional support are important resources that are less available to women than men are because they have fewer networks (Hesli, et.al. 2012; Beckert, 2009).

On the other hand, Ibarra, Carter and Silva (2010) establish that although meeting the relevant criteria was necessary, it was important for one to have a sponsor who could advocate for their appointment. Similarly, in Spain and Ireland (Montes López & O'cconor, 2018) found out that the work of sponsors who sat on promotion boards could become important social networks. Social networks, also gendered, provided spaces for important promotion decisions. The promotion processes can be easily rigged because candidates who are well networked can easily get their work cited by many scholars, thus, increasing their chances. Academics with

social networks can also use committee members within their networks to influence decisions. Some studies have however shown that academics who belong to ethnic minority groups often lack relevant networks and social capital to facilitate promotions (Bhopal, 2016).

Patronage is an important resource in academic staff appointments, grading and promotions because patrons provide opportunities through their networks for the promotion of junior academics. Women have fewer or no patronage networks, which makes their promotion difficult (Carvalho & Santiago, 2010). Other scholars have demonstrated that both genders exploit their networks equally (Sabatier, 2010). Selection committees in universities often prefer to select candidates whom they know.

In addition to social networks, academics are also involved in professional networks, which are both internal and external. Internal professional networks include committees and co-authorship while external networks include competence centres such as research groups in various disciplines that influence career progression (Schoen, Rost & Seidl, 2018). The existence of formal and informal networks indicates that there are important pre-selection processes that determine academic staff appointments, grading and promotions, which can corrupt the processes (Nielsen, 2016).

3.10.2 Modifying the rules to suit favoured candidates

Studies have shown that academics are dissatisfied about consistency in the application of criteria for appointments and promotion (Azman et.al, 2012). At the department or faculty level, some people may modify rules to accommodate their preferred candidate (Ridgeway, 2011). The formal and seemingly objective system of recruitment and promotion can be modified even at the interview level to suit a particular candidate (García--Izquierdo, Moscoso, & Villagrasa, 2012). Thus, the many standards, guiding principles of appointment protocols can be viewed as mere blueprints. The tight and superficially democratic appointment procedures are not surprising because right from its inception, the university has been interested in protecting its reputation.

3.10.3 Academic criteria as socially constructed

Research by van den Brink and Benschop (2012) reveals that the excellence criteria used to judge academic performance is never objective but a mere social construct. Actors involved in

selection make use of commonly agreed principles and common sense to decide on the applicants' profiles (de Larquier & Marchal, 2016).

The social construction of appointment and promotions of criteria indicate that university leaders do not necessarily walk the talk but "… are mere creators and representatives of institutional talk…" (Riegraf & Weber, 2017: 100). In some cases, candidates to be appointed or promoted also have to be politically connected within and outside the university. Thus, a system that allows for non-adherence to procedures and policies to accommodate exceptional cases may provide spaces for exploitation. Ali and Barndl (2018) established that the experts involved could disregard rules to protect their interests.

Darity, Price and Sharpe (2010) have shown that minority ethnic groups fall off the competition for academic promotion well before their applications are received. They are hardly awarded research grants that can enable them to publish in refereed journals, a necessary qualifier for promotions. Omobowale, et.al. (2013) also established that the very notion of international journal as ensuring the credibility of publications was socially constructed and in itself exclusionary of the marginalised groups.

3.10.4 Influence of departmental politics

Studies reveal that departmental politics play a crucial role in academic recruitment and promotion (Faria, Paulo, Loureiro, Franklin, Mixon, & Adolfo, 2016). Departmental politics include a combination of factors such as internal squabbles and sabotage, ganging up, and networks.

Scholars also argue that minority groups already in the faculty, given the power to influence decisions, could choose to take their fellow minority. On publications, Roebken (2010) argues it is difficult for departments to assess new entrants' scholarly potential because there is very little evidence to demonstrate it. Recruiters prefer to select candidates who are similar to them in terms of some attributes (Roebken, 2010). This tendency described as homosociality influences academic recruitment. The tendency towards homosociality indicates that those involved in recruitment may be biased towards people who are like them suggesting that set criteria may not be the determining factor. Thus, it has been argued that getting promoted is a

complicated process which does not only require one to argue his/her case but also needs the support of key others.

3.10.5 Appointment and promotion protocols not innocent

Appointment and promotions policies may be misleading in that they communicate to the reader, what the system is not. Rigorous studies on these have revealed that the policies are designed to give the impression that the system is transparent, systematic, impartial and serious when in fact they are ideological (Englander& Uzuner-Smith, 2015). Thus, protocols are not innocent and necessarily designed for the benefit of those on whom they are used.

Appointments, grading and promotions terms do not usually accommodate both the denotative and connotative meanings of the criteria such as research, teaching and service commonly used in promotions, which presents problems for professions where teaching may involve mentoring, consultancy work, or one to one collaborations, and where all the three aspects are intertwined rather than individualised (Varpio, Onge & Young, 2016). Besides, recruitment and promotion committees often use the denotative or dictionary meaning of teaching, research, and service, which ignores the denotative meaning, which is the culturally specific, individual, and emotional associations that nuance a word's meaning.

The argument suggests that not all the work of academics may pass as promotion worthy when words are subjected to the dictionary meaning. It is common that in assessing academic outputs, evaluators refer to quality, which is a contested term in university education (Akareem & Hossain, 2016). Harvey and Green (2000) reveal that the concept of quality in university education is relative and not value-free such that what it means may depend on the individual user. Barnett (1994) characterises the quality debate in university education as a power struggle in which each stakeholder compete to get their voice heard. Thus, the lack of universal meanings creates loopholes that university leaders can exploit and develop new rules, or modify the existing ones to protect their protégés and exclude those who are not. The point suggests that in implementing the academic staff appointments, grading and promotions policies, university managers may not necessarily deviate from policy but they can exploit the loopholes that the system provides.

While scholars have proved the ambiguities in the promotion criteria, some scholars think that these are functional, that too explicit guidelines are problematic for the institution, and university leadership should be left with the leeway to make the final decisions in the best

interest of the institution (Leal, 2018). However as already noted in section 3.9, much of the literature questions this rationalist view of organizations.

3.10.6 The composition of appointment and promotion committees

A university committee involved in the appointment and promotion of staff can be strategically constituted. Research has shown that in cases where election rather than expertise determine the criteria in building up the selection committees, they may be poorly equipped to assess candidates (Moss, 2012). Robust research on faculty hiring has shown that applicants' chances of securing interviews are influenced by none academic criteria such as race and citizenship (List, 2001). Nyamnjoh, Nkwi and Konnings (2012) reveal that in African universities, the excellence criteria that universities use to decide on promotions are generally ignored.

Departmental committees have also been accused of being too lenient and thus letting garbage go through (Weyland, 2015). Studies have shown that sometimes selection boards are made up of people who are familiar with each other and those whose decisions university leadership is capable of controlling (Grummell, Devine & Lynch, 2009). Conversely, members defined as 'problematic' can be excluded from decision-making positions. African universities have few professors due to a massive brain drain Mushemeza (2016), thus, selection boards can be made up of academics who lack the relevant qualifications and expertise required to evaluate members seeking to be promoted to those grades. This is the case with Zimbabwe, with a severe brain drain of senior academics as acknowledged in Chapter 1 Section 1.2.

The formal and informal systems in which rules are circumvented (Osipian, 2012) highlight that university leadership can manipulate appointments, grading and promotions systems to serve their purposes. Furthermore, it shows that universities as institutions are highly political as discussed below.

3.11 The inherently political nature of universities and their leadership

There has been a growing interest among higher education researchers in what might be termed the politics of higher education with an emphasis on the relationship between state policies and processes and educational outcomes (McLendon, 2003). The intersection between politics and university education is generally underexplored (Harnisch, 2016). For example, Pusser (2003) emphasised the need to understand the role of university education from a state context. Pusser

views universities as political and socio-economic entities that need a holistic approach in seeking to understand them.

Politics is inseparable from organisational life and society in general (Flessa, 2009; Lindle, 1999). Thus, universities are political actors and within them are individual actors or "policy entrepreneurs" (Kauko, 2013: 195). Politics are decisions about "who gets what, when, and how" (Armstrong, et.al. 2013: 151). The traditional conception of politics in public organizations has tended to view politicians as influential figures who bulldoze management decisions and actions to their advantage. What makes it difficult to resolve the university-politics continuum is that on one side, universities are expected to be apolitical while on the other hand, they are too autonomous and enjoy academic freedom (Altbach, 2001). At the same time as is the case with most of Africa, they are state organs and depend on subventions from the government.

Although universities must champion change, political powers make it difficult for them to exercise their mandates. This gets worse in countries where senior managers are political appointees as is the case with Zimbabwe. Some studies show that political interference has often been a source of frustration for academics because changes in political leadership also mean change in the whole university system and its policies (Da Wan, et.al. 2015).

Other than the bigger politics, universities are confronted with multiple stakeholders with vested interest. As Altbach (1987: 59) aptly puts it, "too many vested interests prefer a weak, politicised and factionalised university to an independent and autonomous institution". Besides, university leaders also have their interests to protect. Thus, Mintzberg (1983) classifies all people involved in steering organizations as micropoliticians. The academic leadership plays political games in the universities, with the Dean aiming to become the PVC, and the PVC to become VC while the VC is eager to build legacies and be promoted to bigger posts, these political aspirations influence policy implementation. Thus, in deciding candidates for appointments and promotions, the political interests of leadership are taken on board. Academics, on the other hand, use political strategies in response to the behaviour, actions, and decisions of university leadership and in the end, what suffers is the objectivity and meritocracy of the entire appointments, grading and promotions process.

The discussion above has revealed that universities operate within political trajectories, apart from the bigger politics, micropolitics plays a significant role. Others yet view politics as

inseparable and a blessing in disguise or necessary because isolating politics is like isolating salt from sand (Bacharach & Lawler, 1998). The whole process of academic staff appointments, grading and appointments is by its very nature political. The coming section examines the policy processes and what they imply for decision making by university leadership.

3.12 Conceptualising policy and policy processes: implications for managerial decision-making

In policy implementation, power is often ignored especially in Third World countries, although it influences the way policies are implemented and their outcomes (Erasmus & Gilson, 2008). In the section below, the chapter turns to policy processes, from the perspective of power, which helps in understanding the implementation of the academic appointment, grading, and promotion system by those in power. However good they may, policies serve no purposes if they are not well implemented.

In this thesis, policy implementation denotes the ability to fulfill the conditions as specified in a policy. It argues that the role of university managers and politicians is important in policy implementation. Where university leadership implements policies to satisfy their interests, there is a deviation. In the section below, I examine different approaches to policy and policy implementation processes.

3.12.1 Top-down approaches

This section briefly sketches the different approaches to policy processes. The study is against using the traditional/rationalist state centred conceptions to policy-making which gives rise to what Nudzor (2009) characterises as the traditional problem-solving conceptions of policy. Within this frame, policy is an occurrence or a guide, concerned essentially with the act of finding solutions to problems. Nudzor further indicates that policy is some kind of a manuscript developed by policy-makers, which policy actors must follow to address an identified problem.

 Definitions associated with the rationalist or top-down approaches view policy as "standardisation of action and articulation of practice" or simply "what governments decide to do" (Colebatch, 2002:13). It also means whatever governments choose to do or not do (Dye,

1972) or "what governments do" (Bacchi, 2000: 48). Burt (1992) argues that policy could also include that which government refuses to do. Policy is also a statement of intent and goals, a "plan of action", "a goal-directed course of action to resolve a problem" (Harman, 1984: 13). The perception is that those in power, located at the top of the organisational hierarchy have goals to achieve, thus implementation involves simply tasking those below with plans to achieve the desired objectives (Erasmus & Gilson, 2008).

Top-down approaches to policy processes are associated with the work of (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1984; Sabatier & Mazmanien, 1979). From the rationalist approach, policy processes are centred on the locus of power, the state that has the prerogative to make policies (Dale, 1989). The rationalist approach views policy implementation as linear and following distinct stages. For this group of scholars, policy follows the following sequence: agenda setting, policy formulation, implementation, feedback, and evaluation (Howlett, Ramesh & Pel, 2009). In this view, the policy process is cyclical. The context of formulation is seen as separate from that of implementation, and it focuses on those in power, which is a major weakness given that policy processes are usually interactive.

The rationalist approach is accused of "failing to capture the messiness of policy making and implementation" (Trowler, 2002:2). In university education, Cerych and Sabatier (1986) who in their seminal work adopted a top-down perspective conducted the study of policy implementation. The first wave of policy implementation studies by Pressman and Wildavsky (1984) revealed that policy intentions do not always translate into the expected outcomes no matter how good a policy may be. Because policy by its very nature is vague and ambiguous, it is always open to interpretation and reinterpretation (Ball and Bowe, 1992). Thus, those in positions of power such as politicians and VCs are more placed to make their interpretations and reinterpretations of policies.

3.12.2 Bottom-up approaches

In contrast to the rationalist view, there are bottom-up approaches, which marked the second generation of policy implementation studies. These emphasise the need to study the actions of those affected and involved in policy implementation called street-level bureaucrats or frontline workers (Lipsky, 1980). Street level bureaucrats are the actors that implement policy. In this study, VCs are as street-level bureaucrats who use their discretion in implementing the appointments, grading and promotions ordinance. Street level bureaucrats can define, sift, and

interpret institutional policies in the process of implementation. In this way, they create policies of their own using their power (Lipsky, 1980).

Elmore (1978) focused on policy processes as organisational dynamics reflective of inter and intra-organizational behaviour. Bottom-up approaches opened opportunities for further research in policy implementation and provided a way of understanding the gap between policy intentions and practice. Lipsky (1980) was criticised by top-down theorists for inhibiting policy goals. Street-level bureaucrats have the freedom and power to adjust policy to suit specific needs (Barret, 2004). Bottom-up approaches focus on the actors at the end of the implementation cycle and explore their activities, and objectives (Gornitzka, Kogan, & Amaral, 2005).

Participants in this study are agents who can interpret and produce policies within the university as opposed to passive recipients of policy texts received from government and university administration. However, the study does not; presuppose that the power of higher-level authorities is ignored, as is the assumption in bottom-up approaches.

3.12.3 Political approach

The political approach to policy differs from other approaches. A political approach to policy processes is taken by critical policy sociologists (Ball, 2006, 1994; Trowler, 2002; Codd, 1988) who have been examining the importance of people as social actors in policy processes. This approach to policy conceives policy as an exercise of power and control representing the values and interests of influential social groups (Prunty, 1984). Such an understanding is critical of the rational approach to policy processes with its pre-supposition that policy implementation is only a matter of automatically following a fixed policy text and putting legislation into practice (Bowe & Ball, 1992:12). The political approach views policy as made and remodelled during the process of implementation. Thus, definitions emanating from this perception do not focus on some authority as responsible for policy making such as government or university administration.

Policy is both text and discourse (Ball, 2015). Policy as text denotes the way policies are written and construed. This conception of policy means that those implementing policies can exercise their agency thus influencing their development and interpretation. Ball (1994: 19) notes that "there is creative social action, not robotic activity", suggesting that those who are involved in policy implementation such as VCs are meaning-making beings who interpret policies for their

interests. According to Erasmus and Gilson (2008), all those involved in implementing policy construct language using their meaning-making power and in the process yield new policies. The decoding of policy texts results in a multiplicity of interpretations influenced by contexts, history, and values which shape their interpretations (Bell & Stevenson, 2006).

From the political approach, policy is made and remade by those involved in implementing it. This study adopts the understanding that university policies are remade in the process of implementation. University administrators are not the only actors privileged with making policies, rather managers and academics have the power to shape policies.

From the political perspective, policy is not just evident in documents such as acts of parliament or ministerial reports, but is articulated through different mediums such as the production of text and rhetoric, national policies in universities, in classrooms and so forth (Trowler, 2002). Reynolds and Saunders (1987), reveal that in universities, all stakeholders interpret and respond to policy differently.

As Ball (2006: 47) argues, policies do not enter "a social or institutional vacuum," but rather go into a terrain where there are existing power relations that makes their articulation and responses complicated. The VCs charged with policy implementation possess power that they can use in their favour as is noted in Chapter 7. As a result, an understanding of policy text alone without the meanings actors attach to their actions would be inadequate. Different parties within universities continuously make, remake, and modify policies disputing the myth that policy is an object or is stagnant.

The section above has provided a detailed understanding of policy and policy processes. The major argument is that policies are not implemented linearly as there are many mediating factors. Thus, the gap between stated policies and institutional (internal) practices is expected since actors use their understanding.

3.13 Summary

The objective of this thesis is to understand how policies relating to academic staff appointments, grading and promotions are implemented together with the forms of responses that this generate from the employees. The chapter has exposed the criteria and procedures used for academic staff appointments and promotions. It has examined the assumptions underlying academic staff appointments, grading and promotions and the associated

discourses. Furthermore, it has also shown that micro-level politics play a big role in appointments and promotions processes. The chapter also presents conceptions of policy that are likely to inform policy implementers and recipients. In doing this, the study is guided by theoretical lenses, which emphasise interests and power at various scales. Thus, the next chapter presents the theoretical framework guiding the study.

Chapter Four

Theoretical Framework

4.1 Introduction

A theoretical framework often guides scholarly writing. Theories are constructed to analyse and explain how things work and why. LeCompte and Preissle (1993) define a theoretical framework as an assortment of interrelated concepts that can be used to direct research with the purpose of forecasting and explaining the results. The theoretical framework helps the researcher by providing a comprehensive scope within which to think about the research, conceptualise the problem, and a way of linking ideas to data so that deeper connections can be established. Although some theorists make no distinction between theoretical and conceptual framework, Ravitch and Riggan (2016) points out that a theoretical framework must be based on existing established and published theories. For these scholars, a conceptual framework justifies why the study is important and why the means suggested to study it are rigorous. Although Ravitch and Riggan treat the two as different, some scholars treat them as similar (Merriam and Tisdell, 2015). Following from LeCompte and Preissle's (1993) definition of a theoretical framework, the critical case study is grounded on micropolitical theory (Ball, 1987; Blase, 1991) and Foucault's radical reconceptualisation of the concept "power" and theory of discourse. I used the theories as lenses through which to understand how institutional managers implement policies related to academic staff appointments, grading, and promotions within public universities and how academics respond. Broadly, Foucault's alternative concept of power echoes an inward-looking individualist 'politics,' an idea that is attached to micropolitics (Gilliam, 2017). On the other hand, micropolitics goes beyond individual politics to focus on a range of societal relations, also echoed in Foucault's concept of power and discourse.

> Micropolitics is neither politics in miniature nor single actors in contrast to the political whole. Instead, this notion circumscribes a multiplicity of different flows, which traverse individuals as well as society as a whole (Krause and Rölli, 2008: 243).

From the above definition, actors within the university and the state can act micropolitically to achieve their interests. Foucault's concept of power is very much in line with the micropolitical perspective within which power produces varying effects and protects the interests of those who exercise it (Morley, 2006).

4.2 Choice of the theoretical framework

Initially, I had considered using the concept of power in orthodox Marxist theory because my first impression was that processes within public universities are in the final instance economically determined. I reasoned that there are real economic interests, mediated by the state on behalf of the dominant class. Thus, the Marxist conception of power as state centred proved appealing. However, from my preliminary experience with academic staff appointments, grading and promotions and as one who had come to believe in the relative autonomy of the state, it dawned on me that the Marxian approach did not seem to promise mileage. Precisely because I could see power at work at the local level and power that in some sense contradicted the state. I felt that this theory could not deal with the fluidity and nature of power in micro-context. I needed a theory that could explain how people dynamically use power and for reasons far beyond economics. Eventually, I settled for Micropolitical Theory combined with elements of Foucault's concept of power, which encompasses resistance, together with Foucault's theory of discourse as the best alternative, which could provide a clear understanding of processes regarding academic staff appointments grading, and promotions in public universities. The discourses of interest were those that established the reasons why certain individuals warranted promotion while others did not and the justifications provided by the state as the basis for interfering in the business of public universities.

I found the two approaches to be ideal because of their emphasis on how individuals and groups use power to further and protect their interests and the effects thereof. Unlike classical and Weberian organisational theory, which holds that individuals make decisions that advance the interests of the organisation and its policy objectives, (Taylor, 2004 &Weber, 1947), the micropolitical approach recognises that collective interests do not always guide the actions and decisions of organisational members. Extant literature reviewed in Chapter 3 has shown that university management and individuals within departments can exercise their power in influencing academic staff appointments, grading and promotions indiscriminate of what protocols stipulate. These revelations also justified the theoretical framework that emphasises power in its multiple dimensions and uses at both macro and micro levels. In addition, Micropolitical theory helped me to understand how external influences in the form of the state (macropolitics) worked to influence micro-actions within the universities. Like micropolitical theorists, Michel Foucault clearly articulates the sources of power and how it is exercised in

small-scale daily activities. Foucault also recounts how discourse exposes power and limit other possibilities. In this chapter, I discuss five elements of Foucault's notion of power, which I consider important in providing deep insights into the relationship between power and how academic staff appointments grading and promotions are managed in public universities. These power constructs include the idea that power is not always negative; power is ubiquitous; power cannot be eradicated, power is not monopolised by the powerful and always provokes resistance; and Foucault's theory of discourse in relation to power (James, 2018).

Micropolitical theory together with Foucault's radical reconceptualisation of power and theory of discourse helped me to understand the state of affairs in the two public universities and to see things more clearly as they both focus on how power is exercised at a micro-level to achieve particular objectives. The micropolitical theory goes further to show how the micro and macro intersect. In micropolitical theory, power is an important resource which actors use to achieve their ends. Similarly, Michel Foucault (discussed in section, 4.5) analyses the exercise of power at a micro-level and its impacts on those over whom power is deployed. This shared commonality with micropolitical theory makes it relevant to use in understanding the processes of academic staff appointments, grading and promotions within public universities in Zimbabwe. In the section below, I discuss debates and discourses of power to provide a clear understanding of power, which is often a disputed concept before I present the theoretical framework for the study.

4.3 Debates and discourses of power

Social Scientists view power as a highly contested concept such that those seeking to understand it have to work with multiple dimensions and interpretations depending on the context (Cohen, 2015). While some social theorists focus on power as relational thus multi-dimensional such that one could speak in terms of its "scope, domain, weight, base, means, costs, time and place" (Baldwin, 2016:50), others regard it as a property of actors (van der Eijk, 2018). The concept of power is inseparably and entangled with the concept of interests (Guzzini, 2013; Lukes, 2007) quite evident in Lukes's definition of power. Lukes (2005:37) defines power as "A exercises power over B when A affects B in a manner contrary to B's interests." The definition suggests that some actors are more powerful than others are and that whenever there is power there are interests to protect. Lukes rejects the idea of power as a right (Dean, 2011). Similarly, Political Science theorist Robert Dahl (1957) cited in van der Eijk (2018:86) defines power as "… a successful attempt by A to get B to do something he would

not otherwise do." This definition though excluding interests points to what scholars refer to as "power over' or the actor's power over others synonymous with influence or control (Cohen, 2015). Besides, Cohen suggests that power, as influence does not mean influencing others but rather not allowing others to influence you. Definitions of power as 'power to' and 'power over 'focus on power at micro and macro-levels respectively. These conceptions of power are ideal for this study, which focuses on the way university managers implement academic staff appointments, grading and promotions ordinance. State power synonymous with influence or control suggested in Robert Dahl's definition of power can loosely be referred to as macropolitics in the context of this study (Cohen, 2015). Power is exercised from different power structures that make and enforce binding decisions such as bureaucracies including universities and other educational institutions. This echoes the understanding of power as a right "the kind of power exercised by the sovereign or by government and which claims or is granted legitimacy" (Dean, 2011:4). Such kind of power can be described as legitimate, formal, or bureaucratic power which both the state and university leaders can use to get others to do what they would not otherwise do (Dahl, 1957). Power as a right refers to the power invested in the positions occupied by the actors (van der Eijk, 2018) such as the Chancellor or the VC.

From Parsons' Political Sociology, power represents "the general medium for declaring and achieving collective goals" (Niederberger, 2018:13). Power "is a capacity that an agent possesses and may exercise in order to achieve his ends" (Wenman, 2005: 371). This conception of power is frequently described in the extant literature as 'power to.' van der Eijk (2018) points out that power as a capacity suggests that actors can apply it to maintain, reduce, or increase the range of options available for behaviour or choice. VCs can employ this kind of power. Arendt (1970:44) cited in Wenman (2005) defined power as the ability to act in consent. Lukes (1974) argued that by treating power as a simple capacity, the conflictual aspect of power completely vanishes from Arendt's and Parsons's theories. For Lukes (2005) 'power over' is an important form of power and means that A affects B in a significant way. Conceptions of power as 'power over' and 'power to' point to two dimensions of power.

 Lukes described the radical or third dimension of power as a process by which the apprehension, perceptions, and desires of individuals can be moulded to promote the interests of one group over others (Akella, 2003). This conception of power is akin to Gramsci's (1971) concept of hegemony. Bocock (1986) cited in Akella, (2003:47) defines hegemony as

"the intellectual, moral, and philosophical leadership provided by the class or alliance of class and class fractions which is ruling successfully achieves its objectives of providing the fundamental outlook for the whole society"

Hegemony implies the process by which those in power successfully enforce their values, ideas, and beliefs overall society to manufacture compliance and legitimacy. Hegemony is the exercise of power through consent. According to Lukes (1974), such a form of power is exercised through the control of information and institutions like the media and education. In this regard, the state is privileged to use hegemonic power. Luke's concept of the third dimension of power is akin to hegemony and classical Marxist power of ideology, which presupposes that the dominant classes obscure the understanding of material reality for subject classes inculcating a false sense of self, which they call false consciousness (Jessop, 2012). Echoing Gramsci's theory of hegemony, Bourdieu (1991) uses the concept 'symbolic power', which is the power to construct reality: suggesting that institutions such as universities and individuals have the legitimacy to shape and produce knowledge through a shared way of categorising and ordering the world. Castells (2016:9) would refer to symbolic and ideological power as 'power over minds' defined as "the ability of certain discourses to be internalised and accepted by individuals in an effective communication process between senders and receivers of discourse" as opposed to 'power over bodies' which relies on coercion and is employed by the state. VCs are likely to employ 'power over minds' in their discourses in the process of implementing academic staff appointments, grading and promotions protocols.

From structural Marxist theory, power is an effect of structural determination (Poulantzas, 1969). Althusser (1971) was interested in state power seen as oppressive and acting from top to bottom (hierarchical). Marxist view of power links it to class domination (Jessop, 2012). Power is concentrated in the hands of the *Bourgeoisie* who are in control of the economy. Max Weber perceived power as coercion. According to Weber cited in van der Eijk (2018), power denotes the capacity to realise what one wants even against the resistance of others. Such an understanding of power as coercion and therefore negative is typical of traditional interpretations of power, criticised by Foucault (discussed in section 4.5).

Actors can also use power informally as and when they act to exclude others from decision making by mobilising bias to prevent issues from surfacing (Bachrach and Baratz, 1962). Such use of power is a micropolitical strategy which university leadership can employ. Power can be used through intentional and unintentional manipulation (Lukes, 1974). To demonstrate the

intentional use of power, van der Eijk (2018) identifies resources that can be used as sources of power and influence. These include "control over economic and financial resources, control over information, knowledge and expertise, control over positions that provide access to other sources of power or that are entitled to make particular decisions or appointments."(p.93). From the literature reviewed in Chapters 2 and 3, it emerged that institutional managers and the state make use of all the above resources in their deployment of power. Radical scholars influenced by Foucault understand power as embedded in discourses that set the limits to what can, cannot be said thought, and reacted to (Ball, 1993).

The above section has presented the contestations and different interpretations of power. The traditional understanding of power as centred, possessed, hierarchical, quantitative capacity, and a right as discussed in this section significantly differs from that offered by Micropolitical theorists and Michel Foucault. Besides, traditional notions of power do not adequately capture the dynamic ways in which power is exercised through micropolitical actions of actors within public universities and their *comraderies* located within the state. In the section below, I discuss Micropolitical theory, which informs the study.

4.4 Micropolitics, origins and meaning

The Micropolitical theory has its roots in symbolic interactionism and sense-making theory (Piot & Kelchtermans 2016). Symbolic interactionism emphasises that human behaviour is directed by the meanings they make of a given situation. Similarly, sense-making theory (Weick, 2009) shows how social actors construct meaning or make sense of situations based on sense making. Their interpretation of situations rather than structural forces guides their future behaviour. In this understanding, people's behavior is guided by values and principles rather than predetermined organisational plans. The theory emerged in response to the challenges presented by rational/ linear theories of organizations that saw formal structures such as rules as constraining and shaping human behavior (Taylor, 2004; Weber, 1947). These theorists overlooked the human element and informal aspects of organizations in their application of scientific theories aimed at increasing efficiency and output at the workplace (Blase, 2005). Micropolitics falls within the realm of human relations theories which focus more on informal aspects of what transpires in organizations as opposed to the formal planning of traditional approaches (March and Simon, 1958). Micropolitical theory is therefore in

opposition to scientific management theorists and practitioners who treat administration and organizations as purely rational, characterised by shared values, goals, and formal power arrangements in addition to downplaying conflict and bargaining predominant in educational institutions (Hoyle, 1982). Micropolitics likewise focuses on goal dissimilarities, informal uses of power, the overwhelming, and the capricious nature of organizations (Achinstein, 2002).

The term micropolitics was first used by Iannaccone in 1975 to distinguish between state level or district level politics from that which occurs in and around schools (Johnson, 2003). Micropolitics, in this case, denotes the political structures and processes which take place within the schools (Flessa, 2009). More broadly, Blase (1991) argued that micropolitics or organisational politics illustrate the different ways in which people endeavour to use power to influence others, to protect themselves, and to contest for what they want.

Critiques of this view argue that the rational models, ''ignore the values, ideologies, choices, goals, interests, expertise, histories and motivation of individuals in organizations'' (Mawhinney, 1999: 162). This theoretical framework presupposes that university leadership or management does not necessarily rely on laid out plans, policies, organisational goals, formal power derived from their professional expertise, or top-down approaches to power as implied in the rationalist approach to policy. In part, the individual interests of leadership inform decision-making processes in organisations.

In the field of education, Micropolitics emerged after the realisation that the traditional bureaucratic model did not adequately explain school operations, thus the language of politics, which includes terms such as power, conflict, and interest, provided a more viable option (Bush, 2011). Conway and Rawlings (2015:28) aver that Iannaccone (1975) was the first scholar to apply the idea of micropolitics to public schools to refer to "the interaction and political ideologies of social systems of teachers, administrators and pupils within the school buildings" (p. 43). Since that time, several other researchers have further developed the concepts of micropolitics (Blase, 1991; Ball, 1987). As Ball (1990:226) rightly states "the origins of Micropolitics lay in my frustrations with the bulk of the existing literature, theoretical and substantive, on schools as organizations". Thus, the disillusionment with existing theories, which did not adequately explain processes within schools, stimulated the emergence of micropolitics in the field of education. Boyd (1991) cited in Blase and Blase (2002), points out that the study of micropolitics in education emerged from the revelation that those responsible for policy implementation within the schools became policymakers in their own right because

they could resist or reshape policies made at higher levels. In understanding the management of academic staff appointments, grading and promotions, matters of policy and its implementation are echoed. Thus, university leadership tasked with the implementation of the academic staff appointments, grading, and promotions ordinance are significantly involved in policy modification and production in ways that suit their interests.

Ball (1987) and Hoyle (1986) used the term micropolitics to explore and interpret the behavior of educational leaders within schools. Micropolitics focuses on how power is conveyed in daily practices (Morley, 2006). Hence, Malen (2006) has defined school micropolitics as the formal and informal use of legitimate and illegitimate power by the principal and teachers to further individual or group goals with such goals based on values, beliefs, needs, and ideologies. Micropolitics places power at the centre of its analysis (legitimate or illegitimate). Those within educational institutions are acquainted with who holds power, how it is distributed, and how they can appropriate it to their advantage (Conway & Rawlings 2015). Power in the university is exercised and reflected in the policies and processes that affect the work of academics (Kenny, 2017).

From studies on micropolitics in schools and other organizations, Blase (1991:11) developed a working definition of micropolitics as:

> The use of formal and informal power by individuals and groups to achieve their goals in organisations. In large part, political actions result from perceived differences between individuals and groups, coupled with the motivation to use power to influence and/or protect. Although such actions are consciously motivated, any action, consciously or unconsciously motivated, may have political 'significance' in a given situation. Both cooperative and conflictive actions and processes are part of the realm of micropolitics.

The definition echoes power as a central tenet of micropolitics. In addition, micropolitical actions are likely to yield various relationships. Blase reminds us that any actions strategically or unconsciously taken have the potential to become political. Regarding school micropolitics, Flessa (2009) states that micropolitics is the study of how things work in the school, not how the school authorities would want them to work. Thus, university micropolitics entails an

exploration of how things, in practice, work in the organisation as opposed to how they are expected to work based on policy texts or ordinances. University micropolitics is limited to the university campus and is distinct from its macropolitics. According to Alderson (2009), the macropolitics of education addresses issues within the scope of national or local government among them and key education policy-making and implementation.

Other scholars have referred to micropolitics as organisational politics. Allen., Madison., Porter, Renwick, Mayes (1979: 77) define organisational politics as "the acts of influence to enhance or protect the self-interest of individuals or groups" or "…the management of influence to obtain ends not sanctioned by the organisation or to obtain sanctioned ends through non-sanctioned influence means" (Allen, 1977: 475). At the centre of these definitions is the idea that micropolitics is the use of power and/or influence to achieve personal or organisational goals to protect self-interests. Achinstein (2002) depicts micropolitics as intra-organisational processes.

The field of research on the micropolitics of education has expanded from Iannaccone's (1967) seminal work which drew a link between education and politics to include so many other scholars (Blase, 2005; Blase & Anderson, 1995). Within universities, scholars have also focused on micropolitics (Armstrong, et.al. 2013; Morley, 2005; Wendt, 1994).

4.5 Assumptions of Micropolitical theory

The central claim in micropolitical theory is that the actions of organisational members are influenced by their interests (Kelchtermans, 2007; Blase, 1998; Blase & Anderson, 1995; Ball, 1994; Hoyle, 1982). These interests can be collective, conflictual, individual, or multiple. Within this approach, power and influence are important resources, which members of an organisation can use to further their interests (Hoyle, 1982). In cases of common interests, cooperative relations emerge whilst divergent interests result in conflict (Piot & Kelchtermans, 2016). Furthermore, Piot and Kelchtermans argue that, from a micropolitical point of view, micropolitical behaviour, targeted at protecting the personal interests of members and groups, is quite normal in organisations.

Micropolitical theory also suggests that power greatly influences policy adoption and implementation within educational institutions and captures the strategies leadership uses to exert power and influence (Flessa, 2009; Malen & Cochran, 2008; Malen, 2006; Wirt & Kirst, 2005; Iannaccone, 1991). Micropolitical strategies used by top university leadership are in

themselves forms of power (Armstrong, Tuters, & Carrier, 2013). Hardy (1993) cited in Winkler (2010; 66), metaphorically, states, "power is a currency and politics represents the method of spending it." Thus, the micropolitics of universities denotes how VCs and senior managers spend their powers. The challenge that lies with university practitioners is that none of them is trained in managing micropolitics (Colegio, 2018).

Winkler (2010) provides a list of micropolitical tactics that organisational leaders and subordinates can be use. These include control of information, practices, rules, and norms; building relationships, profiling, keeping the situation under control, imposing pressure to cause action, and exploiting available chances (p.68). According to Blase (1991), micropolitical tactics include 'power over' strategies, which include coercion and co-optation, empowering strategies centred on cooperation, partnership, alliance building, and collegiality. For others, however, power over strategies represent coercion or domination (Wenman, 2005). Blase and Anderson (1995) characterise the last variant of micropolitical strategies as 'power through' strategies that are facilitative and transactional and allow for negotiation. Unlike 'power over' strategies that involve domination, 'power through' strategies allow for negotiation and can be deployed by university managers. Academic staff responses to the micropolitical strategies of institutional elites, which are built on their perceptions of the appointment, grading, and promotions system (forms of power) can be conceptualized using the miropolitical perspective.

4.6 Macro and Micropolitics

Scholars believe that micropolitics and macropolitics intersect to influence educational practice (Webb, 2008; Blase, 1991). Relating to the macropolitics of education, Alderson (2009) places great emphasis on individual factors such as the personal attributes of the players, their interests, emotions, and goals. Attributes of individual players and their interests have the potential to influence outcomes within educational institutions including universities and thus shape micropolitics. In light of university education in Zimbabwe, I argue in this thesis that state interests (macropolitics) have a bearing on local level politics within public universities. Bacharach and Mundell (1993) describe macropolitics as external interest groups that can influence outcomes within an educational institution. Since organizations rely on their exterior environments for survival, the macropolitical environment places demands and expectations

on public universities. Thus, university leadership also has to deal with the demands of external politics or macropolitics (the state). Thus, the macropolitics of the university includes its relationship with external interested players such as the state, industry, politicians, and citizens.

From the literature in section 4.5 above, it is clear that individuals and groups can use diverse tactics to achieve their goals. Policies, rules, practices, and procedures may not necessarily be constraining and, as such, serve symbolic purposes. University managers and state actors can thus use the academic staff appointments, grading and promotions ordinance to achieve what they want such as including and excluding, silencing, and rewarding academics among other consequences.

4.7 Foucauldian analysis of power

Michel Foucault an influential 20th century French intellectual and Philosopher formulated a conception of power in the mid-1970s, described by some as the best exposition of power (Wenman, 2005). In the *History of sexuality,* Foucault began his work by criticising previous attempts to analyse power for failing to capture the dimensions of power (Kelly, 2016). Furthermore, Kelly points out that Foucault was critical of a single model of power (such as that of the Marxists) that viewed power as centrered, for example in the state or power of the boss or father in the family, thus hierarchical, accounts that depicted power as negative, as repressive, constraining and exploitative. Power viewed in the negative presupposes the traditional notion of power as forcing people to act against their will (discussed in section 4.3).

From Foucault's conception of power, individuals can criticise the way power is used but power itself is neither good nor bad. Instead of judging power, people must understand the forms of power that are at work in a particular situation (James, 2018). Thus, Foucault (1980c) spoke in terms of technologies of self, which are a means of exercising disciplinary power. From a Foucauldian perspective, power is equated with relationships (Foucault, 2000d). It comes from below and is not tied to specific individuals. Foucault did not dismiss state power but argued that the state remains in control even though there may be immense possibilities that can happen because of local level interests. These interests can even refract those of the state. University leadership exercises this kind of power when it sets out to shape the behaviour and life experiences of academics.

Foucault was not concerned with the oppressive aspects of power, but more with the resistance of those upon whom power was exercised. Foucault (1990) also suggested that wherever there is power there is resistance. Resistance is an inevitable consequence of the exercise of power (James, 2018). Resistance by academics is manifest in a series of every practice (Anderson, 2008). Foucault (1980b) also argued that to understand how power works, we have to focus on institutions where power is used, embodied in practices, and arms itself with tactics. Academic institutions are thus arenas of power struggle where it manifests itself; is exercised and produces multiple effects.

Foucault was critical of definitions of power, which see power as a possession, as oppression, and as a strategy. As Foucault puts it, power is "never localised here or there, never in anybody's hands, never appropriated as a commodity or as a piece of wealth" (Foucault 1980: 98). Power does not come from the state, university administration, or classes of people; it is not the preserve of anyone. Power cannot be imposed on people; rather it is capillary power that operates from below and runs through people (Foucault, 1979).To clarify this point, Foucault (1981:94) stated that: "power comes from below; that is, there is no binary and all-encompassing opposition between rulers and ruled." Everyone possesses power. Foucault adds that all power is exercised for a purpose.

Foucault, therefore, disagreed with the notion that a specific group of people could wield power because, power is ubiquitous and thus impersonal (Gallagher, 2008). Foucault rejects the traditional view of power as sovereignty- implying top-down power which is hierarchical and exercised from a central point (the state), in favour of the idea that in modern states power is manifold, strategic, and dispersed, being everywhere and thus decentred (Foucault, 1978: 93). If power is everywhere, nothing can be done to eradicate it (James, 2018). Foucault acknowledged the power of the state but believed that by focusing only on this dimension, the complexity of power is oversimplified. Foucault used the terms 'microphysics of power' or 'micro-power' to distinguish between the power of the state and the localised forms of power (James, 2018). Thus, everyone within the public universities possesses power because power is not something that some have while others lack. For Foucault, power is so fluid that it cannot be located here or there but a process distributed among many locations. Power does not reside in a single person, group, or state as is assumed in mainstream Political Science and Marxist

theories (Couldry, 2017) but it is "the overall effect of strategic positions" (Rae, 2020: 39). Thus, the VC naturally being in a position of power can exercise it for personal gain.

Foucault did not believe that power itself exists but rather chose to speak in terms of power relations. For Foucault, the word power is a shorthand for power relations, it is not a substance but it is relational (Kelly, 2016). Power is never exercised in a vacuum but in relation to someone (James, 2018). Foucault (1988) believed that all human relations are to a large degree power relation. In agreement with Foucault, Castells (2016) echoes that power relations are the DNA of societies. Foucault cited in Rae (2020:37) defines power relations as "a strategy with its effects of domination…attributed not to appropriations but dispositions, manoeuvres, tactics, techniques, functionings." The definition clarifies the nature of power and the way it is exercised and experienced. Power is exercised in a very micropolitical way. Being relational and fluid, power is not connected to a particular post such as that of the VC. Gallagher (2008) perceives as useful the employment of metaphors of conflict and warfare by Foucault such as 'strategies and 'tactics' (also micropolitical) in understanding the use of power. Foucault argued that these metaphors could be used as lenses through which to understand the behaviours of those entrusted with power, such as university managers who make decisions on appointments, grading and promotions of academic staff.

Foucault was not interested in who has power or what power is but how power is exercised in a particular context and with what effect (Deacon, 1998). Power is evident in the way it is exercised. In *Power/Knowledge* (1980), Foucault was interested in how power manifests itself in institutions of learning described as capillaries of power, the site where power is exercised through relationships. Power is employed and exercised through "a net-like organisation" and comes from below (Foucault, 1980b: 98). The exercise of power or actions upon actions (Foucault, 1983) produces certain effects on the entities involved. An action upon the action of others does not mean total control over them but a set of actions that always provides the possibility for counteractions or reactive actions or techniques to regulate another person's field of possibilities (Gilliam, 2017). This means that while VCs exercise their power to deal with academics, subordinates also use their power to curtail that of leadership. Power is horizontal, thus people can exercise it at any point in their life.

It is power that is not possessed but exercised, and power that produces effects (Gallagher, 2008). It causes new behaviours to emerge, thus, for Foucault, power, and resistance co-exist.

In Foucault's view, there are no relations of power without resistance because the subordinate subjects always have alternatives open to them; they can emancipate themselves (Foucault, 1980). Put this way, power is never hierarchical but it manifests itself in many small-scale local practices, it operates at a micro-level. The daily interactions that take place within the university are manifestations of power. This suggests that power is not a monopoly of university managers, the state, or any other authority. Academics possess power, which they can exercise to resist the power exercised on them by managers and the state. They are never powerless given Foucault's notion that power is not a possession or monopoly of anybody. Foucault's logic of resistance presupposes that a change induced by resistance at a micro-level can bring about change at a macro-level (Gilliam, 2017). There are only different types of power. While university management wields formal or legitimate power, academics possess professional power (acquired from their training). Academics are unlikely to remain passive because of their professional training, which equipped them with critical thinking skills, and thus use their professional power to resist, remodel or dodge managerial excess power (Anderson, 2008).

The power of university management is challenged if not counterbalanced by that of subordinates who exercise power from below. It is important to understand how academics exercise power in ways that echo Foucault's notion of resistance, which presupposes opposing power, not a face-to-face confrontation (Lloyd, 2012). Academics use their power to resist, dodge, conform or replicate the power exercised over them by university leadership. On the other hand, the state lays claim to and makes use of small-scale power relations as those between deans, chairpersons, or heads of departments. In addition, power is echoed in the way academics respond to the micropolitical strategies employed by university managers.

In Foucault's work, what is important in understanding power is not the intentions of those that exercise it but the effects thereof. Thus, it is not relevant to question who has power, how they intend to use it, rather what is critical is to understand "…its targets …its field of application where it installs itself and produces real effects" (Foucault, 1980b: 97). Thus, any analysis of power that ends with exploring the relationship between the state and public universities (termed legitimate power) would thus be incomplete. Foucault was interested in showing how power at its local forms and institutions (micro-power) affects the daily-lived experiences of

people (James, 2018). Thus, public universities are in Foucault's view arenas of power, political phenomena where its application triggers resistance

Foucault has also argued that those who exercise power often employ discourses or narratives. The word discourse has varied meanings. In everyday usage in the English language and to Sociologists and Philosophers, the term denotes conversations and their meaning to a group of people who hold certain ideas (Pitsoe and Letseka, 2013). In Habermasian use, discourse refers to "a rational and pre-conditioned way of communication" (Selchow, 2017:70). For Foucault (1972) discourse is about what can be said and thought, who can speak, when, and with what authority. Foucault intends to clarify that forms of knowledge are the production of discourses not natural self -evident and known entities (Selchow, 2017). Hence, for Foucault (1972:49), discourses "systematically form the objects of which they speak." Discourse is about inclusions and exclusions that stand in opposition to other discourses, other probable meanings, claims, truths, and positions (Pitsoe and Letseka, 2013). Discourse can be a mechanism of power, can undermine power, or expose it; discourse is both "a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy" (Foucault, 1978: 101). For Foucault, discourses are ways of creating knowledge as well as social practices, forms of subjectivity, and power relations. Weedon (1997) states that discourse conveys and produces power, challenges, and exposes it, makes it fragile and possible to eradicate. Weedon further adds that discourses occur in written and oral form or the social practices of people's daily life.

The discourses employed by those who exercise power (the state and VCs) are not just accounts of the world but accounts designed to legitimate a particular status quo. Thus, those intending to control how subordinates view the way the appointment and promotions ordinance is implemented might dismiss criticism from them as insubordination. They may also faulty these criticisms as illogical and devoid of merit. The idea in this instance is to disqualify or exclude potential competitors to power.

Foucault presupposes that power is mediated through discourse. Leaning on Foucault, I shall show the use of discourse in the study especially by university bureaucrats to deny opportunities to those who imagine entitlement. Language is a powerful tool because it shapes human thought and action (Martin, 2005). Foucault's theory of discourse is concerned with matters of power and domination. From a Foucauldian perspective, language is important in structuring relations of power and setting limits to how individuals conceive themselves as subjects (Martin, 2005). The nature of power is such that it provides university leadership with

a vocabulary and self- understandings that direct academics to see the appointment and promotion processes in a specific way (not in others). As Chairpersons of the committees involved in academic staff appointments, grading and promotions, institutional managers can deploy discourse to shape the outcomes of the processes. Thus, language is both a site and a means of control (Foucault, 1978). Flohr (2016) argues that Foucault's 'toolbox' can be used to uncover the operations of power relations and the possibility of resistance to change the situation at hand.

4.7.1 A critique of Foucault's notion of power and discourse

Scholars have criticised Foucault's reconceptualisation of power as ubiquitous on the basis that such a conception makes power unavoidable and limits the possibility of resistance resulting in political change (Poulantzas, 1980). Flohr (2016: 39) believes that such a reading is flawed because Foucault's "reconceptualisation of power incorporated and relied on a highly original conception of resistance…" which makes the work applicable to those wishing to understand agency or resistance. Similarly, Habermas (1993) cited in Phillips (Phillips, 2002: 330) accuses Foucault of failing to set clear parameters for those seeking transformation and charges the theorist with "cryptonormativism" referring to the idea that the works are pervaded with solidarity and engagement, but the author does not define characteristics of resistance more clearly and substantively. Foucault is also criticised for lacking theoretical stability, given that power had to be reconceptualised making it possible to dismiss the ideas as prejudice (Mills, 2003). Joseph (2003) points out that by denying the power of the state, it becomes unclear what power is exercised for, nor what resistance is exercised against. Besides, Joseph presupposes that "power is trying to do far too much and without a more careful distinction between authority, force, violence, legitimacy, there is a certain one-dimensionality about Foucault's approach" (p.193). Foucault does not seem to acknowledge the intricacies surrounding power in favour of the view that power is everywhere. Couldry (2017) suggests that the problem of a conception of power as everywhere is that it does not adequately account for the complexity of power for example its various forms. VCs possess formal power owing to their position in the bureaucracy, which academics do not possess. Thus, speaking of power as ubiquitous and something not tied to a position or person would seem to disregard the power that those in authority possess. The possibility for resistance, which is present in all power relations, would appear to promote rebellion. Kollosche (2016) points out that although Foucault's theory shows how power is used, it does not explain how it ought to be used properly. Thus, Lewandowski, (1995:226) reveals that "Foucault has too much to say about power and too little to say about

the norms necessary for distinguishing acceptable and unacceptable forms of power." Habermas (1987) cited in Punday (2000) believed that power and discourse in Foucault's theory are too totalising, that Foucault is not capable of describing the nature of the 'body' (entity) that resists discourse. Foucault is also criticised for putting discourses on the same platform yet no discourse is greater, radical or ingenuous than the other because they are all relative in terms of time and place (Isenberg, 1991).

Despite the above criticisms, I used Foucault's reconceptualisation of power to inform the mechanisms of power employed by institutional elites and the resistances academics mount against them. Foucault's conception of power, which includes the idea that power is mediated through discourse, appears tenable in this thesis because it can explain policy implementation by university managers. Certainly, Foucault acknowledged the existence of different forms of power but was critical of interpretations that viewed resistance as violent and open confrontation. Power and discourse as understood from a Foucauldian perspective provide a more robust way of understanding how bureaucrats in public universities implement academic appointments, grading and promotions ordinance. Discourse is inextricably linked to power and can be viewed as an effect of power (Kaden, 2012). The interrogative posture that Foucault adopts in trying to analyse power is quite useful in understanding how it is deployed in the two public institutions.

The micropolitical perspective coupled with Foucault's radical reconceptualisation of power and theory of discourse are important tools for understanding the behaviour of the state, university leadership, and academics concerning how the academic staff appointments, grading and promotions system is executed in the two public universities under study. While qualitative work has been done to understand the micropolitical behaviour of educational administrators, very few have specifically focused on academic staff appointments, grading and promotions procedures in public universities from a micropolitical point of view. Malen and Cochran (2008) characterise the study of the micropolitics of education as an evolving and under-developed field. Thus, my study is situated within those that seek to contribute to an understanding of the macro and micropolitics involved in academic staff appointments, grading and promotions processes in public universities, the perceptions, and responses that these generate together with the impacts thereof.

4.8 Summary

The chapter has discussed the theoretical assumptions embedded in micropolitical theory as well as Foucault's reconceptualization of power and theory of discourse. Besides, it presents the various debates and discourses of power. It is clear that power is a contested concept; it is multi-dimensional, and prone to different interpretations depending on the context and interest of actors. There are different types of powers, which could imply that those subjected to power can mount different resistances. However, Foucault conceptualises the type of resistance that is non-confrontational, the sought that academics mounted against university leadership discussed in chapter 8 of this thesis. The theoretical framework I chose for this study proved ideal in that it shades more light on processes of academic appointment and promotions, which are in themselves highly contested and surrounded by power. The thesis articulates everyday politics in public universities and the next chapter presents the methodology used to gather data on micro and macropolitics and its influences in academic staff appointments, grading and promotions as well as academic perceptions of the processes and their responses.
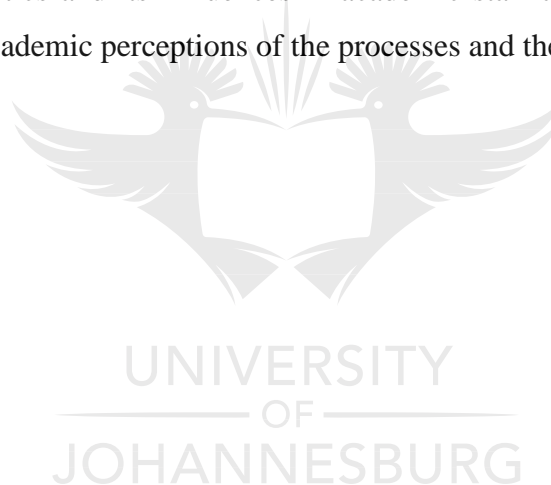
Chapter Five

Research Methodology

5.1 Introduction

All research is guided by some philosophical assumptions about what constitutes research and which methods are appropriate for generating knowledge in specific situations. I chose the interpretive paradigm as the framework for the study that sought to understand the dilemmas in university policy and practice on the academic staff appointments, grading and promotions system. I entered the research process armed with preconceptions which had an important bearing on the methods to be used, the sample to be included in the interviews, the documents to be analysed, ways in which data ought to be understood and the sites where the study should be conducted because I had pre-existing knowledge of the object of study. However, I followed the advice that the construction of knowledge should begin with a break with the preconstructed object (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). I remained vigilant to avoid becoming a slave to my preconceptions. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the methodological approach that this study engages in. The chapter also documents the techniques used to collect data necessary for the objectives. The study explored the experiences and observations of twenty- two (22) participants, which included twenty (20) academics and two (2) politicians. In discussing the methods, I also intimate the challenges I encountered during the process of research and how I addressed.

The chapter is divided into five major sections. The first section discusses the methodological assumptions of the research and the approach adopted. The second section is a description of the research design and provides the tools that I used to gather data on how recruitment and promotions were managed in the two public universities. The last section is about how I addressed ethical issues relating to the study. In the chapter, I argue that a laid out methodological process does not necessarily guarantee that the research process will follow the planned route.

5.2 Assumptions and research approach

Researchers who use qualitative methods often position themselves against other methods (Merriam & Tidswell, 2015). Thus, it is normative among researchers to make a distinction between the different research traditions. The choice of which paradigm was appropriate for the study was informed by Thomas Kuhn's categorisation of research approaches into two

broad dichotomies: positivism and interpretivism (Kuhn, 1971). The term paradigm was first used by Thomas Kuhn (1971) to refer to a conceptual framework commonly used among a community of scientists, which provides them with a framework to guide their research. While some authorities use the term paradigm to refer to a philosophical view researchers adopt to guide their work, Babbie (2007: 31) defined paradigms as "frames of references we use to organise our observations and reasoning" or a net containing "the researcher's epistemological, ontological and methodological premises". Each paradigm contains an accepted set of theories and methods of research (Farquhar, 2012). The above definitions suggest that the research paradigm carries with it assumptions about what one believes to be the nature of reality (ontology), the nature of knowledge or how we know (epistemology), and what values go into it (axiology) (Cresswell, 2003; Merriam, 2009).

Research methodologists use different terms to denote a paradigm: philosophical underpinnings of the research (Creswell, 2013), theoretical traditions (Patton, 2015), and theoretical perspectives (Crotty, 1998). Although Kuhn characterised the two research philosophies as positivism and interpretivism, Klein and Myers (1999) warn that interpretivism is not a synonym for qualitative because some qualitative researches are not necessarily interpretive. The determining factor is the researchers' underlying philosophical assumptions.

Brewer (2011) characterises positivism as the contention that the same methods, concepts, and procedural rules used in the natural sciences should be applied to the study of the social world. Its defining characteristics include an ontological position where reality is believed to be objective, external, and independent of the people concerned, thus, given rather than constructed. The work of positivism is exemplified more in the work of, Auguste Comte often credited as its founder, Emile Durkheim and many such others who were influenced by the scientific discovery (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls & Ormston, 2013). Positivists are more attuned to the image of science as depicted by Popper (1959). This image presents the scientist not as an entrepreneur but as a rational being and the scientific process involving testing of hypothesis in a stepwise manner with methods such as surveys and controlled experiments commonly used (Su, 2018).

In research in which the major objective was to explore the dilemmas in university policy and practice in Zimbabwe, the chief underpinning of the research was to ensure that the voices of the participants would be captured as authentic as possible. From my university experience, colleagues constituted a powerful voice through which I could understand policy

implementation. I needed to capture the words through which they told their perceptions of the whole appointment, grading, and promotions system and besides, record their views including their behaviour. These concerns are accommodated in a qualitative research strategy. Bouma and Atkinson (1995) observe that the spirit behind qualitative research is to view events from the perspective of the people involved, including their thoughts and their perceptions of the world. Thus, the type of data required was essentially qualitative, data collected and presented in narrative form rather than statistical tables and formulae (Yin, 2012). Quantitative methods were unsuitable in this case because they ignore how individuals use narratives to create their world (Alasuutari, Bickman & Brannen, 2008).

In positivist methods, the researcher simply throws questions to the stimuli and interprets the responses using established standards and norms. There is no room for personal bias because the assumption is that the researcher is external to the data collection process and as such, neither affects nor is affected by the research process. Researcher involvement in the study as a participant is not a feature of quantitative research, thus the research design was undoubtedly not ideal for this study.

Crotty (1998) indicates three aspects, which characterise positivist researches: validity, reliability, and generalisation. For this study, I did not seek the final product to be measured against these positivist standards of what constitutes good research. For the qualitative researcher, the research process is never an objective fact because researchers themselves are often carriers of bias and prejudice, which affects the way they look at reality (Kuhn, 1971). The intention was to research *with* the participants rather than conducting an objective study *of them*.

Qualitative research is an umbrella term for all inquiries that deviate from the positivist tradition and seek to produce detailed descriptions and interpretations of people and their practices from their point of view (Sandelowski, 2011). Qualitative research is also difficult to define because it does not have its methods, paradigms, or theories peculiar to it (Barbour, 2008; Silverman, 2011). Its defining features are that it is a naturalistic inquiry, which allows a phenomenon to be studied in its natural setting (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

The interpretative approach seeks to explore phenomena from the point of view of those involved. It provides detailed information about stakeholders' perspectives and experiences in addition to using methods that attempt to provide a holistic understanding of research

participants' views and actions in the context of their lives in general (Ormston, Spencer, Barnard & Snape, 2014). The primary concern of qualitative research is the what, why, and how questions rather than quantification.

These features were the major driving force towards the adoption of qualitative research. After exploring the characteristics of positivism, it was clear that positivist methods could not access some of the phenomena the study was concerned about. It was impossible to access lived experiences of academics, their social interactions, their perceptions about the academic staff appointments, grading and promotions system in public universities. I also needed to understand how state actors influence the appointment of VCs and their ultimate control over universities. Because the problem under investigation could not be addressed using the laws of the natural sciences, whatever was the outcome from that perspective would not be considered as knowledge in my context.

Based on my previous university experience, examining how the university managers implemented academic staff appointments, grading and promotions ordinance entailed dealing with issues of personal interests, macropolitics, and individual or institutionalised aspirations, emotive issues, past experiences, and matters of agency on the part of academics. Thus, the research required a philosophical approach that allowed for the discussion of issues from the perspective of academics to understand the meanings and interpretations that they gave to the way appointments, grading and promotions were managed. This is sometimes referred to as the emic or insider perspective. Neuman (2006: 224) refers to the perspective of the participants as that which participants in the study are thinking, why they think so, what they do and how these subjects make sense of the situation.

I chose to use qualitative methods despite criticisms levelled against the approach. Qualitative research has been accused of yielding purely verbal descriptions that are prone to different interpretations (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2020). Others have criticised it on the basis that it is too procedural and pays too much attention to justifying the methods to a point where research findings become unimportant. However, paying attention to procedure is the whole mark of qualitative research. The needs of the research directed me to avoid positivist methodologies or "the quantitative imperative," the notion that numbers are a necessary condition for arriving at true knowledge (Westerman & Yanchar, 2011: 142).

Qualitative approaches are advocates of interpretivism and share a common understanding of the nature of social reality (Hollstein, 2011). In this study, I was guided by the interpretive ontological stance that argues that social reality does not only depend on the perspective of the social actor but also multiple realities and multiple interpretations. Thus, the role of the qualitative researcher is to unearth these rather than a single objective reality (Denzin, 2010). This key attribute of interpretivism was a major guiding feature of my methodology and data analysis.

Interpretivism was ideal because it is directed by a set of beliefs and feelings, and employs methodologies that are associated with meaning such as direct observation, semi-structured in-depth interviews, and documentary analysis. In this decision, I was also guided by the idea that researchers who reject the positivist approach often adopt some form of interpretivism (Drislane & Parkinson, 2011). I thus believed that qualitative case inquiry should be informed by a constructivist epistemology since researchers believe that knowledge is constructed rather than discovered. In the section below, I pay particular attention to interpretivism.

5.3 Interpretivism

Interpretivism (Willis, 2007) is a recent approach in the social sciences. 'The interpretive turn' which occurred in the second half of the 20th century ushered in a new dispensation in the social sciences when some social scientists began to question and critique the positivist stance arguing that reality is not given but is socially constructed. Denzin (2014) dates the tradition to as far back as Max Weber's 1922/1947 meditation on *verstehen,* a German word referring to understanding. For Weber *verstehen* meant interpretive or empathetic understanding.

Interpretivism is associated with all enquires which give primacy to understanding the meaning of human actions (Schwandt, 2007) such as the qualitative enquiry. Interpretivists also argue that preoccupation with generalisations and numbers leads to loss of rich insights given that feelings and attitudes of academics could not easily be quantified. Besides, it may be difficult to quantify non-numerical concepts such as practices, behaviour, and beliefs of participants. If these elements are quantified, valuable meanings may be lost. Thus, I sought understanding as opposed to explanation.

The interpretive approach of the moderate hermeneutic strand was chosen. Hermeneutics, which has its origins in the interpretation of Biblical texts, is a branch of interpretive philosophy and its major proponents are Husserl and Heidegger (Cohen, 1989). The purpose of

hermeneutics is to make meaning clear. In seeking to understand interviews that became texts after transcription and documentary data, a hermeneutic stance was taken to understand texts within their specific historical context (Gadamer, 1960/1980). Furthermore, I remained sensitive to the advice that without deploying hermeneutic lenses phenomenon cannot be fully conceptualised (Cohen, 1989). Hermeneutics is critical of objective knowledge in favour of understanding through the integration of horizons with the producers of knowledge to develop common perceptions (O'Reilly & Parker, 2012). In many instances, I had to suspend or modify my knowledge of academic staff appointments, grading and promotions to accommodate participants' views to coconstruct knowledge with them.

In addition to empathising with research participants, I also adopted an empathetic interpretation aimed at understanding what participants expressed regarding the situation surrounding academic staff appointments, grading and promotions. I sought to avoid being guided by my pre-existing knowledge. This helped me understand the subjective perceptions of participants. Thus, the implication is that each person has a different perspective, standpoint, or prejudice and that a dialectical engagement is needed to support the synthesis of horizons (Smith, 1991). The thinking was applied to this study by taking on board different sources of data, data triangulation. Triangulation suggests looking at phenomena from different angles (Thomas and Magilvy, 2011). The use of multiple data sources in different categories including deans, chairpersons, union representatives, politicians: "people who hold different viewpoints or possess varying amounts of power" (Natow, 2019: 2) was a step towards a rigorous project. The use of methodological triangulation, site triangulation as well as data analysis triangulation helped minimise bias that can emanate from a single method, source of data or analysis technique (Merriam &Tisdell, 2015).

Triangulation is very much in tune with the interpretive framework in which there is no single and objective reality, but rather there are multiple realities constructed in the process of interaction. From this perspective, triangulation yielded different perspectives about the academic staff appointments, grading and promotions system in state universities. In addition to the hermeneutic stance of meaning making, I was also aware that the reality that academics and politicians presented needed to undergo interpretation for it to be presented in the final report, which was another interpretation. In the process, I was careful that my interpretation of their views was not influenced by what I already knew but rather represented their understanding.

Thus, my interpretivist leanings aligned the study to Gadamer's (1990) rendition of interpretation. In the interpretive paradigm, my role as a researcher was not neutral; rather the meanings that I constructed and imposed through the process of interpretation throughout the research process were influenced in many ways by my previous life experiences as a lecturer in a public university. This explains the adoption of a reflexive gaze throughout the study, learning from feminist researchers who include reflexivity in knowledge production (Conti & O'Neil, 2007).

A reflexive position would help me acknowledge the influences that my experiences have had on the research process including the way I interpreted data. As Carr and Kemmis (1986) observe, the researcher in the interpretive approach is not external to the research process. The researcher and the researched become co-constructors of knowledge in the interactive process of research (Charmaz, 2006; Denzin & Lincoln, 2009). Denzin (2001: 3) points out that interpretivist "…advance the project of critically imagining and pursuing a more democratic society." The intention was not to engage in scholar activism but to unearth malpractices of university managers and the machinations of the state using such a paradigm.

Although I adopted an interpretive framework, interpretivism has been faulted for lack of emancipation on the subjects (Naidoo, 2004). Giddens (1984) blames interpretivism of failing to acknowledge the influence of institutional structures such as interest groupings and power relations. I chose interpretive lenses based more on its strengths as highlighted earlier on. In the next section, I will outline the procedures I undertook in designing the case study.

5.4 Case study research design

In designing the case study, I followed Yin's (2013) advice that if the process of designing a case study is given due attention, it is likely to yield a high quality product. I chose one policy, the academic staff appointments, grading and promotions system of two public universities not intending to prove anything but to understand issues that are more complex and to emphasise the point that policies are hardly followed. It would not have been possible to study all policies in all public universities because the Zimbabwe university education system is substantial and comprised of 14 public institutions. Apart from other technical reasons, I chose to do a case study because of the desire to conduct an investigation that is more workable. Case studies are used when researchers want to understand in depth a small number of subjects or problems (Patton, 2015) real life phenomena (Yin, 2009) to build theory (Eisenhardt, 1989) or to provide

thick descriptions of a phenomenon (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2018). The case study allowed me to study real-life situations and identify views using lived experiences of academics. Participants were able to narrate their experiences hence generating important insights in addressing the key objective of the study, which aimed at exploring the dilemmas in university policy and practice on academic appointments, grading and promotions.

I selected the case study more for its relevance in addressing the research objectives in addition to my interest emanating from my experience, in understanding how the whole system of appointments, grading and promotions worked in Zimbabwe as well as how employees reacted to it. This study was a case study in the sense that one university policy was under analysis: with the academic staff appointments, grading and promotions system being the unit of analysis. In choosing this unit of analysis, I was informed by my previous university experience whereby issues relating to academic staff appointments, grading and promotions were highly contentious. Following the interpretivist tradition, I used the case as an exemplar to widen the understanding of why there is dissonance between policy intentions in theory and implementation in practice. For the study to qualify as a case study, I had to specify the object of inquiry and establish clear boundaries as proposed by Creswell, (2013). I also had to establish ways in which the case study would be bound. Baxter and Jack (2008) suggest criteria by which case studies can be bound, by time and place, by time and activity and by definition and context. Following these insights, I modified the criteria and chose not just to bind my case by definition but also by its unique relationship with the state. I acknowledge that the study of a single policy in two public universities in Zimbabwe may not be adequate to represent the situation regarding university policy and practice in public universities in Zimbabwe. If it is accepted that organisations such as universities tend to differ, generalisations become less important. I also leaned on Flyvbjerg's (2006) notion that a particular case study serves as an example that cannot be dismissed as worthless. Following Flyvbjerg, I strongly believe that the findings of the case study can be used in studying other public universities, which can provide the basis for generalisations. Bourdieu (1984) also insists that the case study carries the potential for generalisation because the model can be replicated in similar settings making, it possible for comparison. I am not claiming that the findings of this case study can be used to make generalisations but rather that if the same model is used in studying other public universities, there can be a basis for comparison and generalisations. In brief, I used the case study to construct a model that can be applied to other public universities in Zimbabwe. Rather than seeking generalisations, I intend, through the case, to extend the boundaries of knowledge

concerning the policy-practice nexus in public universities. In some way, I agree that the real business of a case study is particularising rather than generalising.

Of course, case studies have been accused of lacking objectivity, being subjective, prone to selection and participant bias. I addressed researcher bias by maintaining a reflexive stance throughout the study (Creswell, 2014). To deal with the problem holistically, I employed the notion of trustworthiness in naturalistic inquiry to increase validity and reliability in the qualitative sense.

5.4.1 Critical case study

I chose to use a critical case study design (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Patton, 2002) in that as Patton asserts I carefully chose cases of interest to make a point more vividly. Patton (2002) directs that critical cases could exist when it is clear for some phenomenon that if it does not happen there, it will not happen anywhere else. I was fully aware that the two universities I studied were both public institutions, with the same history, guided by the same Acts of Parliament within which the state maintained a close watch because of the very same interests. Academic staff appointments, grading and promotions were done following the same ordinance, which universities however interpreted at the institutional level. VCs in both cases were appointed by the Head of state and had to fit well into the political matrix. I therefore, anticipated that policy implementation within the two public universities (HUC and TUC) could not be so different. Thus, academic staff appointments, grading and promotions were likely to be managed in the same way.

 I also leaned on Hans Eysenck (1976) cited in (Flyvbjerg, 2006:7) who claims that "sometimes we simply have to keep our eyes open and look carefully at individual cases not in the hope of proving anything but rather in the hope of learning something." I sought to gain deep insights into how the academic staff appointments, grading and promotions processes were handled in other public universities from the experiences my institutional location provided. I remained guided by Patton's rendition of a critical case study in that I continued to be reflexive and based on my previous experience reasoned that, if the academic staff appointments, grading and promotions system were problematic in the public university in which I was employed, the same situation was likely to prevail in other state-owned universities. A critical case promised to provide answers to key questions regarding how academics were appointed, graded and

promoted and why managers within the public universities acted in the manner they did, sometimes setting policy aside.

The findings presented in chapters 6-9 confirmed my previous experiences of how academic staff appointments, grading and promotions policies were poorly managed in public universities. The VCs of both universities proved to have personal interests in the way they implemented the ordinance. Furthermore, state interests remained a key determiner of academic appointments, grading and promotions.

In this instance, the purpose of the case study was not to draw a comparison between the two settings (HUC and the TUC) or to carry out an examination both within and across cases as is common with multiple case studies (Yin, 2012; Stake, 1995; Merriam, 1998). For me, the two units (HUC and TUC) constituted a case study. I also chose the critical case study for purposes of addressing financial and time constraints. The decision to conduct the study on two sites also followed Yin's (2012) advice that members of an organisation may have a common mantra for speaking to those perceived as outsiders, thus researchers run the risk of obtaining biased data if they rely on a single site. From my experience, there were designated persons who had the authority to speak to outsiders. The individuals had the task to ensure that whatever they spoke upheld the good name of the university. In some sense, studying two sites also helped in partly reducing such biases including my own associated with my previous experiences relating to the way academic staff appointments, grading and promotions were handled within the university in which I worked. Multiple case studies work for comparisons and replicating findings but in this case, the two units were for deep comprehension of the dynamics involved in academic staff appointments, grading and promotions and for credence (Yin, 2012).

The fact that I chose an interpretive position meant that the critical case study had to be interpretive. An interpretive case study has its origins in ethnographic research in anthropology. The decision to adopt an interpretive critical case study was guided by claims that the interpretive inquiry and the case study have a symbiotic relationship in that they both emphasise the need for a rigorous and holistic understanding of a particular case (Thomas and Magilvy, 2011). I found the interpretive case study useful because the ethnographic tradition upon which it is based critically reflects on the human constructions of reality. The advice further sensitised me not to only think about my personal biases emanating from my previous

experiences of academic staff appointments, grading and promotions within a public university but those of participants as well. Thus, I chose the two public institutions not so much to compare findings but to emphasise the point that academic staff appointments, grading and promotions policies were sometimes set aside in public universities.

5.5 Research sites

Two public universities named TUZ and HUZ constituted the sites for the study. This section provides a detailed discussion of the two sites in terms of their history, geographical location, culture, internal and external governance, funding arrangements, relationship with the state and academic staff appointments, grading and promotion processes.

5.5.1 The TUZ

Like the HUC, the TUZ has its origins in post-independence Zimbabwe and was established through a university Act. Following independence in 1980, the ZANU-PF led government undertook massive educational reforms to increase access to education to address colonial imbalances and facilitate the rapid transformation of the economy and society in general (Mandaza, 1986). The enormous expansion following the democratisation of primary and secondary education from 1980 meant that universities had to have the absorptive capacity, which prompted the establishment of new universities including the TUZ (Kariwo, 2007) in the '90s. The government needed to develop human resources to staff the bureaucracies following the departure of expatriates (Wangenge-Ouma, 2008). Politicians who feared the possibility of political discontent by secondary school leavers (Zindi, 1994) also motivated the drive towards university expansion. Politicians were trying to 'buy' the electorate in addition to ameliorating religious and ethnic tensions by ensuring that there is a university that caters to the needs of every section of society (Zindi, 1998). Safuna (2010) contends that in Africa, it is common for politicians to politicise university expansion.

Unlike the University of Zimbabwe with a colonial background and history of elitism, the TUZ was established with an inclusive outlook right from its conception. It is situated in Matabeleland, the country's South Western Province which is predominantly Ndebele speaking. The Government together with donor support (Manungo, 2010) met the cost of

building the university. The TUZ was established as a science and technology institution with a national character in that staff and students are drawn from the whole country.

Both universities were established in line with government policy that there should be a university in every province to promote regional development (Pillay, 2008). Although most of the universities established after independence do not have fully developed infrastructure, the TUZ is in a better position because it largely operates from a composite campus. However, like other public universities in the country, it is faced with a critical shortage of teaching and learning resources. The university first opened its doors for over 150 students with a few faculties and less than 30 academics. Its mission is the production of the human capital necessary for driving an industrialised economy. At the time of the study, the estimated number of professors exceeded 12% of the total, while PhDs were above 25%. From its mission statement, the university promises excellence, trustworthiness and ethical behaviour in the discharge of its duties.

5.5.2 The HUC

The rising demand for university education due to massification alluded to earlier, necessitated a further expansion of university education (Nyazema, 2010). The government instituted a commission, the Chetsanga Commission in 1995 to look into the modalities of expanding university education. The HUC came into being because of the recommendations of the Chetsanga Report (1995) that proposed the devolution of Teachers and Technical Colleges into degree-granting institutions that would eventually become universities in their own right. The work of the commission led to the establishment of three other state universities from the year 2000. The HUC was affiliated to the University of Zimbabwe and became a degree-granting institution after 2000.

The HUC was initially established as a Humanities university with a provincial outlook. It is located in the Southern part of the country where Shona is the predominant language. In terms of student and academic staff recruitment, the university claims to have a national character. The HUC is newer than the TUZ and operates from a multiplicity of campuses with inadequate infrastructure and teaching and learning resources. Thus, Shizha and Kariwo (2011) assert that there has been a quantitative increase in universities with little attention paid to quality. At the time of the study, it was estimated that professors comprised less than 10% of its total academic

staff compliment while Ph.D. holders amounted to over 20%. Claims to quality, integrity, social justice and virtuous behavior were visible from its institutional website.

In both the HUC and the TUZ, there are large numbers of academics who are eager to be promoted compared to the flagship university where there are many senior academics. With increased enrolments and brain drain due to poor governance and economics (De jager and Musuva, 2016), the two young universities continue to recruit new members to fill in the gap. The two universities share commonalities in terms of their governance structure, funding regime, relationship with the state and the system of academic staff appointments, grading and promotions discussed in detail in the sections below.

5.5.3 University governance Structures

According to Tilley (1998), university governance connotes the wider decision and policymaking structure of the university. Thus, it would also include funding arrangements quality assurance mechanisms as well as internal and external governance models.

5.5.3.1 Internal governance structures

The administrative hierarchies of the two institutions are similar, the nomenclature having been inherited from the flagship university, the UZ with the Chancellor (President of the country), VCs and Pro-vice Chancellors (PVCs), Registrar, Bursar, Librarian, Deans of Schools, Directors of Information, Directors of Human Resource Management and Departmental Chairpersons (UZ, Act, 1982). The constitution of Zimbabwe as amended in No.16 of 20 April 2000, Chapter 4, and Article 1D.1 provides for the appointment of the Minister by the President who then in consultation with the President and the university council appoints the VC. Generally, the consultation between the chancellor and the Minister is ritualistic since the Minister is a direct appointee of the President. The University Act, Chapter 25; 16, Sections 7 and 8 declare, "The president of Zimbabwe shall be the chancellor of the university and the vice-chancellor shall be appointed by the chancellor". This means that the Head of State is the highest decision-maker in all state universities and VCs, as appointees of the President should ordinarily show loyalty.

State-appointed VCs are the chief executive officers of public universities who are in charge of its day-to-day running. They preside over academic, disciplinary and administrative matters. They chair influential committees and have the power to fire or hire university staff. Section 11 (1) of the UZ Act (1982) provides for the establishment of a university council with the responsibility to oversee the circadian running of the university. The University Council through senate and faculty boards are responsible for university governance and ensure that institutional missions and objectives are met. Councils are also responsible for the appointment and dismissal of staff. Minister nominates 24 councillors drawn from different sectors of the economy and 14 others. The council is also comprised of representatives from the university senate, parent ministry, administrative staff, the workers' committee, and student union representatives among others. Council also includes the university top leadership: Chancellor, VC, PVC, Registrar and the President of the Student Union (who are ex-officio members). The Council works through several committees, among them the Academic Staff Promotions Committee, which is responsible for promotions. Senate is an important organ of the university in charge of its academic matters. It has several committees, the major one being the Academic Board (AB) responsible for promotions. The AB chaired by the VC makes the final decision regarding academic staff appointments, grading and promotions. The Academic Appointments Board (AAB) also chaired by the VC makes appointments.

In both cases, the University Council provides general policy directions in the running of the university. Executive Deans provide leadership in various faculties while Chairpersons are in charge of departments. Departmental Chairpersons are supposed to be appointed by the VC in consultation with the Dean and academics in the relevant department. The recruitment and promotion procedures of academic staff are done through boards chaired by the VC or PVC, the Dean, the Deputy Dean and the Chairperson of the concerned department. Universities are governed through statutes and ordinances, which are provided for in the Acts for the smooth day-to-day running of the institutions. The university governance system is also premised on a stakeholder and/or shared model of governance (on paper). Thus, the system borrows from different models. Trakman (2008) views a stakeholder model of university governance as characterised by collegial and representative governance. This happens when governance is vested in a variety of stakeholders including, among others, alumni, academic staff, students, government representatives, corporate partners and members of the public.

5.5.3.2 External Governance

Public universities are established and governed through an Act of parliament specific to each university but largely similar, the nomenclature having been adopted from the University of Zimbabwe Act. The Act allows for the Head of (President) to be the chancellor of all public universities. As discussed earlier in Chapter 2, the system of having the Head of the state as Chancellor was done to ensure that universities meet national development goals (Zeleza, 2003). From this perspective, state steerage as is common in other African countries is developmental rather than an unnecessary interference.

Garwe and Thondhlana (2018) point out that the system moved from state supervision at independence to state control. Shawa (2017) notes that state control is characterised by strong government decision making and funding and became the common mode of steering universities in post-independent African countries. The Zimbabwean system also exhibits all the characteristics of state control as outlined in Chapter 2 section 2.10.2. The government has had to exercise some form of control to meet developmental goals. Dr. Dzingai Mutumbuka the first Minister of Education after independence in 1980 pointed to the need for attuning the university in line with national needs:

> The university should realign itself with the society in which it is cast because we cannot afford the luxury of a university that is isolated from the mainstream of events in Zimbabwe (MacKenzie, 1986:112).

It is often argued that the university governance model is a by-product of the nature of relations between it and the state. Middlehurst and Teixeira (2012) note that universities created because of state initiatives, as is the case with Zimbabwe, generally reflect state intervention in their modes of governance. Omari (1991) summarises the interventionist model as involving a weak senate and council that is reactive, a weak ministry that cannot fully guide universities and the head of state being the Chancellor. All these aspects characterise the Zimbabwean case as participants also revealed.

State intervention is not to be confused with state control because the intervention is "not a systematic policy control model, rather intervention occurs when higher education institutions become sites of opposition to the development path or perceived political direction of the state" (Moja, Muller & Cloete, 1996:148). The Zimbabwean case tends to borrow from both models.

Generally, the state intervenes in university matters to ensure public accountability over taxpayers' money.

Garwe and Thondhlana (2018) assert that the government exercises control through the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Higher Education, Science and Technology. The committee, in turn, supervises other authorities, organizations such as the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development (MHTESTD), which should provide a system through which universities implement and formulate policies. It also supervises the Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education (ZIMCHE) in charge of developing quality assurance frameworks, College lecturers Association of Zimbabwe (COLAZ) responsible for representing academics in collective bargaining and democratising university education through creating synergies with external partners. Although in 2006, the government established ZIMCHE meant to regulate standards in state universities, the council has been accused of being ineffective because councilors are political appointees (Nyazema, 2010).

Since its independence, the state has always had a monopoly on university policy issues (Cheater, 1991). Policy formulation is a preserve of technocrats and politicians and there is very little involvement of actors outside the official governmental apparatus for policymaking (Kaseke, Gumbo, Dhemba & Kasere, 1998). Moyo and Modiba (2013) also describe policy making in Zimbabwe as state-centric. It has been argued that the role of the state in education policymaking is central because if education is left to be decided by market forces, it will go beyond the reach of the poor (Provini, 2019; Divala 2008). Government as the provider of public service should regulate education policy because failure to do so would result in inequalities and dire consequences (Shrivastava & Shrivastava, 2014). The desire to control education policy emanates from the knowledge that the voices located within the state wield power and can shape the discourses within which policy is framed such that the socio-economic and ideological interests of the state are reflected (Bell & Stevenson, 2006). Thus, it is clear that education policy is a powerful tool that can be used to drive a variety of interests in public universities.

5.5.4 Funding Structure

Funding for universities includes revenue from their income-generating projects, donations and monetary allocations from Government. Zimbabwe's university education system had no community participation until the 1990s with the government providing funding as high as 82.4%, being the highest in the sub region (Watson, Kotecha, Perold, Chetsanga & Burke,

2010). Robert Mugabe who was then President strongly held the conviction that economic and political freedom was only possible if the majority of the citizens were 'mentally emancipated' (Mungazi, 1990). Soon after independence when the economy was doing well, a sound system of education was established (Mlambo, 2013) but in the second decade following independence, when the country was faced with socio-economic and political problems, universities plummeted. Thus, one can say that their success is tied to that of the state, which funds them. The shift towards payment of user fees and reduction of government subsidies within the public university system was precipitated by the introduction of ESAP in the 1990s. The government introduced cost sharing between the government and parents. Currently, the government pays salaries for university employees and provides subsidies. In Sub-Saharan Africa, it is common that universities and higher education, in general, are sponsored by the state (Varghese, 2013). From the effects of ESAP, the Fast Track Land Reform programme in 2000, together with the ongoing economic and political crises that have rocked the country since 2010, Southall (2017), it is clear that the state in Zimbabwe is under fiscal pressure and strained economic environments that make it difficult to meaningfully fund universities. However, even within this context, Shizha and Kariwo (2011), contend that Zimbabwe's expenditure on universities is more than that of other developing countries because the government recognises their critical role in socio-economic development. The state can also tactfully use funding to regulate universities. Omari (1991) contends that funding can be withdrawn based on a lack of compliance.

5.5.5 The relationship between the universities and the state

The state in Zimbabwe establishes dominant oversight on how public universities should function. The victory of the ruling ZANU PF party in the liberation struggle meant that institutions had to be attuned to the demands of the new government, unlike in South Africa where university state relations had to be negotiated (Cross and Ndofirepi, 2016). Nationalists themselves privileged university education as a form of political authority in their nation-building project (Smirnova, 2019; Monaville, 2019). It can, thus, be established that state universities are not separable from the environment in which they operate (macropolitics) and have to withstand external and internal pressure.

Kariwo (2014) suggests three key reasons the government of Zimbabwe should maintain an interest in university education. Firstly, the university is very significant to government affairs.

Two, they are crucial for human capital development and knowledge production. Three, the state funds universities to increase access by the poor hence must monitor the injected capital. This is how public universities in Africa have fallen to manipulation and intervention by the state (Chege, 2009). In asserting the importance of universities to governmental affairs, Robert Mugabe announced that universities were too important a business to be left to deans and professors (Chideya, Chikomba, Pongweni & Tsikirayi, 1981).

The state's intrusion in university affairs intensified in the 1990s when students and lecturers began to use the campus as the site for political mobilisation against state policies (Chikwanha, 2009; Zeilig, 2008). The politics of control is expressed by Cheater (1991:204) who notes that the 1990 Amendment Bill of the UZ Act instituted to control protests on campus was opposed by faculty members who through the Association of African Universities released a press statement condemning it in the strongest terms:

> We reject the central intention of the Bill, which is to impose direct control over the university to transform it from an autonomous institution of learning into a state university. Given the dominance of a single party in government, the university could effectively become ... merely a party university.

The bill was criticised by academics as designed to arm-twist the university to serve party interests. Intervention measures that followed the upheavals of the 1990s at the UZ, influenced university practices such as police action, the resignation of the first black VC after independence, Walter Kamba, in 1990. The VC resigned on allegations that there were too many unprofessional fingers intruding with the work of the university (Chikwanha, 2009).

It is also common that in a country that has been under one-party dominance for a long time, the direction of the university inherits that party's characteristics (Msindo, 2016). As the colonial state, the post-independent state also uses surveillance and censorship to control the activities of both academics and students (Divala, 2008; Amutabi, 2003). Students and academics who are believed to be critics of the state are arbitrarily arrested (Magaisa, 2015). Because the ruling party has an ideology to transmit, Altbach (1987), politicians will control universities because they are useful sources of patronage and power. Flinders and Geddes (2014) define patronage as an inducement system signifying an exchange relationship in which a patron who could be an individual or group forms a two-way relationship with somebody. Flinders & Geddes also view patronage as corruption, cronyism and nepotism. University

managers in most African countries are politically appointed, except in a few cases like Kenya (Mugenda & Mwangi, 2014). In line with the pressure imposed by neoliberalism, the government is the process of restructuring the university governance structures to match international trends such as the introduction of ZIMCHE in 2006.

The section has provided details of the two public institutions under study as well as their governance structures. The next section discusses the sampling methods employed in choosing the participants for the study

5.6 Sampling as a process

The section below analyses the criteria that I used to select the relevant units and participants for the study. Sheran (2002) advises that in qualitative research, it is important to select a sample from which the most about a phenomenon can be learnt. Patton (1990) in Sheran (2002) argues that information- rich cases are the ones most suitable for in-depth study. Therefore, I used a purposive or purposeful sampling method targeting sources, which could provide detailed information. Purposive sampling proved to be problematic at first particularly with academics because they really wanted to understand why I specifically targeted them. Academics did not want to 'risk being exposed' given that, fieldwork coincided with further deterioration of Zimbabwe's economic and political crises. However, when I clarified that their experience in the academic staff appointments and promotions committees mattered, they began to be forthcoming.

5.6.1 Case selection

The choice of likely cases was not mechanical but was informed by my previous experience and information acquired informally through colleagues who felt unfairly treated concerning the way academic staff appointments, grading and promotions were being handled in public universities. Drawing participants from two universities was more preferred because it reduces the effects on the study of local factors peculiar to one institution. In that way, it increases the research rigour. I selected the two cases for the study from a wider population comprising of a total of (19) universities in the country: (12) public and (7) private. Studying the entire population may have been ideal but given the resource limitation, it was virtually impossible. I could only best work with a sample of two public universities sampled purposively.

In choosing the cases, the feasibilities of negotiating and maintaining access in the field guided me (Creswell, 2013) in addition to targeting sources, which could provide detailed information.

In the two universities, it was easier to access participants. I already had contacts as an insider employee. Without these contacts, entry into the site would have been a challenge given that in one institution, my application for permission to conduct research had been turned down. I found the criterion of inclusion discussed in this section to be appropriate because it did not only reduce bias but also increased the credibility of the findings. The emergence of similar findings from different sites is indicative of greater credibility (Shenton, 2016). I take up these issues in the relevant section.

5.6.2 Academics

My interest in this study was to understand how academic staff appointments, grading and promotions were being managed in state universities. In addition, I wanted participants to reveal their views about the appointments, grading, and promotions system. This meant that only those with the relevant experience were targets. Thus, I selected only those academics who by virtue of their university experience had served in different capacities in the appointments and promotions committees. Thus, chairpersons of departments, deans, representatives of the University Teachers' Association and professors (because they sat in the senate) were selected for the study. Not every academic had the privilege to serve in the committees of interest thus; I purposefully sampled participants for interviews. I selected twenty (20) academics whose power distribution differed from two of the public institutions (10 from each) because the number was manageable and consistent with qualitative studies.

Methodologically, I should have worked with those academics that had previously experienced challenges in academic staff appointments, grading and promotions only (as victims) for them to tell their stories, but this was not the case. The sample was limited to those academics that constituted the relevant committees who had experience with the proceedings of academic appointments and promotions. I could not sample those whose applications for promotion were previously turned down because I knew that according to university procedure, they were interested parties, thus, would not attend committee meetings in which issues concerning their applications were discussed. There were ethical challenges involved in the sampling used because it meant that respondents revealed confidential information about academic staff appointments, grading and promotions. Thus, it became very crucial to protect the participants from any harm that may result from the research.

5.6.3 Politicians

I also needed to interview political elites who are often hard to access because they maintain a social distance (Liu, 2018). I purposefully selected four politicians comprising the sample based on their long stay within the government. These politicians had served the government at ministerial level and had background information about the way universities functioned. Of the four politicians, two failed to honour their interview appointments several times until I had to take the decision to work with two only. I was able to interview the two politicians whom I was close to in some respect. I was familiar with some of their contacts, which made it possible for me to access them given the intricacies involved in accessing elites, discussed in section 5.7.2.

5.6.4 Gaining access into the field

The concept of the field is related to the context or setting within which research takes place and ways by which researchers establish contact with participants (Bengry-Howell & Griffin, 2012). Thus, access to the specified data sources should be made only by observing clear procedures such as gatekeeping. Gatekeepers are the people who enable the researcher to access participants. For the study, the gatekeepers included the VCs of the two universities comprising the case study and the MHTESTD under which public universities fall. Following Zeni's (1998) advice that a researcher should be honest about who they are and what their research is about, I explained the nature and purpose of the research and sought legal entry to the said sources of data and which was granted.

In line with research norms, I first had to seek clearance from the relevant government entity, the MHTESTD. I was fully prepared to meet the Permanent Secretary or an agent in terms of the ethical considerations and stratagems needed to gain access. The first three trips proved futile because the Permanent Secretary's agent was away. Getting permission involved several trips to the Ministry's head office in Harare until I met the right person. I had to produce many papers apart from the introductory letter from the University of Johannesburg to the officious bureaucrats who needed to be sure that I was not a bogus student. The process of obtaining permission took close to a month because of the bureaucratic procedures that I had to observe.

I was eventually granted the permission to carry out the study (see Appendix B). The first hurdle had passed but there was still a need to seek clearance from the relevant universities. The initial plan was to include in the critical case study, one of the oldest universities in the

country with the hope that their experiences with the issues under investigation could prove insightful for the researcher but the application was turned down. Shaffir and Stebbins (1991) are right in asserting that the chances for being granted access to do research increase if the interests of the researcher happen to coincide with those of the subjects. There were no common interests in this case. What made it worse was that fieldwork coincided with the time when some universities in Zimbabwe were in the media for malpractices, thus any intruder was suspicious to them. Within the two public universities involved in the study, I also had to negotiate my way through local gatekeepers. I did not attach their permission letters for reasons of anonymity. At this point, fieldwork could take off.

In entering the field, I was directed by "the actors' definitions of the situations" (Kelle, 2014: 3) rather than my perceptions of reality. Thus throughout the fieldwork, I remained reflexive to ensure that I would not use my insider knowledge to deflect participants' answers. Any intervention was not to lead but redirect the discussion towards issues of concern whenever was necessary.

5.7 Data collection

The first phase of data collection involving interviews took place between June 2016 and March 2017 and involved staying at each university for not less than one month. However, in analysing data, the results pointed to the need to understand the political side of university practices. Thus, I conducted the two interviews with politicians in December 2018. I collected most documents during the same period but also continued up to March 2018 because in most cases, this is when some specific documents, such as advertisements, became available. I collected policy documents that are analysed in chapter 5 before and after the interviews. In addition, I collected data through ministerial reports, policy documents, University Year Books and journals. Direct observation was another method that I employed as I was privileged to attend meetings in one of the institutions during my studies. Yin (2013) argues that because case study takes place in a natural setting, it creates an opportunity for direct observation.The intention was to capture data that could be used alongside other data sets from different sources to construct meaning that would address the problem of academic appointments, grading and promotions. I wrote extensive field notes during data collection and this is included as data.

5.7.1 Interviews

I conducted interviews in English although none of the respondents spoke English as their first language. I had an advantage in that I was dealing with participants who were all English literate. I followed Denzin and Lincoln's (2005) observation that the interview sample should include all those people among and for whom issues studied are likely to occur. These were academics who had experience with academic staff appointments, grading and promotions and politicians who had long experience in government. I used interviews amidst criticisms, for example, some have registered preferences for data that occurs naturally and accused interviews of being prone to interviewee and interviewer bias (Roulston and Choi, 2018).

However, in choosing interview as a data collection tool, I was consciously guided by the position that interviews should only be used to get information, which cannot be accessed, through any other way (Darke, Shanks, & Broadbent, 1998). I wanted narratives of participants' experiences regarding academic staff appointments, grading and promotions and these could only be attained through guided conversations. My previous discussions with colleagues in social settings concerning academic staff appointments, grading and promotions indicated that I needed to hear their voices. In dealing with interview data, I used pseudonyms not only for anonymity but also for practical reasons as I was dealing with what would be considered very sensitive information in a university context.

Before the interviews and in line with the norms of qualitative research involving human subjects, I explained the purpose of the research to participants and sought their informed consent. I distributed to participants a consent form issued by the University of Johannesburg's Ethics Clearance Committee. Ethical clearance was one of the procedures I had to satisfy (see Appendix A). Most participants, however, preferred oral informed consent. I then made prior arrangements with the interviewees for convenient interview venues that were quiet enough to produce good audio recordings.

Interviewees suggested that interviews be held during working hours, in the comfort of their offices. In this way, they asserted their authority over the interview process. Besides, the venue rather amplified my professional role, because within the university setting, academics were 'speaking to one of them.' In total, I tape-recorded 18 academics while two refused as well as the two politicians I interviewed. I then had to take detailed handwritten notes in the process of interviewing those that declined to record. I viewed interviews a from a constructionist

perspective as "socially situated events in which how accounts are co-constructed by interviewer… and interviewees" (Roulston, 2013: 3). Interviews proved effective for this study since they provoked feelings, attitudes, and emotions of the respondents given the sensitivity of appointment and promotion issues. I chose to adopt the open-ended and inductive style of questions to get as much data from participants as I could. Participants could speak beyond the questions presented and even had the latitude to ask their questions. The average length of each interview was one hour. The interview questions for academics revolved around the issues listed below (see Appendix C).

- Availability of resources for teaching, research and publication

- Management of appointments, grading and promotions

- Political influences in university governance, academic appointments, grading, promotions and demotions

- University managers' approach to policy matters

- Perceptions of academics on the appointments grading and promotions system and their reactions.

Similarly, I asked a set of interview questions specific to politicians. From politicians, I sought to understand how and why the UZ Act was enacted, the role played by state actors in university policy implementation, more specifically relating to the appointment and dismissal of VCs and their perception of what a university should be. The aim here was to understand the process, reasons, and values behind government actions and decisions concerning public universities using the case of the academic staff appointments, grading and promotions system.

5.7.2 Doing elite interviews

Elite interviews are not very popular among social scientists and more so among educational researchers (Nudzor, 2013). The reluctance to use elites as interview participants emanates from a variety of practical considerations. Literature in political science is replete with challenges researchers have to confront in working with elites for purposes of research (Mikecz, 2012). These challenges range from accessing them because many gatekeepers who act as managers and private assistants often surround them. Elites have less interest in academic research and are "much less open to being the subjects of scrutiny" (Odendahl & Shaw, 2011:

2). Although elites have challenges regarding interviews, I incorporated them based on the evidence they provided as decision-makers.

Because of the intricacies involved in interviewing elites, I had to employ Morse's (2019) strategy of developing relationships with the gatekeepers and their agents well in advance to build trust. Indeed, Odendahl and Shaw (2011: 8) testify that:

> "the process of identifying and gaining access to elite subjects calls for the incorporation of strategies that include a mixture of ingenuity, social skills, contacts, careful negotiation, and circumstance."

Using contacts proved more workable than the efforts that I initially employed to solicit engagement with them via their agents. Appointments were made three weeks before through their agents (some of whom had also become my contacts) and confirmed a day before the interview at venues convenient to them. I was so fortunate that I scheduled the interviews during times when elites were out of the capital in the province in which I was based. In addition, these 'big men' managed provincial politics.

It was common for some interviewees to want to exert their authority on me and to try to redirect the interview. In terms of positioning, they were academically senior to me and some were located in 'the more prestigious' disciplines. I was coming from the Faculty of Education, essentially involved in teacher education. The teaching profession is lowly regarded in Zimbabwe due to its poor working conditions and poor remuneration. I chose to keep my head above the water by employing interpersonal skills like refusing to sink.

In general, I conducted 22 interviews. As I indicated earlier, I used purposeful sampling in the selection of potential interviewees to ensure that I targeted the right people. In this sense, case selection was not just for scientific reasons but for personal reasons as well. In each institution, I made appointments telephonically for interviews. In using the interview as a method of collecting data, I encountered even more numerous practical problems, which I narrate in the next section.

5.7.3 Dealing with practical challenges and dilemmas in the field

The literature on the interview demonstrates that novice researchers face numerous problems during fieldwork. The first challenge encountered in this study was that I was dealing with a

very interview- literate audience. Academics very much know the tricks of research. Some of them were even expert researchers. Quite often, they enquired if they would be offered monetary incentives. This question was disconcerting considering that I was not on any form of funding. Participants used their knowledge of South Africa as a resource endowed country, thus assumed that the study was sponsored. This is not surprising for the case of Zimbabwe where for some people as Mandiyanike (2009) observed, research is a source of livelihood. Others felt that the topic itself needed to be 'fixed'. Thus, I had to remain vigilant so that these peripheral issues would not sidetrack me. Most importantly, I had the advantage that I was familiar with the social, cultural, and professional setting in which I did fieldwork. Therefore, unlike an outsider, I could move freely and develop insights into the context that was not possible with a researcher, foreign to the setting.

Sensing that the topic had political connotations, some respondents did not give candid answers, careful that their answers remained "politically correct" (Mandiyanike, 2009) and putting the university administration in good standing. This was because I did much of the fieldwork in 2016 into 2017, in the last phase of Robert Mugabe's 37-year rule. Another challenge was role conflict. I often had to manage tensions between my new role as a researcher and my pre-existing role as a university lecturer. In many instances, participants kept on mentioning that I knew some of the things since I was one of them. I always had to emphasise that I needed to know their experiences and perceptions.

5.7.4 Documentary data

Social scientists have long used documents to understand everyday social practice. Documents include records and minutes. Coffey (2013) defines documents as signs or symbols through which social actors make deductions about basic patterns or states of affairs, and to which they add and embellish with what they know. The definition implies that researchers working with documents have to know the art of analysing documents to make them speak.

The motivation for using documentary evidence is provided by Coffey (2013: 3) who advises that

"if we wish to understand how organisations and social settings operate and how people work with them/in them, then it makes sense to consider social actors' various activities as authors and audiences of documents."

Furthermore, Coffey (2014) reveals that it would be difficult to understand an institution like a university without studying documents such as committee minutes and prospectuses. Following this advice, I chose to study policy documents indicated in 4.8.5 below in addition to prospectus, job advertisements, newspaper articles and brochures, which I collected during fieldwork. However, in using these documents, I was aware that they carry biases since they were constructed for specific purposes other than research (Macdonald, 2008). In using documents, attention was paid to the intertextuality of documents (or how they are related to other documents and what can be learned about the setting in which they are produced). This provided good insights on the UZ Act for example.

5.7.5 Official policy documents

Appointments, grading and promotions in state universities are a government prerogative. The policies and procedures are stipulated in the university Acts and more detailed in the institutional ordinances. The Academic Staff Appointment Grading and Promotions Ordinance (2002) was analysed. In addition, the Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education (ZIMCHE) also had its policy document guiding academic staff promotions that were in circulation in both universities, which I reviewed. I also analysed sections of the UZ Act (1982) which I purposively sampled because they dealt more specifically with academic staff appointments, grading, and promotions, commission reports such as the Chetsanga Commission Report (1995) and the Williams Commission Report (1989). I reviewed the Academic staff Appointments, Grading and Promotions Ordinance, together with the ZIMCHE guidelines for promotion. I also acquired the UZ Amendment Act (1990) during fieldwork to understand the official position regarding processes of academic staff appointments, grading and promotions in addition to state involvement concerning these matters.

Besides, I wanted not only to gain an understanding of how university managers were expected to implement policy but also get an appreciation of how the state impacts on policy implementation in state universities. Documents were, however, limited in that only those meant for public consumption could be availed. Some of the policy documents, which are indicative of the exercise of power (Nudzor, 2013) by policy actors could not be, accessed especially memos and minutes of meetings where top university leadership or academics were appointed or promoted. The university system considers these minutes as very confidential. Such documents could serve as documentary evidence of the dissonance between university policy and practice.

5.7.6 Archival sources

Archival sources include stored information such as electronic records, libraries, old-fashioned (paper) files, newspapers, television and the mass media (Yin, 2013: 10). I also reviewed archival sources on the development of universities in Anglophone Africa, (discussed in chapter 2) in addition to newspapers by different news houses, which were analysed from 2010 to January 2019 in an attempt to understand how the state keeps the universities under check (discussed in Chapter 6).

I also collected yearbooks from the universities, which are also available on university websites. By these, I sought to understand the history of the specific universities, their administrative structures, their mandates, staff composition among other issues. In addition, I used archival sources in supporting or questioning my interpretations or those of the participants. However, due care was taken in the use of these documents to address the problem of bias. I took Yin's (2013) advice that researchers using media reports need to guard against "systematic bias" as the nature of stories covered or not covered, the kind of questions asked or not asked and the amount of detail included heavily depends on editorial leanings of the newspaper. Yin thus recommends reading the same story from different newspapers with different orientations to reduce bias, which is exactly what I did in this study. In selecting documents, I had the advantage that I largely knew those, which were relevant to the study.

5.8 The strength of audio-recording

Most of the interviews were audio-recorded in the case of those who consented. As indicated already, only 4 out of 22 respondents were uncomfortable with audio recording. In the case of academics, their refusal was partly heightened by the culture of fear and suspicion, which characterised much of Robert Mugabe's rule. Audio recording interviews ensured that I captured the very words of the participants to negate misrepresentation. This was even more necessary given that I was familiar and close to the issues, I discussed. Given (2008) reveals that audio recording participants ensure that the real meaning and their 'intents' are captured. However, audio recordings were used with due care to minimise bias on my part, and avoiding interference with participants.

5.8.1 Transcription of data

It is common for researchers to work with a textual copy of their interviews (Gibbs, 2007). The audio interviews were transcribed although the process of transcribing and analysing data is known to be tedious and time-consuming (Tessier, 2012). Transcription is a process of producing a written version of the audiotape or visual material (Smith & Davies, 2015). Although prone to error, verbatim transcriptions were preferred because of their potential to yield rich data, their flexibility in data analysis and possibility of bringing the researcher close to the data. Transcription in itself is only one way of interpreting data, given that it does not capture such essential elements as the environment, location, body language, I kept a field diary that captured all the essentials. However, field diaries have been criticised because they are prone to bias and depend on the researchers' interpretation (Tessier, 2012).

I had to guard against transcription bias given that transcription itself is highly subjective. This given, I then chose to juxtapose the field notes with verbatim transcriptions to increase the credibility of data. In addition, I employed data sessions where I invited colleagues to share their views about the transcript, particularly what the participants meant, being fully aware that transcription variations were possible. This had the potential to enrich my understanding of transcripts. In interpreting the transcripts, I always moved back and forth to the audio recordings to ensure that what I captured were indeed the words of the participants.

These sessions were normally done soon after each interview when the interview was still fresh in my mind. I cleaned up the transcriptions used for purposes of writing the thesis of fillers such as 'erm' words such as "you know' to ensure that it was easy to work with and maintain those transcripts that supported my argument (Roulston, 2013). I kept the data secured. I developed a fieldwork database to ensure effective management of the data. I secured electronic data using a password while field notes and the audio-recorder were kept under lock. The tedious process of data coding using phrases keywords and colours followed the process of transcription.

5. 8.2 Coding

I used codes, which are labels for the data to make it possible to identify key messages within it and to build concepts. In this study, I referred to the field notes to code, categorise, and put the data into themes. From the methods used, it was realised that power and positionality shape the research process including the face-to-face interviews and even the interpretation of data.

Relating to coding, Saldaña, (2015) makes a distinction between *coding,* which implies determining the appropriate code for a data segment and then labelling it, and *decoding* which refers to reflecting on a data set to understand its major meaning. I analysed data within the framework of intepretivism, where it was important to understand the meaning. Thus, using Saldaña,'s (2015) concept of coding, this study used both coding and decoding. Segments that made the same point were coloured with the same colour and tagged with the same code (colour coding). I manually coded the data using a basic word processor because it is not only faster but also allows the same extract to be put into different codes more easily.

I highlighted parts of the transcripts that answered to my research objectives and then labelled them with codes. Data coding was also based on themes that emerged from the data (bottom up coding) in addition to field notes. I identified categories and core categories from the data and listed them. I did the same process with documents, archival records and field notes. After coding, I compared texts that had the same code within the same data source, and cross categorisation was done with different data sources. I developed the codes into themes by grouping categories and analysing what these categories meant. Thus, King and Brooks (2018: 6) appropriately define coding as "…the process of indexing texts with codes and in due course themes."

In this sense, I used an inductive approach in determining themes by listening to audio recordings, reading and rereading transcripts and reviewing field notes. Mabry (2008) confirms that the case study is based on the inductive method and is a way of building a theoretical understanding of social phenomena. Analytic coding that enabled me to build concepts (Urquhart, 2013) followed descriptive coding which only describes what participants were doing.

5.8.3 Data analysis

The process of collecting data is much more of a human process; it starts from the day interviews are conducted, cuts through document analysis and even the earlier processes including a literature review. The adjustment and readjustment of the research objectives, done in the field in some way speaks to analysis of data. I eventually dropped the question relating to what participants thought was the role of the university in society in the field because I realised that it was conceived in terms of the traditional functions of the university, which would not be useful for the study.

In other words, data analysis can hardly be viewed as a once off event but rather as a process. The choice of which method was suitable for data collection was guided by practical considerations. Unlike the quantitative researcher who is capable of asking the same question to every respondent and whose results are neat, synchronised and can be easily analysed using a computer, I found myself asking participants different questions based on their initial responses, thus the data became muddled. I had to employ a suitable analysis protocol capable of accommodating the varied responses.

The interpretive framework employs qualitative methods of data analysis. Within the qualitative frame, the researcher needs to stay as close to their data as possible by reading and re-reading the data to familiarise themselves and employing necessary analytic techniques and methods (Alasuutari, 1995). In this regard, data analysis was iterative. Essentially data analysis followed the advice that qualitative research is never linear and as such the processes of data analysis takes place at the same time as data collection (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). In addition, I combined data collection and analysis to allow for participant validation of findings. However, due care had to be taken to avoid concluding too early before all the data was analysed. I also had to reflect critically on the data to discover themes and anomalies that emerged.

Given the variegated nature of the responses and the fact that I could not necessarily ask each respondent the same questions, computer analysis for interviews became difficult. I did not considers specialist software, which is commonly used in qualitative data analysis such as NVivo and ATLAS.ti not only because of financial constraints but also because of the nature of the data. The interviews, documents, archival records and field notes were all analysed to establish patterns, concepts or themes, then interpreted to give them meaning. In reviewing documents, Yin (2009) advises that researchers should be on guard because these may not reflect reality. Some may be outdated and are careers of bias such as newspapers. Kawulich (2004) advise that data analysis is not an isolated activity; rather the entire research process is an activity of data analysis and interpretation. To gain a full understanding of the phenomenon studied, data should be interpreted in the context of its historical and social-cultural context. Throughout the study, I gave attention to issues of context to avoid reproducing accounts, which I thought colleagues in my discipline would sanction.

In deciding which data analysis technique to use, I was also fully aware that any computer-generated tools for data analysis still needed an expert to interpret the data (Walsham, 2006).

Thus, I did not have much to lose by manual analysis. I recognised that triangulating data analysis techniques has the effect of improving the quality of research.

I chose Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis framework to analyse and interpret the meaning of the different data sources because of its flexibility. Thematic analysis provides a method for identifying patterns or themes in the data set and for describing and interpreting their importance (Braun, Clarke & Weate, 2016). I preferred a strand developed by Braun and Clarke (2013), the big Q version of thematic analysis found suitable for use in qualitative studies. Data analysis in this study was both inductive: moving from data to theory and concepts and deductive which is the direct opposite. I used the deductive approach in documentary analysis because I understood the documents in line with my cultural understandings and my previous experience. Braun and Clarke's (2006) strategy demands the following: familiarity with data, generating codes of interest to the researcher, searching for possible themes and coding all data to these, revising themes to produce a candidate thematic map, defining themes and lastly report writing. Following Braun and Clarke, I grouped data into themes and subthemes, which became the basis upon which the rest of the chapters were organised. I approached data analysis from an intepretivist point of view, whereby there are always multiple interpretations from different theoretical perspectives. Thus, I derived themes and subthemes from the multiple interpretations of participants on the way academic appointments, grading and promotions were managed in the two public universities under study.

Themes that emerged from the data included macropolitics: the implementation of academic appointments and promotions and its impacts, local level interests and their influences on academic appointments and promotions, justification for policy implementation, academic views on the implementation of the academic staff appointments, grading and promotions ordinance and their responses.

Performing member validation or member checking, a process whereby I asked part of the participants to respond to research summaries so that they verify my interpretations followed the advice that "representation is a political act" (Roulston & Choi, 2018: 34). Thus, I co-constructed the interview data with interviewees. I took due care to ensure that the categories and themes that emerged from the data would not in any way preclude those emerging from the literature review.

Given that I had inside knowledge, I had to resist the temptation to make the data reflect this knowledge. Often, I had to strike a balance between these two roles but admittedly, the role conflict provided insights that would not have otherwise been available. Role conflict enabled me to separate myself from the data although I was, owing to my insider role, 'part of the data sources.' Denzin (1989) expresses that it is always difficult for an insider researcher to use their role and their experiences to write about others. In dealing with the sensitive data, I valued participants and tried to represent them fairly because of the ethical reflexivity stance adopted throughout the study. In the next section, I discuss reflexivity at a theoretical level and how that helped in positioning myself in the study.

5.9 Reflexivity

Richards (2014) characterises reflexivity as posture taken by qualitative researchers in which they reflect on their own data-making role and the way they relate to their research. In this regard, qualitative researchers make data as they interpret, judge, comment, and make meaning out of their data in ways that may change the complexion of the data. Following Charmaz's (2000) advice that the influence of previous work on individual standpoint should be openly recognised, reflexivity, as widely used by Feminist Researchers was employed. Research is never neutral so the researcher needs to reflect on previous influences to understand how they shape current experiences. I also capture in detail my relationship with the study in section 1.7 of chapter 1.

First, I had to understand how I was related to the work. Reflexivity involves a serious subjectivity in terms of coming to know the self through the research process and critical conceptualisation of the self (Howell, 2013). This suggests that the self needs to be conceived in different ways; in this case, the self was a full time practicing academic familiar with the public university systems.

Thus, the very choice of the topic for this study was influenced by my institutional location. Reflexivity helps the researcher to locate herself/himself within the study that is 'the socio-historical location', acknowledging that they bring past experiences into the issues under study (Howell, 2013:8). Reflexivity acknowledges that self is not only brought to the research situation but is also developed by it. In this regard, I learnt a couple of lessons at professional and personal levels. It is an awareness of the researchers' self-interests and social standing, a deep-seated consciousness of self in engaging with the political dimensions of fieldwork and

creating knowledge (Hertz, 1997). As an insider researcher, I drew some lessons from the research experiences especially my own biases, which emanated from my social and professional background. Reflexivity helped me to interpret the data independent of myself. The researcher can thus never really be neutral and objective because they bring into the research situation their own experiences, which need to be acknowledged. Having exposed the above issues, it is appropriate to turn to a discussion of the criteria for judging case study research and steps that I took to validate the case study.

5.10 Research quality

The criteria for judging the quality of qualitative research has evolved over the years. In undertaking this study on dilemmas in university policy and practice, I became mindful of how the whole work would be judged by readers from designing the case study right up to the production of this report. I did not find the positivist measurements of validity reliability, replicability, and generalisability as a criterion for assessing the quality of research ideal. The quality of qualitative work and validity are judged based on principles of authenticity (Lincoln & Guba, 1989).

In this study, triangulation for data analysis, site triangulation, methodological and data source triangulation were done to validate the study. The use of triangulation of data sources, through which individual viewpoints and experiences were verified against others to provide a rich picture of academic staff appointments, grading and promotions processes enhanced the validity of research findings.

Due to the multiplicity of data sources, Denzin and Lincoln (2000) describe triangulation as crystallisation, which depicts something more than the concept of triangulation. In crystallisation, the researcher emerges with the same story from data gathered from various sources. The purpose of triangulation was to establish the convergence of data from different sources, methods and sites. The use of multiple sources of data, which all pointed to the same themes, such as micropolitics as influencing the management of appointments and promotions, pervasive state control by state actors, and academic resistance to the strategies and tactics of university leadership, is evidence of crystallisation. Some scholars emphasise trustworthiness as indicative of rigour.

Trustworthiness refers to the measures taken to achieve validity, credibility, and believability of a study as assessed by the academy, communities and research participants (Whiting &

Sines, 2012). Guba and Lincoln (1985) advanced four elements that constitute trustworthiness in qualitative research, credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability. The various forms of triangulation discussed above were meant to achieve credibility. The purpose of the critical case study was to make it possible for transferability or generalisability, which is a key tenet of case study research. Generalisation in the qualitative sense focuses on transferability.

Marshall and Rossman (1999) share the view that transferability is problematic given the contextual specificities of the phenomenon under study. Conversely, (Denscombe cited in Shenton, 2016) argues that while it is a truism that each case may be unique, transferability is tenable as that case is also an example within a wider group. Dependability is arrived at if the study is repeated in the same contexts with the same methods, the same participants, and still attaining the same results (Shenton, 2016). The construct of conformability, also known as objectivity on the other hand is arrived at through triangulation, which I have already alluded to.

Other efforts to ensure quality were the many presentations given at conferences in and out of South Africa where I presented papers and part of the work at the Ali Mazrui Centre for Higher Education at the University of Johannesburg. I sought to co-construct knowledge together with colleagues. The multiple exercises captured in this narrative may not necessarily guarantee the production of a quality case study but they can create the basis upon which readers of the work can come to their conclusions and further provide their own interpretations of my interpretations.

5.11 Ethical considerations for the study

Ethical considerations are critical issues in every social science research and have been so for some time. On the question of ethics in qualitative research, Carpenter (2018) summarises that at the bare minimum, ethics requires that researchers treat others, as they would want to be treated.

Ethical issues in research revolve around the need for researchers to ensure that research does no harm to their subjects. Frequently in Africa, subjects are sniffed out based on documentary evidence and punished by the vampire state (Whyte, 1969). This research was sensitive to this

possibility of punishment so common in the region. It, therefore, concealed confidential data even where these would create gaps in the story. The study was participatory and involved academics and politicians not only just in the collection but also in how the data ought to be interpreted in the first place. I employed member checking which is not common among most educational researchers.

Indeed, at the end of the research period, the researcher kept reporting the findings to allow participants to verify whether the final product reflected their position. This practice of disseminating results for purposes of authenticating findings is something that traditional educational research has not been keen to involve.

Ethical issues are critical in qualitative research because they indicate behaviour appropriate or not appropriate and serve as a reminder that research should not harm participants (Iphofen & Tolich, 2018). Ethical considerations that guide research practice are enshrined in the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioural Research report of 1978 often referred to as The Belmont Report. The report spells out three key principles, which include respect for persons, beneficence and justice. Respect for persons requires that individuals should be treated as self-directed agents with the capability of making individual choices and protecting persons with diminished autonomy such as children (Graham, Powell, Anderson, Fitzgerald, & Taylor, 2013). The principle of beneficence means that researchers should not harm participants and good outcomes should be maximised for the participants and humanity in general. This principle means that the study should not cause any harm or risk to participants. The last principle, justice, means that research should not be exploitative or extractive.

As stated earlier, I gave participants consent forms before interviews began and advised them that the study was voluntary, for free and purely academic. They were also allowed to withdraw at any time should they need to do so without any consequences. I assured them of their security and confidentiality with codes and unpublishing their names. Moreover, I gave the key research sites pseudonyms such as HUC and TUZ as part of security and ethical considerations.

5.12 Summary

In this chapter, I have exhausted the methodology followed in this thesis. I started by presenting the theoretical assumptions which guide research to reveal my epistemological, ontological and theoretical position. The chapter then proceeded to discuss how I constructed the case study

and further justified the use of a critical case study for a study of this nature. I examined the research design, which is a critical interpretive case study. The theoretical frames and the research design led to a selection of the relevant methods, which i employed as well as the methodology chosen to get data of a sensitive nature. I used open-ended interviews, examined documents and observations. I also looked at ethical considerations and security issues. Throughout the inquiry, I exercised reflexivity and took measures to ensure that the study remained of high quality. The considerations that I presented in this chapter are important because they contribute to the recognition of the case study as a credible and valid form of research. In the next chapter, I present data on how the state controls the university and in the process, influences university practices.

Chapter Six

Macropolitics and University Control

6.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the macropolitical influences at play including state manipulation of legislative instruments guiding the appointment of university leadership in public universities as well as promotion within them. The chapter examines how the state uses various tactics to ensure that universities implement what it desires. In this chapter, I present data from interviews, policy documents, and media reports on state interference with university education in Zimbabwe. In using different data sources, the thinking was that participants could produce accounts that conform to what is acceptable and conventional. As an academic, I understood that accounts produced by fellow academics could be typical of their positioning, thus, resorted to corroborating data from interviews with media sources and policy documents as well. In addition, due care was taken to ensure that my previous knowledge did not interfere with the selection and presentation of data. Structurally, the chapter begins with an introduction, followed by findings on legislative instruments the state and management use in the appointment of top university leadership. The section also presents findings on how manipulation of recruitment and promotions processes is done. Then, there will be another section on tactics the state uses to make appointees support its mission. In other words, the section exposes the many ways the state holds the university by its horns and this will be followed by a discussion on the consequences of state actions and a chapter summary.

6.2 How the state creates a submissive university

In the section below, I discuss the many ways in which the state ensures that public universities are always in support of its cause using different mechanisms and strategies. These ranges from legislative structures and their manipulation, the lucrative nature of employment contracts for VCs to determining decisions, activities and operations within the state-owned universities which have a bearing on academic staff appointments, grading and promotions. As discussed in chapter 2, the development of universities in Africa is linked to state formation (Mama, 2006). Thus, the intervention of the state in the post-independence period appears to be natural and normal.

6.2.1 Appointment and manipulation of university managers

Using legislation on the appointment of the VC, PVC, and other key posts, the state employs many strategies to create a submissive university. By creating subordination structures, the state wants to exploit the intellectual, material and financial resources through its planted agents within the system. The state may use university funds, vehicles, students, and staff to support political party functions including meetings, elections, and even attacks on opposition party members as is evident in the next chapter. Participants echoed the highly politicised nature of the appointment of university leadership.

> Being a VC or PVC is not a qualification, it is an appointment, and one serves at the mercy of the appointing authority. In this business, the most important person to keep in good books with is the chancellor (Interview notes, politician 1; 5 December, 2018).

Another participant also emphasised the politicised nature of academic appointments and how these imposed limitations on the work of VCs.

> There is no professional gap between VCs and Politicians. So as a VC, you have to please the politicians, local ones, and those above, in the process your work is compromised. I know of a VC who was being pushed out by local people. The reason why he was being pushed out was not very clear but it had to do with the political faction to which he belonged (Interview notes, participant 20; 22 July, 2016).

Participant 9 also summed up the situation in the following words "In this country, if you go against the VC you also go against the Chancellor (22 June, 2016).

The statements above by participants suggest that VCs are not only politically oriented but safeguard their employment contracts by ensuring that they meet and satisfy the needs of the appointing authority more than those of the institution and its other stakeholders. Control of the education system was just but one aspect of "Mugabeism" a unique brand of rule characterised by repressive politics (Mahomva, 2013) which scholars claim has been perpetuated post-Mugabe (Hodgkinson, 2019). Media reports confirm that the constitutional requirement that the appointment of VCs is put into the political office is closely linked to state patronage, which the ruling political party established. Mugabe maintained and rewarded ruling

party supporters by appointing them into high office and giving them land among other things to ensure their loyalty and sympathy (Zimbabwe Independent, 13 September 2019). The practice of choosing VCs based on political expediency rather than merit is not new among politicians in Southern Africa (Makgala, 2017).

In one case, a newly appointed VC expressed profound gratitude to the president for the appointment and pledged that the university would support the President through thick and thin (The Herald, 24 November 2018). What we make of this statement is that this VC is not only a political stooge but is also prepared to sacrifice the university business and community for political support and such VCs can hardly make independent decisions from their employers.

It is also argued that university autonomy in hiring top managers and senior academic staff is usually ignored (sub) consciously. These are people whose political record has been vetted and are politically aligned with the current regime. See extract below from one politician:

> On paper, they are described as best qualified, but the truth is that there is hardly any VC of a state university who has never been a senior activist of the ruling party (Interview notes, politician 2, 7 December, 2018).

The statement above confirms Foucault's idea that each society has its regime of truth or type of discourse it propels and makes function as truth (Foucault, 1977). The discourse that VCs are appointed on a professional basis is meant to control what can be said about their appointment, their suitability to silence critics of the system and legitimate the status quo. It is evident that discourses occur in the social practices of people (Foucault, 1978).

Because VCs know their employer and threat, they comply, conform, please, and palm oil that source to avoid losing their jobs even if they may technically be qualified. Participant 10 remarked that although universities are expected to be autonomous in every respect, they usually find themselves trapped in situations where they cannot avoid it by simply pleasing the political hand even when this hand overloads them (Interview notes, 23 June, 2016).

On the other hand, interviews with politicians revealed that political interests were not always the guiding factor in the appointment of VCs. The due processes suggested that VCs were not always appointed at the whims of the president, as there was transparency.

VCs are appointed through the ministry. There is a criteria committee housed in the ministry, which vets candidates and recommends those who are suitable to the president who then makes the final decision. The process is rather secretive though. (Interview notes, politician 1, December, 2018).

It was not surprising that I got this response from a politician. One, it could be that the participant was mean with truth to avoid beating the system one belonged to. Secondly, it would mean that the participant was not aware of the exact process as they admitted to the secrecy behind it. Perhaps, the best thing I should have done was to interview a politician from the opposition or one that had fallen off from the ruling class wagon to get a balanced view. Furthermore, I may not be wrong to assume that the system was not transparent and free if indeed selection of candidates was done at the ministerial level. From my experience within the public university system, the appointment of VCs did not involve people within the university constituency. Rather it happened at a political level. This is because the Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technonoly Development, as one who constituted the selection team, was a presidential appointee and a politician and thus, prone to making political choices. In the many years, I have served in the public university system; information about the criteria used to select candidates for the post of VC has not been made public. The secrecy behind the selection of candidates into the office of the VC is not surprising given that control of information is a very important micropolitical strategy the state actors use to exert their influence on public universities (Winkler, 2010).

Politically motivated appointment of VCs has been criticised by many scholars on the basis that they contradict global university practice whereby VCs are chosen through open competition and rigorous search enabling the best candidates to be selected (Sirat, Azman, & Da wan, 2016). Scholars further argue that old university Acts such as those in Zimbabwe no longer hold water in the face of a modern university for the 21st century which is highly democratic and autonomous (Saint, 2009). The modern conception of universities is however irritating to politicians, as they feel uncomfortable, threatened, and exposed with its intellectual makeup and critical programmes (Atuahene, 2012). Therefore, politicians seek to control what happens within universities through the appointment of V Cs. This way, the state acts in a micropolitical way by tactfully designing laws, regulations, networks, and practices that would ensure that it dominates and subjugates the universities.

While most participants believed that the problem with the appointment of VCs was largely legislative, in an interview, participant 13 highlighted that: "In terms of the Act, it is clear, it is very clear and has no problem. It's even difficult to challenge it because its basic requirements are okay" (Participant 13, 7 July, 2016).

From the above response, the UZ Act of 1982 was viewed as unproblematic. The problem was seen to emanate from those that used it to suit their political interests. However, a close analysis of the UZ Act sampled for purposes of the study provided evidence to the contrary as is shown later in this chapter. From the literature, it can also be deduced that policies are not value-free, they are infused with values, are political, ideological and thus represent the interests of those in power (Petersen and Béland, 2014; Holt 2017). Government policy documents such as the UZ Act are artefacts that repeat the thoughts of politicians. The Act provided spaces for the Head of state and the Minister to choose appointees who served their interests rather than men and women who could execute their jobs. Thus, the system reflected its colonial inheritance of power and domination.

The constitutional requirement that the Minister be in charge of the appointment of VCs makes it difficult for them to make decisions that are contrary to the expectations of politicians upon whom their job is based. Within other Southern African countries, political manoeuvring by the Minister in selecting the appropriate candidate for the office of the VC is common even where the council has nominated and recommended a suitable candidate (Makgala, 2017). The VC and PVC are traditionally candidates who have served in university education before for some time, often holding administrative posts rather than from industry or government departments (McDade, 2009). Indeed, Media reports confirmed that these bureaucrats were not independent academics primarily interested in pushing the agenda of the university forward in a disinterested manner but were agents of the ruling party prepared to go any lengths to please their political masters. A case in point was the controversial and fraudulent awarding of a Ph.D. degree to the wife of the former President Robert Mugabe, then chancellor, a qualification that has since been contested through the courts (Zimbabwe independent, 5 January, 2018).

Whilst political loyalty was seen to be important, politicians also believed that the system provided room for the appointment of professionals based on merit into the top offices of the university. Politician 1 confirmed that:

> Whilst political loyalty is important in these appointments, sometimes the system accommodates 'no harm characters' like Dennis Norman [former Minister of

agriculture] and Graham Hill [former VC of the UZ]. Both were hired on merit; politically they caused no harm because they played a neutral game. Such candidates portray a picture of equity and inclusivity (Interview notes, 5 December, 2018).

This data reveals that the system regulated itself in ways that made it possible to provide an image of political neutrality. Thus on the surface, it appeared that the university leadership was mainly appointed on a professional basis. Participants felt that government involvement in the appointment of VCs was unwarranted and was mere political machination and safety valves. On the contrary, others held the view that state involvement was a necessity:

> I would not envision a situation whereby a university operates completely independent of the government. No institution operates in a vacuum and we cannot rule out the role of state ideology, whether you move from Zimbabwe to Japan, state ideology is one of those key components that are used to shape or move the education agenda forward (Interview notes, Participant 11, 4 July, 2016).

Such perceptions about the need for universities to fall under state control are not new. Mamdani (1993) revealed that following independence, there were academics who advocated for state control of universities believing that they would be more able to discharge their duties and meet nationalist goals. However, such control proved to be a disaster for public universities. Some politicians have argued that individuals whose political standing is clear but are competent enough should not be denied the opportunity to become VCs (Masire, 2006). Apart from their political standing, university leaders in other countries are chosen based on their ability to raise funds rather than their experience with the university education system (Greenwood & Asher, 2011). While the appointment of VCs in Zimbabwe and other countries in Africa may be influenced by politics, elsewhere, VCs are appointed on merit and transparently (Donina & Paleari, 2018) with non-citizens free to contest. In the Zimbabwean case, politics interfered with the whole academic administrative structure of the university as is also noted below. The major concern when universities are entirely left to the state is that they will be subject to the whims of politicians rather than their constituencies (Deacon, Osman, & Buchler, 2010).

6.2.1.1 The appointment of PVCs Deans and other key officers

Legislative intervention by the government manifests itself more in the appointment of the VC, PVC, and council members the majority of whom were appointed by the minister. As was

normally the case with the appointment of VCs, those appointed to the office of PVC had to pass a political litmus test. Ultimately, mostly party cadres could sail through. However, from a political viewpoint, the appointment of PVCs was considered to have little political value by some participants.

> The state has little interest in the appointment of the other top four [referring to the PVC, bursar, registrar, and librarian]. It does not follow that the PVC will one day become the VC (Interview notes, Politician 1, 5 December 2018).

However, a closer look at the legislation reveals that the VC is designed to set limits to what the PVC can and cannot do. The UZ Act (1982) Section 9:3 states that:

> The VC may delegate to a PVC, either absolutely or subject to conditions, any of his functions in terms of this Act and may at any time amend or withdraw any such delegation, provided that the delegation of the function in terms of this subsection shall not prevent the VC from himself exercising that function.

Through this clause, the state ensures that the details of the PVC's job are dependent on the VC. In other words, whatever work PVCs do is at the discretion of the VC. In this way, the VC ensures that state interests are protected even when the PVC is politically indifferent. In this context, PVCs may just be there for ceremonial purposes and as figureheads.

In this context, micropolitics worked to reinforce macropolitics (the state). Even though the president does not appoint PVCs as per the UZ Act (1982), there was a case where the President as chancellor appointed the PVC for Lupane State University (The Herald, 6 July 2016). This shows that the state violates its statutes when dealing with universities. In a different case and an act of subversion of the university Act, the Minister blocked the appointment of a PVC, who had been nominated for appointment by a state university council after a successful interview because of political background (News Day, 19 July, 2016).

This suggests that politicians were as interested in that office as that of the VC and would not follow the procedures as laid out in the Acts. Micropolitical strategy was used to exclude a potential candidate for the office of the PVC. In this case, the Minister employed 'power over' strategies that do not allow for negotiation (Blase & Anderson, 1995). Control of those to be appointed into offices with access to power is part of what micropolitics constitutes. Media reports also confirmed that all key appointments within public universities were politically

influenced and linked to the desire to protect political power rather than ensuring effective university operations.

> As President Robert Mugabe fought to preserve his political power base, he increasingly turned to government institutions. He needed, as much backing and support as he could get to bolster his hold on power and university vice-chancellors were a natural port of call. Thus, all the vice-chancellors we have today were chosen for their allegiance to Mugabe and ZANU (PF). Not only that. Even pro-vice chancellors, registrars, and faculty and department heads were appointed or removed along political lines (The Zimbabwean, 17 September, 2014).

In the case of deans and directors of centres and institutes, a selection board appointed by the council and chaired by the VC or PVC in the absence of the VC does their appointment. Deans are accountable to the VC and can hold office for a four-year long term after which they can no longer stand for that office. The UZ Act also allows VCs to suspend or terminate the appointment of a dean either on the recommendation of the selection board or "for other good cause" (Section 12: 2a; 2b).

As the chief academic, administrative, and disciplinary officer, the VC wields a lot of power. The power of the VC was further enhanced by the UZ Amendment Act of 1990, which extended the disciplinary powers of university leadership over staff and students. For example, the VC can suspend students and staff following recommendations from the respective disciplinary committees and is responsible for maintaining and promoting the efficiency, effectiveness and good order of the university. This way, deans owe their jobs to the VC. Drawing from Foucault (1972), in this context, bureaucracy is used as an instrument of power and technique to effect it.

Studies have shown that politicians use the appointment of loyal cadres into top positions to ensure that they hold the university system by its horns and diffuse its powers (Aberbach & Rockman, 2009). Others believe that sane presidents are more likely to place competent appointees in high priority areas to ensure effective service delivery that can make the nation grow and compete with world powers (Lewis & Waterman, 2013; Hollibaugh, Horton, & Lewis, 2014). Yet others are of the view that political loyalty is what matters to Presidents whenever these appointments are being made. Given these views, one can see that there are

tensions and contradictions in the work of university managers because while they are appointed to implement government policies in the interest of both the university and society in general; they are also expected to save their political appointing authorities to ensure their survival (Piot, & Kelchtermans, 2016).

What was happening in Zimbabwe is not new. In their study of Cameroonian public universities, Nyamnjoh, Nkwi & Konnings (2012) discovered that almost all academics including VCs and deans owed their allegiance to the president. The scholars also reported that most of the university policies were reminiscent of the colonial system, which aimed to sustain maximum discipline, subordination, and loyalty of the blacks. Habermas's (2010) idea of the university as a public sphere in which citizens can present their views, analyse and criticise societal issues affecting them is anathema in Zimbabwe. Government involvement in matters of academic recruitment was indicative of a state that digs its head deep into the affairs of the universities to ensure its interests are met. The state has been involved in over-riding university constitutions (Chikwanha, 2009). This is common in other parts of Africa, where the state has interfered with the appointment, employment and promotion of academics (Omari, 1991; Altbach, 2005). The section below discusses how the state secures the unwavering cooperation of the VC.

6.2.2 Dangling the Carrot: VC's lucrative Contract

Politics of control are reflected in the UZ Act (1982). Here it is summarily stated that in the absence of clearly defined rules of tenure, which are made public, the VCs may serve at the discretion of the president. Such a contract also basically, gives the VCs license to override the rules of the university and its laws. For instance, the former VC of the UZ who fraudulently awarded Grace Mugabe a Ph.D. referred to in section 6.2 above secured an extension of contract beyond two terms of office instead of facing the chop. Besides, the UZ Act does not provide for such an extension that exceeds two terms (Zimbabwe Independent, 10 October, 2014). This suggests that there was a heavy hand beside the council that sanctioned this illegal extension of office. In confirmation, one interviewee revealed that in a meeting in which members of the University Teachers Association took the VC to task over irregularities in academic recruitment, the VC boasted that the President was happy with the work he was doing and was the only authority to please (Interview notes, participant 16, 13 July, 2016).

Using a 'power over' strategy, the VC constructed corruption and favouritism as legitimate and used the university hierarchy to silence academics who complained about the system of hiring. As in the Foucauldian understanding, the discourse the VC used was an assertion of power. Power has its targets (Brenner, 1994), in this case to silence the academics by asserting the VCs' position as invincible. Politicians can ensure loyalty by offering lucrative and attractive conditions of service designed to keep corrupt the reasoning of VCs. For instance, the state buys them posh cars; provides paid holidays once a year, executive accommodation, health insurance, and all other benefits making sure that VCs and their top managers support the state. This is similar to Karl Marx's conflict theory termed subordination of the workers through wages to make sure that they remain loyal and passive. See the comment below.

> Ministers aspire to be VCs. The Minister does not have a contract similar to that of a VC; it pays more to be a VC (Interview notes, Politician 2, 7 December, 2018).

Of course, there is nothing wrong with benefits associated with the contract of VCs because they occupy a strategic position within the university as well as society in general. In the context of the neoliberal university especially, VCs are increasingly assuming the role of CEOs and are privileged in so many ways (Shore & Davidson, 2014). However, according to Zimbabwean standards and the backdrop of the unprecedented economic meltdown (Mpondi, 2015; Bratton, 2014) which has affected universities to a level where others have described them as glorified high schools (Mlambo, 2013), it is bewildering to think how the state is capable of sustaining a luxurious life for its VCs. One can argue that the benefits and power associated with the work of the VCs is meant to secure their loyalty.

6.2.3 Interfering with the appointment of university council

Section 11 (1) of the UZ Act (1982) provides for the establishment of a university council with the responsibility to oversee the circadian running of the university. University councils are responsible for the appointment and dismissal of staff. The Minister appoints 24 councillors in addition to the 14 members whom the Minister does not appoint. Organically, the council is comprised of the chairperson, vice-chairperson, VC, PVC, three members appointed by the Senate, 8 members appointed by the Minister, and 4 members appointed by the council with the university registrar as its secretary. It constitutes representatives from the university senate, parent ministry, administrative staff, the workers' committee, and student union representatives

among others. The chair of the council is chosen from that bag of councillors appointed by the Minister, which ensures that the 'right' person is chosen. The university executive council through the VC recommends to the Minister the suitable candidate for the post of council chairperson. The legislation ensures that VCs and the Minister can influence the appointment of office bearers based on patronage (both political and otherwise).

> You look at the university system, the university council runs it but the VC nominates the chair of the council. The university executive with the obvious influence of the Presidential office technically appoints the chairperson of council who is supposed to be overseer of everyone. I would not see a university chairperson of council who comes and looks at things in a radically different way and supervises the VC in a way that eventually can even threaten their position. l cannot see that happening, so we are looking at this whole system where we think even these chairpersons of councils are supposed to be appointed by the academics transparently. Council chairpersons should be people who are qualified and have the power to override the VC and other interested parties (Interview notes, participant 1, 6 June, 2016).

Apart from the council chairperson, the state is involved in the appointment of university council members in a seemingly democratic way but always ensures that all candidates of choice are included in the bag from which they are selected. State involvement in governance issues is often done under the pretext of ensuring excellence (Sifuna, 1998).

While the above participant felt that existing councils in public universities could not effectively contribute to sound university governance because of the manner in which council members were appointed and its composition, Participant 14 felt that that council was capable of executing its duties.

> When it comes to council meetings, it is a much better platform to influence policies because most of them are ratified at that level (Interview notes, participant 14, 8 July, 2016).

Perhaps, council members became ineffective because they either lacked the technical knowledge about how universities must run or as senior members elsewhere, they hardly had time to dedicate to university business which may involve reading volumes of minutes and thus could have felt better off guided by the VC to the detriment of the system. However, in Zimbabwe, it is not surprising to have university councils being comprised mainly of members

of the ruling party. The thinking behind the collegial or stakeholder model implied in the governance system in Zimbabwe is that a council, which represents the composition of the people in which the university finds itself in (Soudien, 2010), should manage universities. In South Africa, the Higher Education Act (1997) prescribes that councils be the highest decision making bodies responsible for the good order and governance of universities, they are also in charge of financial policy, performance, and quality of outputs and over half of their members are external to the institution.

The presence of external stakeholders within the councils may help instil public confidence in the university as some of them bring specific industry and management skills. While this is not a problem, in the Zimbabwean case, the extent to which some of these stakeholders may drive towards the political line should not be underestimated. Autonomy in its substantive sense is missing because the university council is a weakened system due to the presence of political influences and representation.

The Zimbabwean case contradicts the general idea that the composition of the council needs attention for sound university governance (Morris, 2010). Council members should be appointed based on their knowledge of the university system and their independence from external interest groups or intervention from the government. Although university councils in Zimbabwe are composed of multiple stakeholders, their complexion does not necessarily increase transparency and improve university governance because of political influences. Councils comprised of multiple stakeholders are likely to experience tension as they may seek to represent sectional interests.

6.2.4 Weakening the collegiate system

The Act gives the responsibility of appointment and grading of academic staff to the Academic Appointments Board while the Academic Staff promotions committee handles promotions. The VCs or their nominees chair both committees. As chair in both cases, the VCs can always have the last word and can use their positioning to influence decisions in their favour. The Act gives VCs who are politicians in a sense the power to chair all decision-making committees in charge of the university administration. This is what one participant said about the work of the academic staff appointments and promotions committee:

The committees are just there for formality, even if they deliberate on anything, we are told that we are only making recommendations. This suggests that the committees do not have any power to make decisions. We have discovered that certain decisions the committee makes are later reversed elsewhere. We then query the purpose of those committees. (Interview notes, participant 9, 22 June 2016).

Indeed Participant 15 also highlighted that the "committees at departmental level are ok the problem lies with the top AAB chaired by the VC" (Interview Notes with Participant 12, 6 July, 2016).

Moreover, the decisions of the senate, which should be the highest committee to address academic issues, were also manipulated. See the extract below:

The VC comes with his thinking, sits in the top committee, in the senate, and tells you what he wants so it is assumed that the senate has made the decision when in fact it has not deliberated anything (Interview notes, participant 12, 6 July, 2016).

The VC in this case was able to act micropolitically by influencing the decision of the Senate to achieve personal interests. The VC or a nominee who is often the PVC chairs the Academic Staff Promotions Committee responsible for academic staff promotions. Other members include the PVC, four members of the council appointed by the Minister, deans of faculties or directors of institutes, and at least three professors of the university appointed by the senate.

In a democratic arrangement, the role of the VC in the committees should be in concordance with the views of the committee. By making decisions single-handedly, the VCs contradict the values of transparency and debate which characterise shared governance (Meyer, 2007). Statutes govern the composition, procedures, and operations of academic entities including departments and departmental boards, council, senate, faculty and faculty boards (Schedule sections 2 and 25 of the UZ Act).

However, the various units involved in internal governance do not seem to be powerful. The Departmental Board is only responsible for recommending appointments and promotions of staff after rigorous selection procedures to which the VCs have the final say. VCs chair the collegial system, which is supposed to increase transparency and accountability, as all proposals have to be ratified by them. Thus, the real power lies in one office, that of the VC who has the final authority. Although the university governance system confers decision-

making power to departmental boards and committees, despite the existence of an internal hierarchical structure, the collegiate is chaired by the VC and is thus weak in the real sense. The UZ Act also gives more power to the ministry to influence internal university governance. The MHTESTD is the parent body to which all public universities in Zimbabwe are accountable to leading to some kind of ministerial steering. Having been appointed by the president, the Minister is unlikely to become a neutral actor thus can hardly lead and regulate the university in a just manner.

The use of the legislative instruments is premised on a top-down (undemocratic) view of policy (Hogwood & Gun, 1984; Pressman & Wildavsky, 1984) which stresses control of people as the best way to implement policy (Tummers & Bekkers, 2012) and get public universities to deliver. The Zimbabwe case is a typical example of challenges in university governance in African Anglophone countries (Babyesiza, 2015). Rowlands (2017) confirms that in considering the roles of academic boards and committees, it is difficult for them to follow the prescribed responsibilities because these do not match with practice. Indeed the Zimbabwean case shows that proclaimed state expectations on public universities are not in harmony with the internal university governance must operate. The Act also gives VCs so much power such that they have leeway to abuse this power given that the subunits cannot act as checks and balances. Hence, the thesis sought to examine the realities focusing on a specific case of academic staff appointments, grading and promotions system.

6.2.5 University Autonomy abused to enhance state power

The University Acts provide for the autonomy of public universities. Section 3 subsection 2 of the UZ Act (1982) reads "The University shall continue as a body corporate with perpetual succession and may sue and be sued in its corporate name." Furthermore, the Act guarantees universities the power to appoint and promote staff on a meritocratic basis. Section 4 specifies the powers and objects of the university and in subsection *m*; the university is free to "enter into such contracts, to establish such trusts and to appoint such staff and employees as may be required by the University". The Act thus promises autonomy in that public universities can deal with issues relating to academic staff appointments, grading and promotions in ways that best meet their institutional needs. However, participants highlighted that university autonomy could be used in favour of what politicians desired. VCs could implement academic

appointments, grading and promotions policies in ways that contradict the UZ Act to protect state interests in the name of autonomy. In such cases, the state hid behind the respect for institutional autonomy not taking measures against the abuse of power by top university leadership as observed by a participant below:

> Universities are autonomous; the University Act makes them somewhat independent. Thus, we have a Minister who is in charge of ensuring good university governance but the Minister cannot enforce or come and tell the university to do something, like the VCs, PVCs, even if he or she is fully aware that university policies are being violated (Interview notes, participant 17, 14 July, 2016).

Perhaps the policy inconsistency is intentional on the part of the state because it provides top university leadership with spaces to safeguard macro interests at the institutional level. However, whenever it is convenient for the state and whenever state interests are threatened, the same Minister (whose role is ritualistic as observed in chapter 2 section 2.13) has the power to interfere with university governance and institutional autonomy is set aside. The Minister may assert the power to fire a VC (with the obvious blessing of the Head of State). From the legislative instruments, university autonomy both in terms of organisational and academic matters is highly challenged and compromised if one considers the appointment of council members, VCs and PVCs. Organisational autonomy comprises administrative structures, leadership, governance, and power distribution. On the other hand, academic autonomy refers to the power of the institution to recruit and promote staff without external influences (Pruvot & Estermann, 2018). University autonomy in all its senses did not seem to be observed and was twisted to conveniently serve political goals.

The evidence presented in this section reveals the tensions surrounding the relationship between the state and university leadership. This involves the need to satisfy state expectations, which may be contradictory to university ethos and at the same time ensuring accountability and quality to internal and external stakeholders. The second level tension lies between making universities serve politicians and making them spaces for high-quality research, teaching, and learning to fulfil their traditional mandates (Rowlands, 2017). If VCs become untouchable at the institutional level, chances are high that no level of society except the chancellor will be able to stop them. Thus, public universities are more inclined to operate like family enterprises or personal empires defeating the whole purpose that they are a public good existing on taxpayers' resources and trust. Ironically, the Minister of Higher education in Zimbabwe has

often emphasised that politics should not interfere with academic matters (Newsday Zimbabwe, 12 February, 2018). Through such discourse, the state was constructed as interested in creating public universities that are powerful and independent while in practise this was not the case. The discourse was deployed to maintain state control while stakeholders were made to think otherwise. Like Armstrong, et.al. (2013) puts it, micropolitics will usually interact with external macropolitics to influence university practices. As will also be shown later on in chapter 7, micropolitics and macropolitics reinforce each other in many ways. The manipulation of legislative instruments serves to show the dynamism and complexity of the policy processes. At the point of implementation, policies are interpreted and modified in ways that suit the objectives of state actors (Reynolds & Saunders, 1987). If the rationalist approach to policy were unproblematic, in this context, one would have expected state actors such as the chancellor to use the legislative instruments in ways that ensure excellence and efficiency in the management of public universities. However, in practice, this is not the case as the above discussion has revealed.

6.2.6 Denying universities financial autonomy

In the economic sense, the state provides financial support to institutions through the parent ministry. The funding includes staff remuneration and sustenance of institutions, which includes research grants and promotion benefits. Thus, without state funding universities are incapacitated and continue to look up to the government. It also emerged from the interviews that state funding of university education created a perpetual dependent relationship between the state and the universities:

> I think there is no way universities can operate outside state politics because they are financed by it, the state is involved in the appointment of university managers making state control a reality, ultimately, institutions are also liable to state failures and it affects their operations (Interview notes, Participant 20, 22 July, 2016).

In addition to this, one of the politicians I interviewed also revealed this "If you do not pay the bill, you cannot control the university" (Interview notes, Politician1, 5 December, 2018).

Because of the economic relations, the state can keep universities within its orbit and ensure that they play to its tune. Mama (2006: 9) indeed reveals, "today the state, while still the major source of funding for higher education, is no longer uncritically assumed to represent the public interest in Africa". Much of the funding for research comes from the government and is disbursed to the 14 public universities. There is research evidence to the effect that up to 95% of higher education expenses in African countries are controlled by the state (Uetela, 2017). Government funding of university education can be supported from a social justice point of view (Rawls, 2008).Governments need to ensure that education does not go beyond the reach of the poor. In the case of Zimbabwe, the situation has meant that the fortunes of the university are tied to those of the state (Nyazema, 2010). Funding is used to ensure compliance in ways that make it possible for loyalists to receive the requisite resources needed to run universities while those who are less conforming are financially disadvantaged. One participant had this to say:

> In terms of funding, my observation is that it mostly depends on the relationship between the VCs and the government. Those institutions with such fluid relationships, who have a close relationship with the government, will go the easier way in terms of researches and the like. Let us take this university as an example, the first VC is the one who did all these developments here because it is alleged that he was strongly linked to Mugabe, and after him, everything just stopped. VCs who are connected to the Presidium are provided with resources. Now we do not have resources for research, which is key to our promotions (Interview notes, Participant 13, 7 July, 2016).

The political economy of funding is such that universities should follow the economic trajectories of the state so that there is never a time when they are powerful enough to constitute a threat. Even within institutions as is observed in the next chapter, the VCs use funding to establish a following by providing benefits associated with promotions to some while denying others. In 2016, the then Minister of Higher and Tertiary Science and Technology Development Minister acknowledged that the higher education sector "is a neglected and forgotten sector of the country" (Chronicle, 21 August, 2015). The neglect of universities did not come as a surprise given that academics were ranked as the most notorious critics of the regime (Human Rights Watch, 2014). Thus, without funding, the work of academics including research is hampered and this has significant implications for their promotions. While academics are required to publish work of good quality to earn promotion, the state hardly made the resources

for research and publications available. Relative to this, at one point, the government threatened to completely wean off state universities or make them pay a percentage of their staff salaries (The Herald, 25 May, 2015). Perhaps these were just empty threats given the level of interest the state had in its universities. With state funding, universities can hardly be freed from the political influences because of their over-dependence on it. MacKenzie (1986) describes African universities as vulnerable as there is much dependence on state funding. The relationship is always skewed in favour of the government (Netswera & Mathabe, 2006). In Zimbabwe as is the case in other African countries, the government has used funding as a means to co-opt both university students and lecturers into a pro-government force (Makunike, 2015; Omaar, 1991).

6.2.7 Interventionist policy steering

State dominance in policy issues is not new. It was common in the colonial era. Academics expressed concerns over control and lack of participation in policy matters not just within the university but beyond, casting doubts on the expertise of those involved and the credibility of the policy processes:

> I am a specialist in renewable energy, and the other day I saw on TV that the Minister was announcing that they were in the early stages of formulating a policy on renewable energy. I was so surprised that I am working in one of the biggest universities in Zimbabwe, but I have not been consulted yet I am a specialist in this area (Interview notes, participant 16, 13 July, 2016).

In the post-independence period, state supremacy in policy issues was perpetuated due to the influence of external agents such as the World Bank and the IMF who stirred up government-driven policy initiatives. Donor organisations offered policy solutions in tune with authoritarian politics that is so prevalent in Africa (Molla, 2018) which excluded players outside the official state policy making machinery. University governance system in Zimbabwe follows the neoliberal ideology by which state power is seen as positive in advancing market mechanisms (Shawa, 2017). However, such a position may impede democratic university governance and policy steering mechanisms. The policy steering apparatuses a government chooses to use influences university governance (Bleiklie & Kogan, 2007). Thus, participants felt that the

problems of policy and its implementation at the university level were, in part shortcomings of national governance:

> The VC uses political power in running the university, the same power is used in the appointment and promotions system, what is done at a national level is just the duplicate of what happens in the university. (Interview notes, participant 7, 17 July, 2016).

Policies are tied to individual Ministers who do not consult academics such that a change of portfolio by a Minister responsible for university education or more generally a change of government means the emergence of new policies. Some of the participants echoed this:

> The policy framework changes with the coming in of different ministers, they will come in and change the direction of how the policy should go so policies are never supported to the end, they are tailor-made to a person, that is where the problem is. Policies also lack relevance because they are developed from above (Interview notes, participant 12, 6 July, 2016).

The MHTESTD is responsible for the supervision of education policy and implementation in state universities (Human Rights Watch, 2014). Following a rationalist approach, policies are arbitrarily announced by the President or by the responsible minister. The Minister responsible for university education in Mugabe's era announced the development of a new University Act to cover all universities in the country but this has not seen the light of day in the new dispensation:

> The principles of the new Act approved by cabinet last week will repeal all Acts of universities and the Manpower Development Act. We will come up with a new law by the end of July and we have come up with a strategy document for the next 10 years (Chronicle, 17 April, 2017).

In a news article titled "Government standardised staff Promotions at Varsities" (The Herald, 10 August, 2018), the new Minister that came in with the Second Republic made a similar announcement to do with a harmonised promotional system in which all public universities were expected to follow. In this item, the Minister further announced, "Through the Structural

Instruments (SI) 132, 3 and 37 of 2018)…a Professor at Lupane State University will be the same as a Professor at Gwanda State University."

The government approach to policy that is state-centric, top-down and thus liable to implementation at lower levels is not consistent with democratic values. From this approach, the government sets policy which implementers, in this case, VCs, must put into practice mechanically and in an intended way to achieve its objectives (Mulcahy, 2015). VCs are material agents tasked with the delivery of government objectives. This is why discussions about new academic staff promotion policies are announced by the Minister without any involvement of academics as should be the case in a collegial university governance system.

The top-down approach however seems to provide many spaces for the work of VCs as social actors who interpret policies according to the meanings they make of the text (Singh, Thomas & Harris, 2013; Braun, Maguire, & Ball, 2010). According to Ball, Maguire and Braun (2012) the process of putting policy into practice is not straight forward because there are many mediating factors such as resource availability, history, and context. Thus, in the context of this study, the process of putting the appointments, grading and promotions ordinance into practice is influenced not only by the macro-economic conditions of the country but also other factors such as the political context and interests of state actors (external governance).

The state seeks to control education policy for practical reasons. Education is a critical ideological source of power used to shape other areas of societal life and advance state interests (Shapiro & Berkeley, 1986). Burton (2004) argues that participation fosters social solidarity and leads to better policies. From a study of Ghana, Mohammed (2015) concludes that many regimes in Sub-Saharan Africa are either autocratic or are on the path to democratic rule. Thus, few people are invited to participate in policy making hence such policies fail to get public support. In Zimbabwe, Moyo and Modiba, (2013) also observed that policies fail because they lack public support. However, largely, state intervention in education policy cannot be completely ruled out because issues of equity and social justice need to be addressed.

Following from the discussion above, the state in Zimbabwe uses both interventionist and control models of policy steering and university governance to keep universities submissive. Based on the UZ Act, the role of the President is supposed to be ceremonial but as noted in this chapter, the Presidium has used its powers to control universities. Omari (1991) cited in

(Shawa, 2017) succinctly characterises state intervention as comprised of the following features, an inactive chancellor who is also the head of state and government, a weak ministry of education that cannot address university problems; university councils that are largely dormant and only reactive to issues and a Senate that exists solely to address academic issues. These features largely characterise the public university system in Zimbabwe. At the same time, the mode of steering shows features of state control (discussed in Chapter 2, section 2.10.2). In a deliberative university system, which allows social justice to prevail, one would expect capable leaders to be appointed for the top jobs while decisions and operations are managed in a bottom-up fashion using policy frameworks that are debated by relevant stakeholders.

6.3 Outcomes of Control

The control measures, which the state institutes, have ramifications for the work of the university and society. Universities cease to be public institutions from where society must derive benefits. The politicised relationship between public universities and the state in Sub Saharan Africa has caused a lot of damage (Boaduo, 2013).

6.3.1 Politicised appointments and promotion of a kakistocracy

Putting the appointment of the VC in the office of the President ensures that only candidates that the president approves of are selected. The candidates may not necessarily be the best but just because they have a reputation for positive politics. Respondents believed that since the appointment of top academics in charge of university management was not meritocratic it provided room for the appointment of least able and party-oriented leadership.

> An ideal situation is one in which individuals are not appointed based on political affiliation but based on merit, people who have gone through the system who understand it will be better off to manage these universities than those who are just appointed along political lines (Interview notes, participant 19; 20 July, 2016)

Participant 16 emphasised the widely visible poor governance in state universities and its effects on academic appointments, grading and promotions.

> Besides the issue of resources, the way academic appointments, promotions, and

grading are managed in state universities has largely to do with governance, many pathologies of governance. We are looking at corruption, patronage, and all those things, which the system allows university leadership to get away with (Interview notes, 13 July, 2016).

In respect to the above views, it has been argued that politically influenced appointments are likely to promote mediocrity in terms of leadership because they are anti-meritocratic and often do promote abuse of power. See the media report below.

The public officials in our universities know perfectly well that they are not competent enough to be holding such positions. Such characters may even loot public funds with impunity because they are guaranteed protection by appointing authority (Newsdzezimbabwe, 15 October, 2018).

Dangerously, government interference with the appointment of VC, PVC, and university councillors done in Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia, and other African countries is one of the weak points the state gets its way into the university and ably defuses it (Fussy, 2018; Shawa, 2017). In 2016, for example, the ministry of education in Nigeria, in violation of the University Act of 2003 dismissed more than ten VCs for unknown professional reasons and replaced them with their political stooges (Fatunde, 2016).

The Nigerian case tells us that political appointed jobs are not reliable as they can be relinquished the same way one got them as long as the employee does not kneel before the appointing authorities even if it means doing so against their ethics. This also suggests that political appointees may victimise sound academics and turn down their applications for promotion simply to protect their jobs. Political appointees do this with the help of spies and other surveillance systems to ensure that staff does not rise against the government and its policies (Hwami, 2010) and/or university administration. Furthermore, the constitutional requirement that the sitting President be the chancellor of public universities creates managers who are loyal to the state and protects incompetent members who are politically connected.

The state uses its power to control universities because, in part, it perceives power as coming from above (centralised), as opposed to the power that comes from below (decentralised) (Foucault, 1980). However, attempts by the state to dispossess councils and faculty members of their power as discussed in section 6.2.4 above are a recognition of power as coming from

below, hence the need to thwart it. Ball (1987) and Foucault (1980b) are right in asserting that power is ubiquitous in education.

6.3.2 Nullification of public accountability

According to Winkler (2010), politically influenced appointments of VCs are driven by the desire to protect the interests of the state and the rulers. Winkler further observed that state actors use micropolitical structures within universities, which include alliance building with university top leadership and create the impression that they care about the universities' welfare when in fact the idea is to make leadership accountable to politicians. An interview with politician number 2 on this assumption revealed this:

> The Act is clear, VCs are appointed by the president, so the government secures its interests through the appointed VCs whom it can also fire. Yes, VCs are semi-gods in universities but not before the creator. You cannot challenge those. (Interview notes, Politician 1, 5 December, 2018).

The state created VCs that are all-powerful and only owe their allegiance to one person in the land, the President. From a study on the crisis at the UZ, Hwami (2012) established that the VC disobeyed a court order without facing any contempt charges. This implies that in some sense VCs are above the law simply because they are high profile politicians and kids of the number one citizen. If somebody cannot even fear the constitutional law, how would they respect mere regulations and by-laws of a university? Thus, a culture of impunity, brutality, and selective justice was established which mainly targeted the opposition and those considered dissidents within universities (Zimbabwe Independent, 13 September 2019). The power of topmost university managers is acknowledgeable within the university contexts, society and at the state level such that everybody can feel it (Halffman & Radder 2015; Anderson, 2008).

Responding to why the parent ministry or ZIMCHE did not address the problems of governance in state universities, participants argued:

> In this country, if you go against the VC you also go against the Chancellor. It becomes increasingly difficult to pin down these VCs. Go to any public university, no VC might be clean in terms of corruption (Interview notes, Participant 9, 22 June, 2016).

If VCs cannot be challenged by anybody except the creator, whom in this case I suppose, is the President or maybe God, then who can challenge or discipline them in the absence of the creator? Based on the above view, I can assume that VCs are immune and irresponsible to the demands of the university community they serve. Accountability in university education means that VCs are expected to be good stewards of public funds and programmes and ensure that they deliver according to the expectations of the public (Omal & Afolabi, 2018), but in the Zimbabwean case, this becomes impossible.

According to Dunn (2003: 61), "accountability is the obligation owed by all public officials to the public… for explanation and justification of their use of public office…" Thus if VCs acquire the status of semi-gods or demigods because of the circumstances of their appointment, and become accountable only to the number one citizen, under such political influences, universities cease to be public goods and spaces of democracy and liberation (Guzmán-Valenzuela & Barnett, 2013).

Contrary to the assumption that VCs are demigods and accountable to the president only, Politician 2 had this to add:

> VCs cannot challenge the president, not even the minister. One VC challenged the Minister over a technical report, and he eventually lost his job. State universities are dependent (Interview notes, Politician 2, December, 2018).

Ordinarily, VCs have multiple constituencies to which they must respond not just the president. These include other than politicians, students, parents, alumni, industry and society and international organisations. Where university leadership is preoccupied with the demands of a single constituency such as politicians, the university ends up losing its value to become a political youth wing. Under such circumstances, university leadership becomes preoccupied with implementing policies to the satisfaction of politicians who butter their bread.

Since both VC and chair of the council are political appointees by the same president, they all may belong to the same political party and are birds of the same feathers. In the event of abuse of the system, the two cannot discipline each other without the knowledge of the president. The political game is perhaps that the three top people: chair of the council, VC, and the chancellor possibly are a well-coordinated syndicate that is ready to protect each other. By implication, it means once VCs are allowed to go scot-free after abusing their office, other political leaders will ride on it to infiltrate the system knowing that the VC is now toothless and part of the

game. Such abuses would range from financial abuse, admission of students connected to politicians, dismissal of suspected anti-government students and staff, recruitment of dependents of politicians into the university teaching and support staff among others. The university will end up being entirely a political ground where mass rallies are held rather than spaces for higher education, deliberation and intellectualism. Political parties in Zimbabwe have used universities as sites for Presidential rallies (Zimbabwe Independent, 18 July, 2013).

Besides, the UZ Act (1982) provides the VCs with open contracts and bestows on them unlimited power. This allows VCs to turn universities into personal estates, as they are not accountable except to the council chair who is also in some sense a presidential appointee. During the interviews, a participant revealed how a VC used their power to fire a university registrar who wanted to be professional and objected to the VC's decisions based on the rule of law.

> We had a professional university registrar here who would closely see what the VC was doing. I do not know what exactly happened, but I know that he lost his job just because he challenged the VC on some matter based on principle and the University Act (Interview notes, participant 17, 12 July 2016).

In the context of Zimbabwe, VCs heavily rely on state power, which is hierarchical as opposed to the power from the bottom as envisaged by Foucault (1980). This is opposed to the thinking that the power of VCs in the 21st century should be derived from the internal and external constituencies they are expected to represent, a form of leadership based on consensus (Thorp & Goldstein, 2018). However, the powers of the VCs resonate very well with Foucault's reconceptualisation of power as being ubiquitous because they can exercise it everywhere within and without the universities. For example, other than commanding the universities, VCs in Zimbabwe have even the power to command the Judiciary like the one that defied the contempt of court order cited above. What it means is that politically appointed VCs who lack public accountability can implement university policies to the satisfaction of their appointing authorities and for their interests. Political appointments generate malpractices at all levels including manipulated academic staff appointments, grading and promotions guided by patronage, corruption, and cronyism.

6.3.3 Creation of patronage networks

Participants also confirmed the existence of patronage networks in public universities that operated like mafia groups by promoting a culture of impunity and self-enrichment agendas. At the same time, the system enabled coalition building (Blase and Blase, 2002) among those who partook of it. Participant 6 echoed that:

> It is a system because these are just the same people, the people in ZIMCHE, the people in the ministry of education; VCs and management are just the same. I mean there is a system of patronage and people are put into positions because they are related and are friends. ZIMCHE and the ministry of higher education can do nothing to bring sanity to state universities because their friends are there. ZIMCHE and ministry may simply talk but their hands are tied (Interview notes, Participant 6, 16 June, 2016).

Participant 10 also revealed the existence of patronage networks in state-owned universities whose purpose is to enrich those at the top.

> Noncompliance to policy stipulations is not in any way hidden from the ministry, what has become pandemic is corruption. People seem to operate as syndicates making sure they fill their pockets. These things are open to anyone who is free-minded but I just do not know how they are unattended (Interview notes, Participant 10, 23 June, 2016).

The position of the chancellor makes it easy for public universities to play games and act as a breeding ground for the promotion of patronage networks and corruption. In patronage-based appointments, the president appoints people to various lucrative positions to reward them for their loyalty, obedience and discipline (Bearfield, 2009). The legislative requirement for the appointment of VCs makes them susceptible to corruption and patronage with the knowledge that they will enjoy the protection of the Head of state as long as they efficiently serve political interests. A good example of academic patronage is the conferment of honorary degrees or sometimes fake PhDs as was the Grace Mugabe case (The Zimbabwe Independent,19 September 2014; The Daily News, 15 October, 2018).

The constitutional requirement that the president appoints VCs presents serious challenges in academic staff appointments, grading and promotions. In this way, VCs do not need to be accountable for their actions. Yanguas and Bukenya (2016) remind us that the constitutional separation of powers is done to enhance horizontal accountability and reduce the subversion of

the state for political purposes. Thus, without it, universities are heavily politicised and become useless as academic organisations.

6.3.4 Increased censorship impeding university work

To silence critics, the government works in cohorts with the university administration through a network of students and faculty members who act as informers. Being political functionaries, top management of state universities try to monitor the activities of academics to ensure that they are politically compliant. In line with the political culture of silence and fear, that has gripped academics, one participant revealed:

> I think politics to some extent does influence the way business is done within the university, people are afraid to say things out and if they say them, they say them in secret places. (Interview notes, participant 8, 20 June, 2016).

Academics can hardly criticise the university leadership for poor implementation of the academic staff appointments grading and promotions ordinance. As one journalist notes, a culture of fear and silence grips the academy such that even the most rebellious academics lack the courage to speak. From the media, it is revealed that:

> They talk only in muffled tones. They are queasy even to discuss anything about their institutions on the phone because they suspect they have been bugged. You have to meet them in the far corner of a pub or in a car with rolled-up windows (The Zimbabwean, 17 September, 2014).

Academics in Africa began to fall out of favour with nationalist leaders in the 1960's when they criticised their autocratic rule and were labelled as transmitters of a foreign ideology (Zeleza, 2003). Even the most seemingly tolerant Julius Nyerere ridiculed them (Hyden, 1991). This has made the academic work untenable, all of which have implications on their promotion.

Thus, it has been argued that academics exercise self-censorship or voluntary censorship in all their work to keep out of trouble with the state, thus inhibiting the production of 'subversive' literature, which is likely to unsettle the government (le Roux, 2018; Altbach, 2005). Academics are not free to speak their minds using the university space because they are fully

aware that academic freedom pronounced on paper does not necessarily exist on the ground. Indeed, within the university itself, academics are not comfortable to criticise administration on the glaring malpractices for fear of surveillance hence exercise self–censorship. Self-censorship is justified because academics are fully aware of the consequences of their critique. Censorship associated with state repression is common in many African countries (Mama, 2006). Above all, academics are aware that there is an officially rehearsed way of responding when discussing institutional matters, which they cannot violate without consequence. Critical topics that warrant research but are viewed as politically sensitive are avoided by academics to remain politically correct (Chege, 2009).

Such sensitivity influenced not only the content I included in this thesis but how I presented data. I was fully awake to the challenges that I could encounter after the production and publication of the report and thus decided to take due care. State-appointed agents within the university can create a space that they want (Jacobs, 1998), to some extent making it possible for authorities to implement academic staff appointments, grading and promotions policies in the manner that they want. There are clear examples of academics that are critical of the state who have lost employment or faced deportation (Chikwanha, 2009). This is a common trend in many African countries. For example, in Botswana, Kenneth Good a political scientist faced deportation after presenting a seminal paper on presidential succession at the University of Botswana (Taylor, 2006). Censorship is a tool that colonial governments used to prevent the attainment of a just society. The practice of having state spies in universities has been common in Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia, Tanzania and other African countries. These spies may range from military, police intelligence, academics, university students and party wings among others.

African academics have sought to use their expertise to challenge ruling governments much to their disappointment. Other than job-loss and demotions, some have suffered physical consequences like torture, imprisonment and assassination (Ngirwa, Euwema, Babyegeya, & Stouten, 2014). This is so because internal governance structures work in cohorts with those external. The data presented in the next chapter also attests to this argument.

6.3.5 Undermining the rule of law and promoting a culture of impunity

Africa is afflicted by what Makinda (2012) refers to as 'leadership malaise' implying a situation where corruption is widespread and the political leaders are not willing to respect the rule of

law for their benefit and the country at large. Because of the culture established by political leadership, VCs were running universities the same way the country was being run, violating statutes without consequences. VCs, with the protection of the president who counted on them for political support, had also become lawless, authoritarian, and immortal. Echoing the intersection of state power and that of the VC as a guide to decision making regarding academic appointments and promotions, participant 9 made the following remarks:

> In our union meetings, l remember we went to the VC and we tried to discuss with him issues to do with recruitment and promotion where we suggested the upgrading of existing members who qualified rather than importing from other universities. The VC roared that by recruiting his associates, he was not being unique in his thinking because even the president was aware of it and was proud of the work he was doing in the university (Interview notes, participant 9, 22 June 2016).

This finding suggests that VCs implement the academic appointments grading and promotions ordinance in pursuit of both their interests and those of the president. In addition, the assumption that VCs are political pawns holds water. Thus, micropolitics and macropolitics interact to influence practice in public universities with the two levels reinforcing each other (Bacharach & Mundell, 1993; Owen, 2006). One former VC of the UZ became both policy-maker and policy implementer as the VC flouted university policies and procedures at will. The VC did not necessarily need the council to run the affairs of the university. The VC was described in grotesque terms as:

> The bully with an anti-intellectual approach and intolerance and responsible for damaging the reputation of the institution by assuming authoritarian control while hobnobbing with the political elite (Zimbabwe Independent, 10 October, 2014).

The behaviour of this VC was reminiscent of Mugabe who appointed and fired government ministers at will and paid no regard to their presence (Compagnon, 2010). Such lawlessness could be witnessed in public universities. After independence, universities became a threat to African leaders who could not tolerate criticism from professors whom they perceived to be harbouring political ambitions (Mamdani, 2008). Remarks made by Professor Kamba, the first VC of the UZ in 1980 are indicative of colonial influences in the conception of the university.

The vision and perspective of those who were concerned with the planning, was the future and operation of the university in the context of what they knew, what they were aware of, in the country then (Kamba, 1981: 57).

As the chapter has shown, the state uses a variety of strategies in dealing with public universities to protect its interests. Though the measures serve the desired purposes, some of them are rather too extreme and are an indication that to some degree, African politicians constitute a danger to their universities. Power-based control is initiated directly through legislation and its manipulation as well as control of human resources. State control has turned universities into parastatals and therefore incapable of producing graduates capable of pushing the continent forward (Zambakari, 2011). Sawyerr (2004) advises that African states need to refocus on the public purpose of universities, while Aina (2010) warns that African states need to rethink whether they genuinely need universities or not, how many they want and for what purpose. It is clear that the state is responsible for bringing public universities to their knees in the manner in which they influence processes within them including academic staff appointments, grading and promotions. VCs are capable of using their power as a tool for social reproduction and domination in the state-owned universities. I argue that such control simply renders universities dysfunctional and incapable of executing their mandates.

6.4 Chapter summary

In this chapter, the argument has been built around the discussion from chapter 2, which looked at how the colonial state influenced the running of the University of Rhodesia to protect colonial interests. I moved a step further and discussed how the post-independence state continues to influence universities as strategic centres. The chapter has also demonstrated that the state does not allow deans and professors to run the university independently because the university is such an important business (Mugabe, 1981). More importantly, the chapter explores how and why the state digs its head deep into the university. The ruling elites continue to use state-owned universities to serve their political agendas at the expense of productivity. Through legislative instruments, funding, the appointment of top figures, meddling with the internal affairs of the university among others means, the state still carries the university at the back. However, control of the university has grave consequences not just for the institutions themselves but also for society. In the next chapter, the discussion is moved further to show how organisational interests and state strategies mesh to ensure that the university responds not just to post-independence interests but also those of the elites that manage them.

<center>**Chapter Seven**</center>

<center>**Micropolitics and policy implementation**</center>

7.1 Introduction

This chapter examines local level interests with a bearing on academic staff appointments, grading and promotions processes in public universities. I wish to argue further that there are always strong external influences from the state providing guidance to public universities on how they ought to operate. Even in the absence of the state, micropolitics play an important role in influencing policy implementation at the universities. In every case, these interests force leaders in universities to implement rules and regulations in ways that favour them. In the end, those appointed, promoted, or demoted are people who advance or cross the agendas of the leaders. This chapter is divided into four (4) broad sections. The first section outlines the details of the regulatory instrument, which is the basis of analysis. It is a detailed account of what the instrument sets out to do and how it should be done regarding academic staff appointments, grading promotions. The second section is a substantive discussion, providing data on how the statutes are implemented daily across the universities. Various cases are provided which show deviation from the regulations across the institutions in ways that advance the interests of university leadership. My previous university experience proved quite useful in selecting relevant cases because I had a good understanding of what the ordinance stipulated and could thus easily figure out whether or not there was adherence to the rules. In interpreting and presenting the data, I was aware that I was studying fellow academics (myself in some sense) and did see the appointments, grading and promotions processes as problematic, which I inherited from my institutional location. Thus, I needed an eye that could see itself to avoid producing predictable knowledge. Reflexivity proved quite useful.

The third section is a consequence of the practices because it looks at the precise factors at the local scale that give rise to the deviation from regulations. The fourth section looks at the impacts of the deviation on the local level, society, and scholarship in general while the final section summarises the chapter, showing that the university business is affected by the micropolitics of the elite.

In the section below, I discuss the regulatory mechanism around academic staff appointments, grading and promotions.

7.2 The academic staff appointments, grading and promotions ordinance

The ordinance refers to academics as "all persons employed by the university as professors, associate professors, senior lecturers or lecturers who are contractually required to carry out teaching/tutoring, examining administrative duties and to conduct research." (Ordinance 3, Chinhoyi University of Technology p.16).

The Academic Staff Grading, Tenure and Promotions Ordinance applies in all state universities. The Ordinance took effect from 1st January 2002. The Ordinance spells out how universities go about doing all their activities specifically concerning appointments, grading and promotions. The Ordinance is drawn from the UZ Act (1982) Chapter 25 section 16, which was passed by parliament when the UZ was the only university. The UZ is the premier university; it ranks first among local universities. It is the model most universities want to emulate. Borrowing university regulations from the flagship university appears common in African universities. Nigerian universities have adopted regulations from the University of Ibadan while Malawi's new universities have borrowed from the then University of Malawi (Omobowale, et.al. 2013).

As far as the UZ Act is concerned, appointments, grading and promotions should not prejudice anyone. In terms of the criteria for promotion to any grade, all state universities use the following broad criteria which involve teaching; research, scholarship, creative work, service within the university and one's profession. Largely, the UZ Act is an expression of social justice. For instance, Article 3, Section 6 subsection 1 of the UZ Act asserts that no individual will be barred from admission into the university or denied promotions based on social religious, political and or any such criteria. Appointments and promotions are open to all who qualify. In subsection 2 of the same article, the Act promises to give preference to citizens or residents of Zimbabwe when making appointments or promotions. The demand to give priority to Zimbabweans was consistent with faculty hiring in post-independence nations, geared at Africanising the universities. Bulfin (2009) defines Africanisation as the move to ensure that Africans occupy the topmost administrative and professional levels of the university. The Ordinance also has implications for excellence and social justice as stated:

> In making this Ordinance, the council has as its objective the establishment within the university of an equitable and workable system of appointments and promotions which satisfy the legitimate career aspirations of academic staff and which will ensure the

achievement of the university's academic aims whilst maintaining the high quality of its academic staff" (Ordinance 3, Great Zimbabwe University: 1).

The high standards stated in the ordinance are meant to condition academics to strive to meet the goals of politicians and not the ambitions of academic staff (Englander & Uzuner-Smith, 2015). The discourse of quality is common in universities as noted from the literature review in Chapter 3. Giving preference to locals only for university jobs is seen as part of the Africanisation of the university, which followed independence in most African countries (Yesufu, 1973). Universities in Zimbabwe have maintained these ideas even after independence. However, universities world over and by their philosophies are universal institutions whose business is to find solutions to the problems of humanity including discrimination. MacKenzie (1986) believes that this part of the University Act does not only exclude foreign applicants but also denies Zimbabwean universities the opportunity for cross-fertilization of knowledge.

7.2.1 Grading, notching and academic appointments

Grading wise, the system uses professor/research, professor/associate, senior lecturer/senior research fellow, lecturer/research fellow. The university council determines the salary for each grade and the salary step applicable to each notch within a scale. On an initial appointment to the university's academic staff, a successful candidate is to be graded and notched according to his or her qualifications, experience and published research. The basic qualification for appointment to the university's academic staff is normally a masters' degree. However, most state universities now insist on a Ph.D. or equivalent. According to the Academic staff Appointments, Grading and Promotions Ordinance, universities recognise the relevant post-graduate experience of an appointee. In addition to experience, the universities also recognise published work of an appointee in determining their grade upon appointment as guided by the AAB in each case. In making the recommendations, the AAB is expected to consider the quality of publications in terms of whether or not they are peer-reviewed among other attributes.

7.2.2 Criteria for promotion

In assessing members for their suitability for promotion to a higher grade, state universities consider a broad category, which includes teaching; research, scholarship, creative work, and service within the university and one's profession. This three-dimensional approach to

evaluating the work of academics is common in other universities (Divala, 2016). In assessing a candidate's teaching, attention is paid to teaching method, course content, and general student performance in the course; quality of the candidate's supervision of undergraduate and postgraduate students in terms of elements such as projects or dissertations and internship. In this category, the development of new programmes and the production of new and effective techniques of instruction and teaching materials are also considered.

7.2.3 Assessment of research, scholarship and creative work

In assessing a candidate's research, defined in the ordinance as research scholarship and creative work (Ordinance 3, Chinhoyi University of Technology: 5), the universities appreciate the diversity in the dimensions of research and thus focus on the elements below:

- accumulation of data that confirms an existing theory
- application of existing theory to facts specific to given contexts
- generation of new theory and its empirical testing
- generation of new methodologies for dealing with problems in the discipline of practice and
- originality and innovation in contributions to issues of culture, creative arts, writing, architectural design.

For purposes of promotion, state universities consider only research and other scholarly work that has been published, been accepted for publication, or is in a written up form that can be assessed such as professional reports. However, these are weighed differently against journal articles and books in favour of the latter. Universities also consider the quality and quantity of research output. Based on these criteria, universities develop a weighting system for books and their authorship, articles in refereed journals, book chapters, refereed conference papers and abstracts, non-refereed conference papers, articles in non-refereed journals and book reviews.

7.2.4 Assessment of service

In assessing candidates for service, the ordinance emphasises the academic staff being a good university citizen who performs his or her duties devotedly. In addition, a candidate's expertise is expected to benefit not only their profession but also the community at large all of which is considered sufficient service. The ordinance prescribes that there be documentary evidence indicating the nature of service such as research grants awarded. In assessing service, the

following areas are considered as important: taking a leadership role in the university such as serving as PVC, dean, departmental chair, director of a unit, chairing a committee, or being actively involved in activities such as student counselling. Undertaking research that addresses a national problem or being chairperson of a parastatal constitutes adequate university service. It is left to the discretion of each specific university to decide on the weighting of the different categories of service. This is where differences in applying the instrument emerge among state universities.

7.3 Criteria for promotion to specific grades

For each of the grades, the ordinance specifies the relevant criteria, which universities must employ. I examine the grades in the section below.

7.3.1 Criteria for promotion to senior lecturer grade

Promotion to this grade includes an assessment at the level of outstanding research, satisfactory teaching and satisfactory service within the university and within one's profession where each university determines, through a scoring system, what each of those categories constitutes in terms of weighting. The criteria for promotion to the senior research fellow grade are based on research output in research-oriented activities: such as consultancies, student supervision, part-time teaching, and commissioned research with each of these allocated weighting which varies across universities. They may also be assessed based on satisfactory research, teaching and service as defined by each university.

7.3.2 Criteria for promotion to associate professor grades

The criteria for promotion to associate professor are either by publications, which merit international recognition in the candidate's field as testified by external and internal assessors, or reviewers of the candidate's work. Besides, applicants are expected to produce a general quality of research, which is of a higher level than that expected for promotion to senior lecturer. Teaching and service should be of high quality or outstanding teaching or outstanding in service within the university and within one's profession as defined by each university. The criteria for promotion to associate research professor is based principally on research and research-oriented activities including consultancies, student supervision, part-time teaching and commissioned research.

7.3.3 Criteria for promotion to the full professorial grade

The criteria for promotion to full professorship is that one must be a full-time academic with an international reputation for scholarship and a cumulative record of sustained research. These must be recognised or testified by internal and external assessors, examiners or reviewers of the candidate's publications. In addition, the candidate has to perform satisfactorily in teaching and service. Each university assigns its weighting concerning the three major categories upon which full professors are assessed. It is worth noting that requirements for promotion to senior lecturer, associate professor and full professor are stipulated in universities using the Appointments, Grading and Promotions Ordinance although these criteria contradict those stipulated by ZIMCHE, with the latter being generally more demanding.

7.3.4 Promotion procedures

Promotions in Zimbabwean universities are done in response to institutional calls for applications, 'ad hominem promotion' (Sadiq, et.al. 2018). Annually, in the early part of each calendar year, the chairperson of a department is required to place in the file of each academic member of that department, a report concerning the member's teaching, research and university service within one's profession in the previous year.

These annual reports form the basis of their report to the Faculty Promotions Committee/Academic Staff Promotions Committee and AAB for applications for promotion and consideration of the granting of tenure respectively.

In terms of the ordinance, any member of staff wishing to apply for promotions can do so at any time. The applications are submitted to the chairperson of the member's department who then submits to the Faculty Promotions Committee/Academic Staff Promotions Committee, through the dean of the faculty. The submission includes a dossier containing curriculum vitae, application for promotion, copies of each of the annual reports on the member since initial appointment or since the date of the last promotion. The dossier also includes documented evidence of research, teaching, service, and a summary of the Departmental Board's views on the candidate's application.

A report containing the chairperson's recommendations on the candidate's application, which is first made available to the candidate for comment, but in all other respects should be regarded as confidential to the Faculty Promotions Committee/Academic Staff Promotions should be

submitted. A candidate can also submit any comments on the chairperson's report which they may wish to bring to the attention of the Faculty Promotions Committee/Academic Staff Promotions Committee.

The dossier also includes a list, in order of preference, of assessors to whom the Faculty Promotions Committee/Academic Staff Promotions Committee may refer. This list is prepared by the Departmental Board and stipulates the number of assessors required for promotion to each grade. Three assessors for a senior lecturer/senior research fellow of which at least two should be external to the university. For associate professorship/associate research professor, 4 assessors of which three are external and full professor, 6 assessors 4 of whom should be external. The dean of each faculty will then forward to the Faculty Promotions Committee/Academic Staff Promotions Committee, the dossier received from the chairperson of the department on each candidate, together with a report and recommendation by himself/herself as dean. The dean's report is confidential, except in cases where he/she disagrees with the chairperson's report. In such cases, the dean is required to make his or her report available to both the chairperson and candidate, in which case the candidate's comments on the dean's report shall be included on the final dossier submitted to the Faculty Promotions Committee/Academic Staff Promotions Committee. The Faculty Promotions Committee/Academic Staff Promotions Committee has the final authority in all promotion matters except in cases of appeal. Reports obtained from assessors are confidential. In instances where the chairperson of a department is a candidate for promotion, the dean of the faculty undertakes the responsibilities of the chairperson as laid down in the ordinance. All cases of appeal are referred to the VC.

Briefly, the instrument used for appointments, grading, and promotions is to some extent comprehensive and reasonable for anyone to get guidance. However, the ordinance is problematic in that it is not explicit on the point system, which universities use in their ratings. This lack of clarity may serve as fertile ground for micropolitical activities of the VCs. Stoesz, Eaton, Miron and Thacker (2019) contend that comprehensible language and transparency around expectations are characteristic of an ideal organisational policy. Detailed as the ordinance may be, Englander and Uzuner-Smith (2015) contend that protocols are not necessarily neutral because they are designed to coerce members to strive towards meeting the targets of the university and the policy-makers. Thus, they represent the interests of those that are involved in their production, university administration and politicians.

The next section discusses the micropolitics of academic staff appointments, grading and promotions. In the process, I will illustrate how university managers neglect this instrument as they use tactics to manipulate the instrument in ways that make it possible to achieve their objectives and protect their interests and power.

8.4.3 Poor research productivity

By choosing to publish with the sole objective of promotion rather than the desire to contribute to knowledge, academics cease being interested in academic pursuits but remain in the university because of choice or lack of it. In a bid to be promoted, academics undercut the system by producing large quantities of published work, which is substandard (Liu, 2017).

If research is done solely for purposes of promotion, its contribution to the global corpus of knowledge is doubtful because the focus is on quantity rather than quality. Publications produced for purposes of promotion only are usually a disaster to both the university and the academic because they can lead to the creation of a 'zombie professor'. In the Zimbabwean idiom, the 'zombie professor' is said to have 'label without level', which points to a dissonance between paper qualification and intellectual capacity. Where there were no incentives in terms of promotions, academics also felt no obligation to publish. Such a path is worrisome especially in a continent and a country where research output was reported to be so low (Yankholmes, 2014). Poor research and low research productivity are responsible for Africa's poverty (Sawyerr, 2004).

7.4 Micropolitics of academic staff appointments and promotions

The similarities in the existence of micropolitics in the two universities studied were interesting. However, participants at HUC were more emphatic and articulate on the micropolitical tactics used by university managers to further their interests than their colleagues at TUZ. In this section, I discuss a variety of micropolitical strategies employed by university managers in implementing the appointments, grading and promotions ordinance in the two universities studied. These strategies range from controlling information to controlling practices; building hidden coalitions; dividing and conquering; failing to meet target times among many other tactics.

From a micropolitical approach, the section below shows how VCs use power to protect their interests rather than those of the university. Apart from the micropolitical lenses, I also used

Foucault's concepts of power and discourse as tools to understand the behaviour of university managers and academics. The implementation of the Academic Staff Appointment, grading and Promotions Ordinance in public universities is a demonstration of how power is exercised by university leadership rather than being merely possessed (Foucault, 1982).

In the coming sections, I will discuss micropolitical strategies used by managers in implementing the appointments, grading and promotions ordinance using evidence from the participants, which includes the deployment of discourse to advance and protect their interests. The strategies and tactics demonstrate that university managers cannot just rely on formal authority and organisational policies in their discharge of duty. The basic idea in micropolitics is that interests drive the actions of organisational members. Thus, the practices of the VCs, which may run counter to stipulations of the ordinance, are driven by self-interests and the exercise of power.

The Ordinance provides clear guidelines for appointments, grading and promotions. However, appointments, grading and promotions criteria used by VCs is not necessarily derived from the regulations in all instances. Rather, some processes take place within and before appointments and promotions. These processes are important in defining suitable candidates much more than their qualifications. These pre-appointment and promotion processes were not hidden to me because I encountered them on numerous occasions in my work within the university. Within the department for instance, members usually knew who the 'strongest' candidate was way before the actual processes began. The statement about academic recruitment by the participant below speaks to this argument:

> Before and during the interviews, panellists will figure out whom a candidate is linked to, if he or she is linked to the VC this may influence the score of the individual. The majority of panellists will have almost uniform scores as they read into the VC's preference and then support the same candidate by raising his or her scores (Interview notes, participant 3; 9 June, 2016).

The above case and many other cases I discuss in this chapter reveal that appointments, grading and promotions processes are not neutral as they are socially constructed and mediated by a variety of factors that may not be academic. Thus, the excellence, objectivity, and equity purported in the 2002 Ordinance is just mere institutional talk (Reigraf & Weber, 2017). The

qualifications of the applicants are not in themselves independent, but are rather socially constructed during the process of appointment and promotions.

7.4.1. Violations of promotions guidelines

While there are regulations and clearly defined procedures to guide leadership, they frequently ignore these. There are cases where promotion is denied even where the applicant is over-qualified. Indeed, the majority of the participants agreed with this perception. This is very clear from the data.

At one institution, a leading law lecturer was denied promotion. Instead, the university chose to employ a junior inexperienced lecturer as dean of faculty. At another university, a leading historian and labour activist was denied the promotion. The applicant had applied for senior lectureship and had met the requisites. Nevertheless, the applicant was turned down under bizarre circumstances (Interview notes, participant 20; 22 July, 2016).

In both cases, the affected candidates subsequently filed a case for relief in line with the laws. Leadership does not deal with cases according to the ordinance and choose to ignore the rules. In another case, Participant number 6 who is also a member of the labour association at one of the universities, and who by regulation must attend all appointments, grading and promotions committee meetings, revealed a case of an individual who was denied tenure even though they met all the conditions. In this instance, the chair of the committee, strangely, argued that the candidate scored poorly on the outreach factor and continued to push this view on the bewildered committee,

> …emphasising the issue of good citizenship, but giving it a new twist that committee members found strange, he said we are not giving it to him because of good citizenship argument. He tried to define the term 'good citizen' only on the lines of university contribution rather than the national character of the contribution as defined by the regulation. So, in the end, the candidate lost, even though his publication record was okay and the contested university service was also okay, having been rated by peers but now the chair was emphatic on the basis that he is not a good citizen (Interview notes, Participant 6; 16 June, 2016).

From the three cases involving promotion and tenure, the concerned candidates at the two universities failed the test not because they were not competent but because the leadership did

not want them. The leadership in all cases used bizarre interpretations of the regulations to deny the candidates and in the process reinterpreting policy (Trowler, 2002). The VC used discourse to construct the members as unbefitting of promotions in order to exclude them. The VC also used power relations to stimulate the production of discourse, which would work in their favour to discipline the members (Foucault, 1995). In the latter case where a candidate was being considered for tenure, the tactic was to construct a definition of good citizenship which would exclude the applicant, also an important micropolitical strategy (Morley, 2006).The behaviour of the VC is very much in line with Fouacault's argument that power invests itself with strategies and tactics (Brenner, 1994). The VCs likewise used formal power (which Foucault does not emphasise) to ensure that the committee would not promote a candidate defined as unsuitable. In defining micropolitics, Blase (1993: 142) refers to it as the use of both formal and informal powers by individuals and groups to achieve their goals in an organisation. Dahl (1957) cited in Marsh (2012) advocates that power is used formally when one uses their authority to get others to do what they would not otherwise do. In this case, the VCs derived their power from the position they occupied in the organisational hierarchy. Thus, power relations are an important aspect of organisational life (Pfeffer, 1981). Power allows university leaders to define the criteria and type of candidate they want and is mediated through discourse as the above cases reveal. The dominant voice of the VCs is not consistent with previous studies on appointments which have shown that collectively, committee members base their decisions on numerous criteria and interpretations of criteria leading to decisions that are uneven and at worst contradictory (van Den Brink, et al. 2010). The VCs' dominance meant that the committee system was rendered ineffective. Thus, VCs operated without checks and balances and were more of demi-gods as some participants claimed.

In the cases discussed above, the regulations were certainly abused to fulfil the interest of the university leadership. The findings corroborate with the central idea in micropolitical theory that interests (Ball, 1994; Blase, 1991) drive the actions of members in an organisation. In this context, the interests are not collective; neither are they university interests but are rather individualistic. The existence of interests has meant that promotions policy and ultimately meritocracy are compromised. The findings are in direct contradiction to the argument that meritocracy is achieved through the establishment of clear procedures and criteria for recruitment and promotion (Castilla, 2016). The VCs play micropolitical games by using their power in implementing the ordinance, which provides clear guidelines and procedures, to get what they want to be done. Thus, meritocracy has the weakness that it downplays the influence

of power at the decision-making arena by putting individual merit at the forefront as (Śliwa & Johansson, 2014) have argued.

The work of university managers also indicates that policy language can be manipulated or interpreted by those involved in the process of implementation to suit their interests (Erasmus & Gilson, 2008). The problem with promotions and appointment protocols is that they use qualitative terms that are open to different interpretations (Moher, Goodman & Loannidis, 2016). This may mean that university leadership does not necessarily violate policies but provide different and competing interpretations of the same policy. In such cases, they may not be faulted. Codd (1988) argues that different readers of policies should necessarily produce a plurality of interpretations. Thus, rather than merely being modified, policy within the universities is refracted at the level of the VC as it moves down the implementation staircase (Reynolds & Saunders, 1987).

Participant number 6 narrated a case where a member was denied a promotion based on irrelevant criteria and how the VC, aware that the participant had documentary evidence, which could be used in the participant's, favour if denied promotion unduly, was forced to endorse the elevation. The respondent pointed out that:

…there was a case when we were considering a member, who from my understanding should have been promoted, but considering his tenure, they considered that he had failed to solve an administrative issue as a chairperson relating to another individual in his department who went somewhere without leave but that one is administrative. However, when we were considering his tenure, someone said no, he actually failed to caution his member and therefore he is not going to be promoted. Nevertheless, his teaching was okay and everything. Another individual, who later went to court to be promoted, even myself, not that I was not tenured but the VC produced a letter trying to threaten me because I was involved in the Academic Staff Union before. He knew that I would apply for tenure, and I would use this document as proof that he can disadvantage me in my application for tenure. Therefore, because of such considerations, they gave me tenure when I applied for it (Interview notes, participant 6; 16 June, 2016).

In the first case above, a member was denied a promotion based on the VC's evaluation of the work although other panel members were agreeable. The member was constructed as incompetent based on an administrative issue that had no relevance in terms of what the

ordinance stipulated. In line with Foucault (1978), discourse was designed not only to ensure that the member did not qualify for promotion but also to make other panellists view the member in the same way. In this instance, as Foucault suggested, discourse was used as an instrument of power. It was a 'power through' strategy aimed at getting the cooperation of other panellists (Blase & Anderson, 1995). The use of power by the leadership is an indication that the whole process of peer review is problematic. Morley (2005) points out that although the process appears neutral, it is problematic because it is not value-free and is hegemonic. Academic judgment of a colleagues' work is often very subjective such that those who do the assessment often find themselves relying on their preconceptions rather than the facts at hand. Thus, using the language of the protocol, the member was found to be satisfactory in all the three areas of assessment, which included research, teaching, and service, by the committee members except the VC.

According to Varpio, et.al. (2016), the language of appointment protocols is often problematic because committees often use the dictionary meaning of teaching, research, and service which ignores the denotative meaning or the culturally specific, individual and emotional associations which distinguishes the meaning of a word. Thus, the differences between the denotative and connotative meaning of a word can provide spaces for VCs to act in a micropolitical way.

Commenting on the problems associated with appointments and promotions policies, Moher et al, (2016: 383) emphatically state "some widely used criteria are not openly acknowledged in otherwise very lengthy, often heterogeneous, official documents". The findings suggest that it is difficult to understand decision making in the university without an understanding of how power is used (Caruso, 2013). Using Foucault's conception of power as 'actions upon actions' (Foucault, 1996), the VC was aware that the academic, with a background in the staff union, previously threatened through a letter, would use the VCs previous actions (the threatening letter), to get justice delivered through the courts as the member had implicating evidence against the VC. The VC anticipating that the academic was going to use 'micropolitical capital' their only joker (Armstrong, et.al. 2013) to facilitate promotion thus decided to promote the member without contestation. Malen and Cochran (2008) are right in pointing out that in the decision-making arena; actors interact with policy and with each other and use strategies to exert influence and power. Thus, Hoyle (1982: 88) depicts micropolitics as constituted more by "…strategy rather than enacted rules, by influence rather than power."

If the ordinance were to be implemented as expected by the rationalists and bureaucratic conceptions, then it should have influenced the behaviour of both VCs and academics to follow the criteria as laid out in the rules to achieve the goals of the university rather than individual goals.

In the cases presented in the next section, I discuss how VCs painstakingly justify the promotion of favoured candidates.

7.4.1.1 Use of irrelevant criteria

Sometimes the university leadership denies promotion to deserving candidates based on irrelevant criteria that do not subsist in the regulations. A participant confirmed that VCs construct the criteria for appointments and promotions:

> Because of individual interests, we have challenges where university administration may bring in its things into the appointments and grading system even if this is a government entity (Interview notes, participant 3; 9 June, 2016).

I shall use two cases from the two universities, one about age and another about political activism as a demonstration that university leaders may resort to the use of irrelevant criteria.

7.4.1.2 Introducing age into the ordinance

In one university, the Chairperson of the appointment committee was so angry against an applicant for a post of a lecturer. The Chair's anger was on the basis that the candidate was of a particular age, something that the ordinance is silent about. Against the candidate who had the requisite papers and experiences, the VC allegedly remarked,

> The candidate was too old and was from the pensioner's desk. How can you get me to work for my departments if they are already on retirement? I will not accept this he said. (Interview notes, participant 20; 22 July, 2016).

The rejected candidate subsequently got a job with a different university and has been working there since. The point is that the VC in question cleverly introduced age into the ordinance and by so doing found a way of locking out the candidate of potential.

In another case, the VC justified appointing a candidate based on age. Though the justification was sound, it was not related to what the ordinance stipulates.

I have gone through several of these meetings but you find that they look at age. For example, a holder of a Masters degree aged 35 was preferred by the VC on the basis that the person was likely to bring more benefits to the university and was likely to learn more than someone who comes at the age of 60 (Interview notes, participant 2; 7 June, 2016).

In this instance, the VC may not necessarily have held any age stereotypes, but used age to lock out unwanted applicants. From a Foucauldian perspective, power relations fuel the generation of discourses (Diaz-Bone, 2017). Research has shown that age stereotypes influence job recruitment. According to Milliken (2001), professors support the recruitment of applicants below 20 years of age, against university policy on the basis that they can be moulded into potential researchers. This perception of age is rather strange because it runs counter to the popular view that young candidates may not be hired. After all, young candidates are perceived as lacking emotional stability (Truxillo, Fraccaroli, Yaldiz, & Zaniboni, 2017).

The use of irrelevant criteria in promotions appears common in most universities. In a study on university crisis, Nyamnjoh, Nkwi & Konings (2012) established that professors could be promoted without publications, entirely based on their administrative work. Certainly, such norms are not contained in the ordinance. It is bewildering to think where they emanate from. Long and Fox (1995) have characterised the use of irrelevant criteria as particularism. VCs use their conventions to decide who qualifies for an appointment and who does not. This creates serious problems because one would never know when they will use policy and when they will resort to conventions. Literature has also shown that academics can be denied promotions based on their scholarship defined by the university administration as politically motivated (Gumport, 1990). It leaves one to wonder how else a professor in political science can publish without being political.

It is not new that within academic appointment committees rules can be modified to exclude or include certain candidates with or without established justification. In the above case, the VC departed from universalistic criteria set in the ordinance and went further to legitimate their own criteria to accommodate a candidate of choice. Denouncing the more mature applicant based on age constitutes subtle discrimination (Hesli, et.al. 2012). Under such circumstances, the role of the committee is merely to vanish the promotion process to hide the dents. Hence, other scholars have regarded such committees and rules as symbolic gestures geared at enhancing institutional legitimacy (MacLean & Behnam, 2010).

7.4.2 Reading political activism

Sometimes the leadership hunts for the non- relevant activity of the applicant. At the HUC, a leading academic who showed political interest in one of the emerging opposition parties in the country was summarily demoted. According to the informant,

> The call rang late on Friday. It was the VC on the line. Bring the car and the keys issued to you as dean, he was told. At first, he thought the VC was uttering a bad joke, but when he went there, security was on standby to repossess the car and the keys. From that time, the dean became an ordinary person (Interview notes, participant 19; 20 July, 2016).

The latter case is curious because it involves the replacement of the dean with a junior person who did not deserve a promotion. The point, which is of interest here, is that the VC perhaps wishing to please Mugabe demoted an able academic for an academically disabled one based on politics. This suggests that third or fourth parties located outside the university (macropolitics) influence the VC's decisions.

This is in direct contradiction to what is laid out in the University Act which stipulates that no one should be denied entry into the university as a member of the academic or administrative staff or be denied a promotion based on political or religious grounds UZ Act: Chapter 25: 16, section: 2 subsection 5).

Political interference in academic promotions and demotions is popular in the bureaucratic university where VCs are expected to be loyal to the ruling party to maintain or advance to higher positions (Simpson & Hawkins, 2018). In a study on patronage in Ghana and South Africa, Kopecký (2011) found out that in one-party dominance systems like Zimbabwe, there was no distinction between state and party. Thus, the state was prone to abuse by the party. Reading the power of the party in university affairs, Cheater (1991) questioned whether the UZ was a party university or a national university. Circumstances surrounding the appointment of VCs make it imperative that they should oversee party interests within the university. Thus, those that defy conventional political views risk not being accommodated. The VC was positioned as a defender of group interests, in this case, the ruling party.

Given the circumstances of their appointment, it is not bewildering that VCs should advance party interests. These assumptions are consistent with what happens in other parts of Africa where the university space has been captured by the state. It is common practice in universities that when they dismiss individuals whom they do not like or deny them promotion or tenure, other more plausible reasons are often cited which are not the actual causes to put the university in good standing and avoid litigation (Schrecker, 2010). In a study on student protests in Cameroon, Nyamnjoh, Nkwi & Konings (2012) found out that the universities harassed political suspects. In the context of the nationalist project, which followed independence in Africa, the university space had to be safeguarded. Regarding the University of Dar-es-laam, Mamdani (2008:6) points out that:

> The more professors sounded like ministers in waiting and sometimes even presidents in waiting, the more their critique began to sound self-serving. In a single party context, the university began to take a veneer of an opposition party giving rise to confrontations and often led to strikes and shutdowns.

The above quotation speaks to the observation that universities as democratic public spheres are under threat (Giroux, 2018). The problem is exacerbated by the co-optation of academics into politics where they serve as university administrators.

In the context of Zimbabwe, intellectuals that serve as government agents can be depicted as pro-state intellectuals. In the case of the political activist who was demoted from the position of dean, there was an interest agenda on the part of the VC, in this case, ideological interests. Using formal power, the VC had to act micropolitically to ensure that the system would not continue to reward an undeserving candidate. Thus, the dean had to be demoted. The conflict of interests culminated in conflictual relations (Blase, 1991). Thus, Innaccone (1991) asserts that policy can be produced from conflict.

Thus, a new policy that academics should not take part in opposition politics was enacted. The demotion of the dean did not have to follow university procedures. The above cases reveal that behaviour and structures within universities are all political and that the distribution of power influences policy adoption and implementation (Malen & Cochran, 2008; Wirt & Kirst, 2005). The practices of VCs contradict the notion that academics should be evaluated based on performance rather than non-academic criteria (Deem, 2009).

7.4.3 Cases where promotion is justified and exaggerated though contentious

In one university, two associates of the VC were appointed and promoted on the same instance on the basis that their publications warranted such. Though faculty was rather dismayed, it was felt by some that the decision was justified because the ordinance provided for it. Echoing similar observations, participant 8 articulated the discrepancy in appointments, grading and promotions

> You hear one person is employed for the first time, they are tenured and promoted to senior lecturer, you hear others are employed and are on probation for 3 years but those people have the same qualifications. We have other lecturers who have so many publications and have PhDs but have not been promoted. Some of them in other cases have interviewed people who have been offered jobs and tenured there and there but they have been there for quite some time so there are many things happening (Interview notes, participant 8; 20 June, 2016).

The above cases are intriguing in that the promotions protocol stipulates that applicants are supposed to be promoted after three years and by procedure, their work should be assessed by external examiners. The cases here indicate that the appointments committee ignored this expectation. In the above cases, the VC acted as 'a sponsor' who advocated for associates to be promoted upon appointment on the basis that their publications warranted such a decision and yet other candidates in similar positions did not enjoy the same privilege. Likewise, Montes López and O'Connar (2019) established that double standards were prevalent and sponsors or networks who sat on promotion boards played a critical role in facilitating one's promotion.

The sponsors as social networks opened up opportunities for some while closing doors for others. Da Wan, Chapman, Zain, Hutcheson, Lee & Austin (2015) revealed that in Malaysia promotions depended very much on networks candidates had with university leadership. The cases above also indicate that power in the university was not used for the benefit of all academics but those individuals who were well connected. The power of networks puts into doubt the transparency of the ordinances during promotions. The way VCs use power is indicative of Foucault's understanding of power as not only repressive but also productive (Lilja & Vinthagen, 2014). It is clear from the example above that the bureaucratic model of the university is not capable of dealing with the VCs' machinations by exposing them (Bush & Glover 2014).

7.4.4 Cases where promotions were contentious

In some instances, promotions were quite debatable. I present a case of this nature below.

> In this university, they say we do not promote people who do not have doctorates and then when they meet those with doctorates, they emphasise on publications, where they now say you do not have enough publications or you have publications that are not in high impact factor journals. Therefore, you can see that it is all about gatekeeping. (Interview notes, participant 6; 16 June 2016).

The ordinance that guides academic promotions does not demand that academics have a Ph.D. as a benchmark for promotion. The VCs adopt these conventions to enable them to manoeuvre. This requirement is set in the ZIMCHE guidelines for promotions which universities are not necessarily obliged to adopt because the proposals have not yet gone through parliament. The impositions are structural demands that are put in place to limit the number of applicants for promotions (van Den Brink, 2010). In this case, as Foucault (1978) rightly notes, discourse conveyed power, the VC imposed the criteria that those without P.h.Ds did not warrant promotion as legitimate to exclude undesirable candidates.

In one of the cases above, the leadership chose to focus on one aspect of the promotion criteria, impact factor to exclude the applicant. Scholarly work is increasingly judged based on metrics such as H-Index and the impact factor. These performance-based indicators appear to be objective because they are mathematically correct. However, research has shown that the metrics do not prohibit arbitrary decisions because they can be manipulated through networks. The problem also emerges when these requirements are tactfully used to close doors for promotion for other people. From the example above, it would appear that making the ordinance mathematically tight is insufficient in dealing with the micropolitical capital of university leadership. The impact factor requirement puts pressure on African academics on the path to promotion to publish in foreign journals believed to have a wide readership at the expense of local ones that are easily accessible to them (Oyinlola, 2013). Issues of promotions are generally contentious in many universities. Sometimes the cause of disagreement is that committee members lack the expertise to assess an applicant's work because they are not specialised in that area. Such was the case at the University of Addis Abeba where committee members without a legal background dismissed the work of a law applicant (Mesfin, 2012).

7.4.5. Violation of promotion procedures

Sometimes leadership in various universities disregard procedures for promotion. They do not respond to the call to promote certain people as is required by the Ordinance. In an interview, one participant revealed that people applied for senior lectureship but their papers were ignored for years. In a similar case of delays, another participant from a different university when asked if they got a satisfactory explanation for the delays complained that they never did not (Interview notes summaries, participant 9; 22 June, 2016).

Others complained that some VCs would not meet staff to select a substantive chair for the promotions committee. According to one informant familiar with the case, the VC in question simply asked members to write names of their preferred candidates, and from there a unilateral decision was made.

The behaviour of the VC in question was micropolitical in that they pretended to be busy and would thus not create time for some of the important business of the university. This was one way of undercutting procedures. The purpose was to ensure that a candidate would not be decided from below who may not be favourable to the leadership. Good university practices require that leadership provide the reasons for delayed promotions to avoid arbitrary decision-making. However, it would appear that even in contexts where reasons were given, these were often manufactured to provide a picture of transparency.

7.4.6 Violation of recruitment procedures

Recruitment procedures that utilise open methods such as advertisement calling for applications were also violated. Undercutting procedures was done to recruit candidates of choice.

> When we talk about the recruitment policy, applicants are supposed to respond to an advert, after the advert, departments are involved in making a shortlist of the candidates and recommend who is employable or not. A selection committee chaired by the VC produces a final list of applicants to be interviewed. But as we speak today you simply receive a note, from human resources indicating the appointment of someone whose history you do not know, so l think that policy stipulations concerning recruitment are violated willingly (Interview notes, participant 10; 23 June, 2016).

In a similar case indicating a breach of the appointments procedure to accommodate a favoured candidate, a respondent had this to say:

> In terms of recruitment, I can say that committees are ineffective because they are influenced by informal political factors. For instance, there are cases where people are told who they should shortlist for appointment not necessarily based on merit but they do because it is an instruction coming from above (Interview notes, Participant 6; 16 June, 2016).

Both cases are an indication of the violation of the open recruitment procedure. In the first case involving recruitment direct from the human resources department through a memo, the department may also be part of the local network involved in dispensing academic jobs or it is rendered powerless by those in power. In the latter, a case where the VC openly suggested a candidate to the committee, the VC sought to rope in a candidate within their network as (Sadl, 2009) has suggested. The VC used formal power to manipulate the committee to get their candidate included. These cases reflect personal interests that university leaders want to protect. Sometimes the recruitment procedure is not only violated but leadership goes further to modify the criteria. As such, the whole process is rigged which is common in African countries. Thus, in such cases, the due processes of appointment and promotions laid out in the legal instruments are completely ignored as new and personal procedures are created.

Thus, other than shaping the behaviour of the actors involved, education policy is also shaped by those who are responsible for its implementation. The findings of this study reveal that there is always a dissonance between publicly stated policy goals of organisations and what happens in practice. Distortions and gaps emerge in the process of implementation leading to 'policy refraction' (Bell & Stevenson, 2006).

VCs are active participants who co-author and interpret policies in their own ways such that they are not limited by the policy understandings of the Ordinance. This interpretation of the policy process from a bottom-up perspective is essential in that it reveals the tactics, activities, and objectives of those who are tasked with implementation and are targets of policy (Gornitzka, et.al 2005). As agents and street-level bureaucrats (Lipsky, 1980), VCs can manipulate, define, and shape policy. Thus, top-down approaches that view policy implementation as a mechanical process are problematic.

While the majority of participants complained about the violation of recruitment and promotion procedures in the two universities, participant 18 below saw no problems:

What I observed as a lecturer and chairperson of the council, in terms of appointment, there is not much to complain about because the procedure that people apply is according to the criteria, which are laid down by the department. The department chooses and selects candidates, from there the selection criteria goes further to the faculty, and those who have been chosen are scrutinised by Academic Board, which includes the VCs and the PVCs. In that case, the process is transparent (Interview notes, participant 18; 18 July, 2016).

Claims like these were not as common as the majority of participants at both the TUZ and HUC believed that the system was flawed and lacked transparency. It would seem this respondent had their reasons for saying so, I cannot confirm with certainty. However, I may speculate that the participant might have lacked critical lenses to mirror what goes on inside the system. As a former councillor, the respondent might have been a passive participant in the process. It could also be that the member was simply not being truthful and maybe they were part of the elite that benefited from such processes and thus a member of the VCs coalition

7.4.7. Violations of appointment criteria

In some contexts, policies are violated for a seemingly good cause, to fill posts where there is a shortage of qualified individuals by relaxing the rules to accommodate the right candidates. However, such policy wavering in appointments is not provided for in the ordinance.

In a separate case but also relating to violating terms of appointments, participant 6 revealed that administration invited applicants from within the university to fill existing posts using an internal advertisement; a procedure, which the respondent felt was not consistent with academic recruitment practices across public universities as articulated in the ordinance. The Ordinance only provides for open recruitment where everyone who qualifies can apply. A system of appointment where only internal candidates compete for posts does not exist in the Ordinance.

I think the system is not very fair because we have seen cases where appointments are made in response to internal advertisements. But from our knowledge, this is a university and we believe that posts should be opened to everyone in the country and when we then make an internal advert, we are limiting competition, we are limiting the number of applicants (Interview notes, Participant 6; 16 June 2016).

Instituting a system of academic recruitment where only insiders are invited is on its own a micropolitical tactic to create a group of privileged members. On the other hand, openness in the recruiting of academics enhances transparency, fair competition, and enables outsiders to hold the university leadership to account. A closed recruitment system, as indicated by the case above, is criticised for lacking transparency and justice because vacancies are tailor-made to suit specific candidates (Nielsen, 2016). Closed recruitment can be fertile ground for micropolitical strategies such as corruption and nepotism.

In open competition, posts are advertised in newspapers, university websites, and other forms of media to reach out to as many potential applicants as possible, to select only the best (Horta et al, 2011). Open recruitment is guided by the ideology of meritocracy, whereby individual achievement is the basis of recruitment or mobility. Meritocracy underpins the operations of modern universities and militates against nepotistic and corrupt tendencies. However, from their study on academic recruitment in Dutch universities, van Den Brink, et.al. (2010) established that the open recruitment system was not a guarantee to preclude micropolitical activities by university leadership; rather it just served the purpose of rubber-stamping. Indeed the evidence presented throughout this chapter speaks to the very same argument.

In most of the cases discussed thus far, the VCs were able to use their power to influence outcomes of committee meetings in their favour. Using different micropolitical strategies and discourses, the VCs ensured that only preferred candidates were successful. The use of strategies and tactics is very much in line with Foucault's conceptualisation of modern forms of power (Kaden, 2012). Some participants revealed that the committee members oftentimes felt powerless against the VC, whose decision they were forced to adopt, much in contrast to Foucault's notion that power is not centred or tied to an individual's position (Diaz-Bone, 2017). The participants observed that the VCs mostly used their tactics to get everybody on board. According to Hoyle (1982: 90), the power used in micropolitics can be classified as influence, which is defined as "the capacity to affect the actions of others without legal sanctions." Thus, autocratic VCs overpowered the committees forcing them into accepting their decisions.

According to Morley (2006: 544), "power can be relayed through seemingly trivial incidents and transactions." While the VCs used their powers, the result was that power was not devolved to other committee members, thus moving towards centralisation. In this way, the VCs became the power holders in the appointments and promotions committee.

From the experience in Zimbabwean universities, Kariwo (2010) established that in most of the committees, the VCs did not only chair but made most of the decisions. As in the cases above, the participants suggested that academic appointments had not been very transparent:

I have not been in the interviewing panel for academics. I am not sure of what goes on in the boards, but what I know is that there are certain qualifications that one must possess before they can be employed, there have been allegations, of course, of bias in recruitment towards one ethnic group several times but they are unsubstantiated (Interview notes Participant 16; 13 July, 2016).

When asked how often the accusations were made, the participant established that these were common especially regarding the appointments and promotions of non-academic staff members. I also verified the accusations using the human resources staff register. However, for academic appointments, I could not establish the substance of the accusations. Though the appointments and promotions of the non-academic staff were not within the scope of this study, it served to indicate that universities are not entirely blind to ethnic politics found in wider society. Indeed studies on Africa have established that ethnic politicking is an important micropolitical activity determining university staffing and promotions right from the highest office (Sifuna, 2010).

7.4.8. Ignoring the approved grading system

Universities are expected to use the grading system, which is stated in the ordinance without favour. Concerning this matter, the ordinance specifies the entry grades for academics and requires that they apply for senior lectureship after being granted tenure and having satisfied the relevant publications, teaching and service requirements. However, the grading system on the ground is quite different from that which appears in the Ordinance. Participants found it difficult to understand the anomalies and in one case sought recourse through the courts.

I am aware that there are also such cases even here where individuals were transferred from administrative posts after acquiring Masters Degrees to the classroom, but their grades were not changed. They went to court and won, and they were appointed to lecturer grade because they had taught for a long time and currently they are working for their tenure and publishing their papers (Interview notes, participant 3; 19 July, 2016).

In a bizarre case, involving grading, participant 10 also echoed the sentiments that the grading system within the university was largely being ignored.

The first example where academics had to resort to litigation for placement into the correct grade suggests that grading does not necessarily depend on one's qualifications. If leadership has interests, it will place one in an inappropriate grade anyway. In the second case, academics were notched to senior lecturer grade right upon appointment (Interview notes, participant 10; 23 June, 2016). This suggests that the university leadership had an interest in them and that there might have been the power of networks at play.

The grading system at HUC was markedly different from that reflected in the Ordinance suggesting that major decisions were made in the interactions of people rather than in the boardroom, where appointments, grading and promotions took place. It could appear from the cases above that the politics of the committee room did not matter much as compared to preappointment processes or networks and sponsorships.

7.4.9. Delays in processing applications for promotion

Sometimes the VC in question would sit on the call for promotion. This was especially the case where existing applicants were not cronies of the leadership. In this case, the leader delays the call for as long as it takes to get a group of applicants that are within their circle. I shall provide two cases that came.

At the HUC, an informant talked of the curious tendency by the VC not to call for applications for promotion. The VC used the excuse of a government freeze, not to hire or promote new people. This, of course, is not true, because the government did not stop the universities from promoting, perhaps appointments. Participants talked of many applicants that had applied without a response from the university. Some had even approached their union to get the VC to explain why their applications were not processed.

The story is the same in the other university, with a strange twist though. In this instance, the VC provided excuses for not promoting people and only opened the call when cronies reportedly made overtures for promotion.

> …corruption for example patronage, political influence, those issues come to play even when we say that we have frozen the posts, you see people getting appointed here and there

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but the people who are appointed are linked to those that are in power. You see even when we say people are not being promoted because there are no resources, some who are promoted because they are linked to those that have influence. Promotions will happen as soon as they qualify (Interview notes, participant 6; 16 June, 2016).

These cases illustrate that VCs implement policies only when it furthers their interests. The practice of suspending promotions is common in African universities. At the University of Makerere, Mpoza, Ssempebwa, Nakaiza, Lukyamuzi, & Hawa (2013) established that there was a shortage of senior academics because academics were stagnated at junior levels. In Malawi, Mzuzu University had also stayed for nearly 4 years without promotion, from 2014 to 2017 without explanation. In these matters, the decisions of VCs are influenced by both the need to distribute scarce resources (Bolman & Deal, 2003; Lindle & Mawhinney, 2003) and to protect their interests. Patronage as cronyism, Flinders and Geddes (2014), is an important micropolitical capital that places those who are close to the resource, in this case, power, at an advantage while those furthest from it are underprivileged.

In navigating their way, university leaders had to go micropolitical and employ discourse to justify their decisions. Participants referred to corruption and nepotism as guiding factors in the decision to either recruit or promote staff. Indeed, the University Act provides room for universities to appoint staff as and when they should. However, university leaders found themselves having to deal with external macropolitical elements such as reduced university budgets and subvention, which have an impact on the micropolitics. Under such conditions, university leaders need to devise tactics to protect themselves and safeguard their local level interests.

While the cases cited above from both universities demonstrate that there was no political will on the part of the administration to promote members, some participants gave a different opinion. In their view, the little mobility in terms of promotion was not a result of interest-driven decision making on the part of the leadership but the problem had to do with academics themselves who lacked the requisites.

Such observations, if indeed true, may speak to the quality of hires prevalent in the university. Poor hiring does not promote intellectual development, not only at the individual but also departmental level as it simply kills scholarship.

7.4.10 Hiding behind VC's busy schedule

When VCs pretend to be too busy, they often justify it according to some higher-level criteria. This is often done to circumvent and manipulate procedures. In one university, the VC who had deliberately stalled the appointment of a substantive chairperson argued that they simply were overwhelmed with work that is more urgent and did not have the time to engage in face-to-face consultative meetings with individual members. One of the informant's remarks captures this:

> There is no doubt, indeed, that VCs have busy schedules, particularly where the university is still young and facing teething problems. It is often acknowledged even when the post of the VC is being advertised, that the person being sought should be prepared to work under pressure (Interview notes, Participant 20; 22 July 2016).

What is of significance to this thesis, and one that other scholars have observed, is that this level of pressure simultaneously provides an opportunity for people to innovate and circumvent requirements of the ordinance when it matters for them to do so.

Not creating time and pretending to be too busy are important micropolitical strategies that those in leadership positions use (Winkler, 2010). There are of course many other cases, but these two illustrate the point that when it comes to implementing the ordinances on promotion, the VCs deviated from what is expected of them hiding behind busy schedules yet they had time for their social life maybe because that is within their interests.

7.4.11 Selective application of promotion criteria

Participants revealed that despite the existence of a stipulated ordinance, ZIMCHE had introduced its criteria for academic promotions at odds with what was contained in the ordinance. This created room for VCs to use the parallel and contradictory instruments to include and exclude others.

In one case, which shows the selective application of promotion criteria in the other university, a member who did not qualify for promotion was promoted anyway.

> ...we had a member whose points of listing were 12 but upon checking his publications, the points came to 11.5. Instead of telling him to apply when he fulfilled the 0.5 point difference, the member was fraudulently promoted, yet previously we had members whose points were

not enough but were told by the dean that they had to look around and increase the number of points before their applications went through the review (Interview notes, participant 17; 14 July, 2016).

The quantitative assessment of faculty work including the point system is popularly used for promotions in universities (Englander & Uzuner-Smith, 2015). The use of the point system to determine the academic contributions of faculty staff is indicative of the "Taylorisation of intellectual labour" (Dominelli and Hoogvelt, 1996:7 8 cited in Englander Uzuner-Smith, 2015: 71). In Taylorisation, the work of academics is broken down into separate tasks and grouped into standardised outcomes such that they become more like pieceworkers. The above example indicates that the seemingly objective point system, which the universities use still, reflects power relations that characterise the promotions processes (O'Connor & O'Hagan, 2016).

To cite a different case relating to selective application of criteria, Participant 19 revealed that the rules were tightened when assessing an applicant who was not favoured whilst they are relaxed when dealing with preferred candidates:

> Certain people are favoured while some are made to follow the procedure to the last word. For some, without wasting time, the chairperson of the committee will announce that we know he is well published, he published 20, we know he published 15 so let us promote them. They do not even send the work to assessors (Interview notes, 20 July 2016).

All the cases cited above denote that university administrators do not fairly apply the ordinance. In the case of the academic whose publications did not meet the required points but was promoted, the dean acted as a sponsor while playing a gatekeeper of upward mobility to others. Gatekeepers within the system may make it impossible for a member to be promoted if the member is not within their circles.

In the case above involving the academic whom the VC claimed to be well published and whose work had not been sent to reviewers, the VC sought to mobilise bias so that committee members could raise no issues regarding the applicant's work. Discourse in this case was both an effect of power and legitimation tactic (Foucault, 1978). The behaviour of university

managers resonates well with previous studies, which have shown that there is a selective application of criteria in appointments, grading and promotions by committees (Ridgeway, 2011). That the 'big men' on campus indeed have personal interests to protect in their implementation of policies.

7.4.12 Withholding information

In some situations, university administration withholds essential information because they are aware that their decisions are not fair and transparent thus, should be kept away from public scrutiny. In the case below, information was withheld to control the much-needed financial resources and to avoid criticism of their interest-driven and self-serving actions. Control of resources, is a micropolitical element (Lindle & Mawhinney, 2003) used by VCs as shown by the participant below.

> You hear that so and so have gone to South Africa for a workshop, that is when you realise there is funding. They [university administration] only implement those policies that work in their favour. We do not run the show we rely on them. However, when there is funding, they will not come back and tell you that now there is funding, for research or conferences so you would not know what is happening. Right now, some top people are going for contact leave, but we have been told that there is no money yet this comes with our employment contract and is necessary for our promotion (Interview notes; participant 17, 14 July, 2016).

Although going on contact leave was not a necessary condition for promotion, this behaviour was not characteristic of one university, even in the second university, respondents complained that important documents were hidden from them and that information did not cascade to them in good time (Interview notes, participant 13; 7 July, 2016).

Research by van Den Brink, et.al. (2010) established that universities commonly withhold information especially that which relates to appointments and promotions so that their decision-making is never open to public scrutiny. Generally, the culture of transparency is missing in some public universities. Svensson (2007: 119) defines transparency as "public openness in allowing citizens access to documentation and decision-making procedures." In some countries, there are laws, which require that public entities, including universities, make available to the public information on, and decision-making procedures. The absence of access to information laws to enforce transparency in Zimbabwean public universities increases the incidence of opaque governance characterised by practices such as withholding relevant

information or making it accessible to a privileged few. Certainly, these men and women were leadership-oriented in all instances. Creating a group of privileged members (coalition) and providing them with different kinds of support, is an important micropolitical tactic and a reflection of power (Armstrong, et.al. 2013). Public disclosure would mitigate against nepotistic tendencies among other malpractices (Svensson, 2007).

7.5 The power of departmental politics

The story of academic staff appointments, grading and promotions would be incomplete without exploring how university departments are involved in organisational politics. Other than focusing on university leadership as giving rise to the nature of university practice in Zimbabwe, it is important to explore the contribution of departments. Evidence from direct observation involving the work of the departmental boards in selecting potential candidates for recommendation to the VC indicates that within the department, members are almost sure about whom they want for the post. Networks play a very important role in providing relevant information to applicants about job opportunities and requirements.

Unethical members of the department are rumoured to be releasing interview questions to their favourites to maximise their chances. In one very interesting case, I observed, the job advertisement targeted Ph.D. holders. However, networks played their part by sounding non-PhD holders to apply. This information was made available only to candidates of interest. In the process of shortlisting potential interviewees, the department devised criteria whereby even those studying towards Ph.D. were accommodated such that on a point system, they accrued very good points, not so different in terms of margin from PhDs holders.

The department chose to emphasise their masters' degrees, which were distinctive in order to outclass potential applicants. In the end, they too (non-PhD holders) were called for interviews by default. In this case, criteria were altered to accommodate candidates of choice who did not qualify. These are individuals whom the department envied for their intellectual capacity demonstrated in the process of their postgraduate studies.

Similarly, in cases involving promotions, colleagues have often voiced their support by crediting their research, teaching and service. Even in cases where a candidate does not provide relevant documentation, the application is never thrown away but the applicant is advised to submit the missing documents before the dossier moves to the next office. This collegiate attitude is not necessarily extended to every member though. In some circumstances, the

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department may choose to overlook the quality of publications for applicants while in other cases they are thoroughly scrutinised.

These examples suggest that the success of one's application largely depends on one's networks within the department. In these instances, departmental politics included a combination of strategies such as ganging up, networks and mobilising bias (Ibarra, 2010; Faria, 2002). The cases above in some sense point to local logics where the desire was to match the potential candidates for appointment with the institutional culture (Grummell, et.al. 2009).

Members of the department act strategically because they fully understand the political environment under which they operate. In this case, academics knew very well that a higher-level committee would not dismiss their decisions because it had proved very tolerant and flexible in previous cases. According to Orkodashvili (2010), when departments offer excuses for candidates they like, it is a demonstration of mediocrity. In the case of recruitment, the decision of the department could have been guided by the desire to avoid candidates whose academic background was unfamiliar (Roebken, 2010).

In the above case, the whole process of appointment was flawed in that both the procedure and criteria were not observed. The practice contradicted the meritocratic ethos that the department espoused. Thus, it is clear that in appointment or promotion, one does not just need an advocate, but the support of colleagues in the department (Baker, 2010). University leaders were not the only actors using their micro-political power but the department was also invested with power. The department also recruited through social networks in cases of closed recruitment where posts were not advertised in newspapers, journals, or the internet. In such cases, influential figures in the department, often-senior academics van Den Brink (2011) describes as 'scouts' located colleagues within their formal and informal networks and mobilised the rest of the department to support the candidates.

Thus, appointments, grading and promotions were politically determined at the level of the department. Even the initial process of selecting candidates within the department is not simplistic because arriving at criteria for ranking candidates is a political process, with an array of criteria at the disposal of departmental members (Musselin, 2002). Thus, reaching the common ground is not often simplistic.

7.6 The policy-practice nexus

Overall, the majority of participants revealed that university leadership was not adhering to academic staff appointments, grading and promotions policies and procedures. University leadership chose to implement the Academic Staff Appointments, Grading and Promotions Ordinance in ways that further their interests and those of their followers. There was generally non-adherence to policies in the two case studies. However, the trend was louder in the HUC, which is newer than the TUZ. Regarding a plethora of policies the university enacted, participant 8 from the HUC had this to say:

> We have universities, those universities have policies, which they make for themselves, but they do not follow them, whether we are talking about dismissals or promotions or tenure, there is a huge dissonance between policy and practice. I remember this semester and the last, we made so many policies but these policies are not observed (Interview notes, participant 8; 20 June, 2016).

The micropolitical lens used in this study unearthed the otherwise hidden informal structures of state universities in Zimbabwe, which have been described by some scholars as the hidden transcript of the university (Anderson, 2008; Morley, 2006). Anderson (1990) cited in Berkhout and Wielemans (1999: 404) reminds us "a focus on the formal or official mechanisms of the education policy process negates the hidden, covert, informal, or implicit dimensions where power is exercised more unobtrusively."

Research has also shown that universities by-pass their well-prescribed policies because their decisions are generally interest-driven. The implementation of university policies by leadership points to a dichotomy Argyris and Schön, (1996) describe as espoused -theory- and theory-in-use showing the influence of subtle patterns existent in informal aspects of the organisation including informal interactions and information exchanges of members. In South African literature on education policy implementation, the mismatch between policy intention and policy practice is widely referred to as the "policy gap", (Sayed, 2001: 29).

The espoused theory refers to what members of an organisation formally claim to do through their policies, mission statements, ordinances, and other such frameworks while theory- in -use denotes that which they do which may be different from what they say they do (Mckinnon, 2013). Theory-in-use is often indescribable and undiscussed and thus remains concealed because exposing it may prove humiliating for the actors involved and the organisation in general (Schön & Argyris, 1996). In their view, theory-in-use thus indicates the identity of the organisation, which may be quite different from that which is portrayed by its policies, mission statements, or manuals. Others have described the organisational identity as its institutional culture (Mckinnon, 2013). From this study, it emerged that transparency in academic appointments, grading and promotions only referred to the formal procedures while there were many informal processes.

The multiple and diverse cases discussed in this chapter show a complete deviation from the regulation in addition to delaying or denying academics promotion. The results in this study contradict the commonly held perception that newer universities are more permissible in terms of promotions because they hardly offer conditions that attract professors. In the section below, I discuss the reasons for the wide deviation, arguing that individual or collective interests are always at play.

7.7 The logic of implementation

This section attempts to explain the behaviour of the leadership in decision-making. Why the university would delay hiring and promotion of certain people against regulations or fail to promote them even when good ratings from assessors, peer reviewers, or other committee members as required by regulations are there. Why leadership would smuggle certain people who ordinarily may not qualify into the system.

Following analysis of various documents and interviews, it emerged that these things happen because the VCs want to please their political master; want to increase their followers within networks; have the liking for corruption and nepotism and do so to minimise opposition to their rule among many other reasons.

7.7.1 Maximising favour from authorities

Sometimes deviation from regulations is informed by the desire to find favour with those who make their stay in power possible. In the case of the concerned universities, the chief office to please is the chancellor. I shall provide two examples of this.

6.7.1.1 Case 1

At one university, the sitting VC went out of the way to deny promotion to a deserving historian. The issue was not that the historian was incompetent; rather it was because the member had a proven record of working against the ruling party and its policies affecting teachers in Zimbabwe. In doing so, the member became an eyesore to the chancellor. Indeed, the member became a constant target for the president, being ridiculed in public for working with saboteurs and foreigners according to media reports. The behaviour of the member no doubt became a cause of extreme discomfort for the VC. Many participants reported the VC as saying the staff member was a nuisance and an embarrassment to the relationship between the university and the chancellor. So as a way of increasing favour with the authorities, the VC undertook a variety of measures to deal with the applicant finally and in a manner that would please the chancellor. That manner involved denying legitimate promotion on flimsy grounds that would not stand in a court of law. For this reason, the sitting VC was able to enjoy the favour of the patron, who returned this favour by guaranteeing the VC's tenure for over a decade.

6.7.1.2 Case 2

The desire for increased tenure in office is at the core of decisions that deviate from the ordinance. This observation is to some extent not new because it is already noted in a variety of platforms and literature that micro-level survival interests influence policy decisions (Nyamnjoh, Nkwi & Konings, 2012). Likewise, in Zimbabwe, a Kenyan law lecturer was deported for using 'subversive' teaching materials (Chikwanha, 2009). The leadership had to show political sensitivity in the matter and this could be traded for office. In this case, the sitting VC sought favours from the presidium. What is novel about this present observation is that even the local 'big men' are partly to blame for the nature of university practice, not always the state alone. They have to employ survivalist tactics (Ospian, 2012) to remain in office. The desire to please those in higher offices is a key influence guiding the decision-making processes of academic leaders (Cleary, et.al. 2013).

7.7.2 Patronage

Sometimes, promotion is used to build a following at the university. This was the case concerning the lawyer who was denied promotion in preference of a junior academic, barely qualified discussed in section 6.4.1 above. This lawyer had a long drawn disagreement with the VC on how the university was being run. If the leadership had taken on board this lawyer, this would have created internal opposition to their rule. Conversely, an appointment of a junior lecturer to lead the faculty was effected to create foot soldiers for the VC.

Participants in the HUC referred to the cases where chairpersons, deans and lecturers were either appointed or promoted unprocedurally as ways of building a team of loyalists. Other participants indicated that management would always have good grounds for turning down an application for promotion. In an informal discussion with one of the deans at HUC about the law lecturer, the feeling was that it was proper to appoint one's kith and kin in the African context because these relations are what define us as Africans. The dean emphasised that we are unique as Africans and from a social point of view, we are more communal than individual. Participant 6 vividly expressed patronage as influencing recruitment.

> corruption for example patronage, political influence, those issues come to play even when we say that we have frozen the posts you see people, they get appointed here and there but the people who are appointed are linked to those that are in power (Interview notes, participant 6; 16 June, 2016).

Patronage in Africa is an old practice and research has shown that the creation of new formal institutions has not succeeded in replacing old informal ways of doing things (Yanguas & Bukenya, 2016). The Dean's comments presented above attest to this. Patronage influences appointments and promotions in many African universities (Munene, 2013).

When the VC uses patronage by giving jobs and promotions to friends and relatives, Hamilton (2002) describes it as personal patronage. In Africa, patronage is a way of maintaining traditional relationships that are highly valued in the African context (Berman, 1998). Thus, beyond building a following, patronage serves different and sometimes practical purposes. According to Menaldo (2012), patronage serves both material and symbolic purposes. Patronage may be dispensed to gain power over those below or to reinforce one's ego and standing in society. For the lecturer who was deported for political inclination, within patronage discourses it might be perceived in two ways. One, the academic stood their ground and refused

to become a patron of the wicked ruling class, in this case, the politicians hence was labeled a dissident and suffered for that perceived arrogance. Secondly, it could be that either the VC or the chancellor were seeking to increase their levels of patronage. If the lecturer had joined the political line, it would increase the patrons or followers of ZANU PF or increase the network for the VC at both micro and macro levels.

7.7.3 Corruption and nepotism

Sometimes the promotion is to create a reputation for the leadership either on campus or in the region from which the leaders originate. This is so evident in a dramatic case that took place at one university where management appointed and justified the appointment of family members and those of the extended family on the basis that it was only proper to remember one's own.

> You can call that corruption or nepotism, call it what you want but frankly, what else would I have done. Even some of you would have done the same (Interview notes, participant 5; 14 June, 2016).

Participant 6 confirmed that the VC had several relatives within the university. Nepotistic appointments are common in Africa, especially in Zimbabwe. The major impact of these micropolitical decisions is the promotion of mediocrity and the destruction of merit. Furthermore, the respondent identified the reasons for the mismatch between what the ordinance stipulates and what happens in practice by alluding to such factors as nepotism, corruption and patronage and other participants at HUC repeatedly identified these.

7.7.4 Minimising opposition to leadership

By placing friends and relatives in key positions and ensuring that faculties are infested, the logic is both economic and political. Participant 13 felt that other than patronage, there were economic reasons, which justified the appointment and promotion of relatives and friends.

The argument was that distributing jobs to close relatives is necessary, both from a social and economic point of view. Job recipients are likely to act as a buffer during times of crisis. Coalition building is important for university managers in Africa, given that universities are generally contested terrains where students and lecturers are embroiled in strikes with university administration and the state over their living and learning circumstances and conditions of service (Saint, 2009; Chimanikire, 2009).

7.8 Impacts of policy violations

The macropolitical practices of university leadership described above make a mockery of the official requirements for academic staff appointments, grading and promotions. They privilege mediocrity at the expense of talent (Nyamnjoh, Nkwi & Konings, 2012). The interest-driven decision-making by university leadership means that those who are appointed and promoted at various scales may not be competent enough to discharge their duties. Yet the contributions of academics have implications for the quality of a university (Teichler, 2009; Altbach, 2003). Furthermore, Nyamnjoh, Nkwi, & Konings (2012) argue that since these practices are reproduced and recreated, they give rise to an institutional culture. Organisational studies have shown that there is a link between organisational culture governance (Chaffee and Tierney, 1988) as well as its leadership style (Birnbaum, 1988). Thus, a university with an institutional culture that values merit in appointments, grading and promotions is likely to organise its practices on that basis while the reverse is true.

Thus, a poor organisational culture is implanted in a university, informal rules are created to guide practices, and policy becomes irrelevant as it depends on the VCs. Institutional cultures that do not promote meritocracy give rise to the nature of university practices witnessed in Zimbabwe as discussed in the previous sections above. It is not surprising that Cohen et al, (1972) typifies universities as organised anarchies with a cabbage cane model. This is because from the evidence presented in this chapter, university goals are not clearly articulated and decision-making is inconsistent and personalised. If organisational politics and personal interests drive decision-making processes within public universities, they lose their value as institutes of higher learning worth resourcing. There is also a danger that if university leaders become preoccupied with satisfying partisan interests, the need for public accountability diminishes.

Halffman and Radder (2015) have revealed that university leadership should be accountable to the academic community. The power of micropolitics suggests that policy instruments that focus on achieving fairness do not achieve the goals because leaders tamper with them. Similarly, some studies have revealed that neither academic merit nor research output determined promotion "but rather institutional politics and power play" (Yankholmes, 2014: 104).

The current study has also come to the same conclusion that policies that guide academic staff appointments and promotions "are toothless paper tigresses that are fraught with implementation problems" (van Den Brink, et.al. 2010: 1477). Policies are rendered meaningless when institutional elites use their power to influence processes in their favour.

The hiring and promotion practices have implications for quality both at the level of the university, and the individuals. It is claimed that the quality of a university is judged by the quality of its faculty, which is a function of its thorough promotion and merit system (Teichler, 2009). In the absence of quality, the university is downgraded to a farm school or a cottage farm. The lack of quality may even "villagise the university" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2016: 19). The malpractices point to the existence of a dual system whereby one is recruited promoted or dismissed by either following the rules of the game or by circumventing them.

At the societal level, the practices indicate that universities may not be worth the taxpayers' money if they do not help solve social problems. The illegal dismissals and denial of promotions on unfair grounds constitute a violation of academic freedom, which universities espouse. Unfair dismissals contribute to social problems instead of solving them. Ultimately, universities cease to be places where individuals can experiment with new ideas and think critically. Overall, the malpractices do not allow for the existence of an organisational culture of excellence.

In summary, the ways academic staff appointments, grading and promotions have been handled have had momentous serious effects on the standards and quality of education in these universities as they have created fears, demotivation and insecurity. Demotivated employees will usually be less productive and less committed to their job.

It is also obvious that micropolitics has impacts that are not only short-term but are also long-term as will be discussed in the coming chapter. As street-level bureaucrats, university managers use discretion and autonomy in implementing the Ordinance even when the outcomes are not clear (Lipsky, 1980). They do not always implement policies as they are detailed in the ordinance but rather the way they perceive them.

7.9 Chapter summary

In this chapter, I have shown that local level group and individual interests influence university policies. Deviation is meant to cater to interests that can be individual or collective. Thus, the

many standards, guidelines and codified language in the appointments and promotions protocols can be viewed as merely bureaucratic processes. This interference with regulations to reflect micropolitical interests has an enormous impact on and off campus as discussed in the section above. If appointments, grading and promotions are such that they affect standards and that they only serve to further interests of those that rule or manage the system, then it follows that such promotions should be done in the interest of academia. In the next chapter, I will focus on the perceptions of academics on the way academic staff appointments, grading and promotions are managed, their responses and the impacts thereof.

<center>**Chapter Eight**</center>

<center>**Perceptions of Academic staff on Appointments, Grading and Promotions**</center>

8.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I look at how the pervasive management of promotions produced particular perceptions from those affected. How academics hard-done-by the system were disappointed to the extent that they quit pursuing promotions. I also discuss the variety of responses and strategies academics employed some of which I was very familiar with and had previously participated in. However, in writing the report, I took due care to let participants speak from their perspectives and ensured that the final product was not influenced by my perceptions of the manner in which academic appointments, grading and promotions were being handled. I had to refrain from ideas and data, which were not the products of the research practice. I remained guided by Bourdieu (1996) in that I was capable of conceptualising beyond what the participants were able to grasp because they had not sufficiently given much thought to the things that were of interest to me as a researcher. Thus, I was capable of formulating responses in clearer ways. The structure of the chapter is as follows: the first section is on their perception of the appointment, grading, and promotions system including the instrument that guides the procedures and what they expect and why. In the next section, I examine academic responses to the micropolitical strategies of university leadership. In the last section, I discuss the consequences of the mismatch in expectations and reality. The final section provides a summary of the chapter, paving way for recommendations.

8.2 Academic perceptions of the system and their preferences: emerging themes

It can be argued that academics play a crucial role in university education and research thus their contributions need to be taken seriously. In the discussion of what the system ought to be, academics articulated their dissatisfaction with the way policies surrounding academic staff appointments grading and promotions were being implemented. They wanted processes followed, transparency, participation, social justice and no politically induced appointments. Their preferences were largely driven by the desire to uphold meritocracy, quality and fairness.

Respondents identified negative attributes of the existing governance structures, which also have a bearing on the implementation of the academic staff appointments, grading and promotions system. The attributes of concern were identified as the following:

- Lack of transparency and accountability

- Lack of participation in governance structures and policy making

- Insufficient information flow

- University managers as autocratic gate-keepers

- Political interference damages university and privileges mediocrity

- The system privileges published research at the expense of usable scholarly work

- Policies lack time frames and provision for revision

- Policy needs standardisation

- ZIMCHE does not cater to the needs of academics

- Need for time-bound policy reviews

The list of attributes suggests that there were problems concerning the leadership and the way business was conducted in the universities. I now discuss each of these attributes in detail in the section below.

8.2.1 Lack of transparency and accountability

Academics thought that there was no transparency in the appointment of deans and chairpersons and the implementation of the academic staff appointment and promotion system in general. They preferred leadership chosen by faculty because they commanded respect. These should be academics with a good standing in terms of professional work and known to be knowledgeable with a worthy record of accomplishment. Other than appointments and promotions processes, academics also expected the policy processes to be transparent.

Transparency and accountability of public organisations foster a healthy corporate culture, increase stakeholder confidence and reduce the incidence of unethical behaviour. They believed that policies were being domesticated and implemented at the whims of VCs whose interest was to position themselves strategically for their benefit. In their understanding, transparency meant that decision-making was not arbitrary and guided by rules that every member was familiar with.

When we talk of transparency, we are saying that things can be predictable; you know what is supposed to be done when you are in a situation or context. Is this not what we are supposed to be doing? (Interview notes, participant 1; 6 June, 2016).

This understanding of transparency was commonly shared among academics. In some sense, the participant above also sought a shared understanding of what transparency meant in the given context, which I chose not to provide preferring to work with their understanding of the word. Transparency in university education would require that institutions provide to the public information that can hold them to account. Participants did not define transparency in the wider context of the word where universities have to be open in terms of their decision-making and procedures to members of the public (van Den Brink, et.al. 2010). Accountability connotes the idea that one should be answerable for their decisions and actions (Harmon, 1995). According to Dunn (2003: 61), "accountability is the price citizens extract for conferring substantial and administrative discretion and policy responsibility on both elected and appointed government personnel." Thus, in talking about accountability one has to think about internal (accountability to the university community) and external accountability (involving societal members at large). In the extracts below, participants tried to demonstrate how the processes at the two universities remained opaque.

Chairperson and deans, are supposed to be appointed by the VCs using the system that we all know where people will show the VCs who they want, but in reality, those things are never done that way, now we are never called, we just hear that the chairperson has been selected. (Interview notes, participant 1; 24 June, 2016).

Faculty members on a rotational basis previously selected chairperson and deans. Academics complained that the collegiate basis upon which their selection and contracts rested had been transformed.

I remember some few years ago, posts of dean, chairperson, those were posts that people within would rotate with colleagues in either the faculty or department heavily involved, but now they have shifted them, deanship is now an executive post (Interview notes, participant 14; 8 July, 2016).

University leadership plays around with these policies to suit their needs and enhance their powers. Thus, they exercised their power to 'game' the policymaking and implementation processes so that the policy outcomes were always in their favour. Whilst the common

perception was that the system was not transparent, some respondents differed and believed that the system was fair and transparent (Interview, notes summarised, participant 18; 18 July, 2016).

In their study on the emergence of executivism and deanship in selected South African universities, Seale and Cross (2018) established that managerialism has transformed the posts of deanship from collegiate to executive deanship which is management-oriented and devoid of intellectual and academic leadership. The selection of academics to be involved in leadership has been a contentious subject. The UZ Act stipulates that the dean be appointed by the VC on a three-year contract with the involvement of faculty members (see Appendix E). However, the reports above suggest a shift from what that which is stated in the regulations. Academics may take interest in those appointed into leadership positions because of the expectation that appointees should be of good character, men, and women of virtue because they are likely to have an impact on the behaviour of others (Osguthorpe, 2008).

Increasing transparency in academic appointments, grading and promotions enhances the image of public institutions to citizens and reduces the likelihood of malpractices such as corruption and nepotism (Svensson, 2007). One can argue that the university Acts in Zimbabwe allow for transparency in the sense that the council is comprised of members from outside the university (external stakeholders) with the council always an outsider. These are meant to scrutinise decision-making processes within the university. However, this is not the case because the majority of council members are appointed by the minister and thus politically affiliated as discussed in chapter 5. Devising policies that foster transparency and accountability and providing incentives for appropriate behaviour could be one way of ensuring that decisions are transparent. However, van Den Brink, et, al, (2010: 1460) are quick to warn that this is not the solution because "transparency policies can even be counterproductive when actors attempt to implement these policies strategically for their benefit." Thus, transparency can only function effectively in the presence of transparent leadership, one that is open in terms of its decisions, modus operandi, its rules and regulations among other attributes.

Academics believed that the appointment and promotion procedure stipulated in the ordinance with a bottom-up approach is what should be maintained because it does not only ensure rigour and transparency in the process but also acts as checks and balances to ensure that only candidates with potential were selected.

8.2.3 Lack of participation in policy issues and decision-making processes

Academics felt that they were excluded in policy formation at the level of the department, faculty and the university. They did not have a buy-in in policies that affected them. They felt that where they were called to participate, their role was merely cosmetic.

They also believed that their contributions towards decision making in the universities were generally not valued. Rather, they found themselves at the receiving end with policy processes and decision-making processes always taking a top-down approach. Participant 18 emphasised that: "In most instances, you don't even know where the policies were formulated" (Interview notes, 18 July, 2016). Another participant made similar observations, "Committees, just do so to fulfil the diary for the university, but whatever they suggest is never put into play" (Interview notes, participant 12; 6 July, 2016).

Academics preferred a situation where they could participate in setting up the standards for academic staff appointments, grading and promotions, standards they were agreeable to rather than impositions by the university administration.

> Platforms for participation should be made available. As far as I know, most academics are not involved in policymaking and policy implementation. Now leadership is just coming to push part of the appointment and promotion policy to the academics. I think it's not fair, at the university level, you see a professor being driven to do something which doesn't make sense and which is contrary to the policy (Interview notes, participant 14; 8 July, 2016).

Tierney (2005) argues that academics should be involved in determining the measure for academic quality in the university. Academics also wanted to have an input in academic matters that affected them. According to Mohammed (2015:44), it is not so important to have in place platforms for participation. What is critical is the genuineness and effectiveness of participation, which is measured in terms of "depth, quality, legitimacy…and impact of participation."

Thus for Mohammed, the quality of participation and the influence stakeholders have in policy decisions are the core tenets of what participation involves. This means that policies that emerge from the process of participation should accommodate academic views and thus, be acceptable.

Gallagher, (2008) note that all activities that fall under the umbrella of participation in decision-making involve power relations. Using Gallagher's analysis of Foucault's conception of power, academics only have the power to participate in policy decisions if they have the opportunity to exercise their power, if not their potential is never realised. Thus, it is one thing to say academics have the power to contribute to decision making via committees and other platforms, and another thing to get their decisions to be included in the products.

Thus using Foucault's (2003) conception of power, decision-making power only exists if it can be exercised, without which it remains void. Academics complained that where they were called upon to participate in university decision-making committees, leadership did not validate their input and thus, their contributions were cosmetic. At the faculty level, university leadership consulted deans because "they think deans are the best brains in any given faculty" (Interview notes, participant 12; 6 July, 2016). Similarly, at the departmental level, committees were established as generally ineffective. What made them even more unproductive was that they could only recommend their decisions to the VCs could easily ignore them.

> There is a lot of short-circuiting to meet objectives especially in the context of the harsh economic environment. However, you will find that the key officials in the university make decisions on behalf of all others; there is no participative kind of management where issues will come from the departments (Interview notes, participant 1; 6 June, 2016).

Lai, Li & Du (2016) refer to top-down decision-making as consultative, whereby university administration solicits faculty for their views but retains the power to make the final decision. In the view of the above scholars, this type of decision-making process is inadequate because it merely involves information sharing rather than a joint decision-making process.

From the interviews, academics revealed that the real decision-making power lies with university administration especially the VC who works with a small group of people in the top-management team popularly known as 'the top five' in the academic hierarchy of Zimbabwean public universities. The top five include the VC, PVC, University Registrar, Bursar and Librarian. The decision-making process is indicative of a political model of the university where decision-making reflects the role of power, politics and coalitions (Middlehurst & Teixeira, 2012).

While this was the popular notion, others believed that university leadership was not to blame because academics were not interested in participating in decision-making. (Interview notes, participant 20; 22 July, 2016).

Many participants suggested that platforms for participation were available but could not be used meaningfully. The culture of silence was problematic among academics. Some alleged that a culture of silence came in because academic voices were ignored by university leadership hence no need to speak anymore. Thus, they felt it would be a waste of time providing their views since they were ignored and were just used as scapegoats to endorse VCs' decisions.

8.2.4 Lack of communication and insufficient information flow

Academics in one university registered that there was limited information flow from the top to the departments, such that even policies were not made public. Instead, they were kept in the policy archive of the registrar and only dispensed as ammunition against those found to be in the wrong. Participants also believed that policies were used to protect the interests of the administration rather than being the guiding principle in university education practices. They complained that university management hid the information necessary for academic work from them. In one of the sites, which was my workplace, I was forced to reveal that at one point I fell victim to the practice of withholding essential information from academics because participants knew the details of what had transpired and kept referring to the case. Indeed, insiders cannot escape their past because so much is already known about them (Mercer, 2007).

Academics expected that policies should be publicised and information cascades down to them through the appropriate platforms of communication, which includes the union, faculty or the department, but this was not the case. Participant 19 suggested that information should be put on notice boards or circulated via email.

To their surprise, information of interest was kept under lock and key. Policies were hardly made public to prevent lecturers from making legitimate demands. Tummers and Bekkers (2012) contend that it is the nature of street-level bureaucrats to provide citizens with a limited amount of information. Control of information was an important micropolitical strategy, which VCs continuously used. In implementing policies, street-level bureaucrats Lipsky (1980), who in this case are VCs use their discretion concerning whether or not they should make certain information available to academics, when and how. Evans (2010) defines discretion as the amount of freedom a street-level bureaucrat can exercise in a particular context. Thus, in

communicating information, university leadership was guided by private interests. Management tactfully monopolises information so that academics do not make demands that can create problems for them. In this case study, administrative opaqueness hampered the flow of information to the disadvantage of academics that needed it to further their work.

8.2.5 VCs as autocratic gatekeepers

In their view, the VCs' perceptions were that they were above policy, characteristic of state politicians (discussed in chapter 6 section 6.3). Thus, the VCs willingly violated appointments and promotions policies and procedures without consequence. Participants suggested that VCs used bureaucratic authoritarian management systems inherited from the colonial system and this had made it possible for them to implement university policies the way they liked. They also believed that VCs were not so keen to promote people and emphasised on the number of publications that were over and above the regional standards because they wanted to minimise the number of professors in the universities who by their position would participate in decision-making processes via senate. However, state intervention had rendered Senate ineffective as it could only deliberate on academic issues. To defend their privilege to decision-making and power, VCs had to play a gate-keeping role.

At the HUC, one of the oldest members of staff familiar with institutional history and very vocal in instances where policies were flouted was denied a promotion because the administration felt threatened by the member. In explaining why management acted in this manner, the member had this to say:

> I think the personality of the leaders in the institution matters, some leaders prefer not to have many qualified people around them, and they would rather remain the only professors around so that it is easier to appoint their allies in different roles within the university. I do not know because this is something that has never been discussed, as such but you can understand. With many books and book chapters to my name, I tried to apply for a professorship in 2014 but my papers were reported to have gone missing. You just hear from others that they are not being taken for various reasons (Interview notes, participant 1; 6 June, 2016).

Another participant analysed the number of publications required for promotion to associate professorship compared to the alleged regional expectations and came to the same conclusion that VCs were authoritarian gatekeepers who created policies that only served their interests.

Generally, participants felt irked by the way VCs portrayed themselves and used their power to limit the number of people who were promoted to the top positions of the academic hierarchy. An authoritarian style of leadership would not do for a university in the 21st century where VCs are expected to be public intellectuals and change agents beyond their national borders (Muller & Casper, 2000).

The authoritarian model of leadership witnessed in Zimbabwean universities does not sit well with the claims that universities are universal and liberalist. Thus, Larsen (2015: 88) describes the university system as pervaded by "oxymoronic centralised de-centralisation," implying that in terms of power distribution, the university is the opposite of what it purports to be. In this regard, gate keeping was essential to centralise power. Having a significant number of professors who sat in the senate was therefore considered a threat and discomforting.

Academics wanted a situation where university appointments were free from politics. In their view, merit-based appointments would ensure the appointment of university managers who exuded required competencies, ones with the capacity to move the university forward. They also wanted the administrative hierarchy to be comprised of academics that were not tainted by politics.

8.2.6 Political interference

Participants believed that their operations were being affected by politics at all levels. Local-level politics made it difficult for academics to contribute their views to the circadian running of the institution while broader national politics also created impediments for some or possibilities for others. Thus, political influences promoted mediocrity in terms of the quality of people that were either promoted or appointed into certain positions as Particpant 17 below noted.

> When we look at the teaching staff, l think that we have a serious problem where anybody who is politically connected can land a job in a university. From my experience, teaching is compromised and l feel that we can no longer talk of quality but numbers (Interview notes, 14 July, 2016).

Another participant also felt that university business bordered around politics, both internal and external such that academics could hardly contribute their views towards university management and national issues.

It is a political culture, I think politics to some extent does influence the way things are done. People are afraid to say things ... So those voices never really get to influence decisions at the top management level, so I will agree it is a governance issue, political affiliation is the substitute for qualification (Interview notes, participant 8; 20 June, 2016).

The culture of silence within public universities was openly visible, and in part influenced the tone of this report. I was aware of the context, the subtle links between situations, and could assess the implications of revealing certain kinds of information (Mercer, 2007). However, within this context, I took due care to ensure that the views of participants were not distorted or watered down. Instead, I used the familiarity to provide rich data. It has been argued that for a bureaucracy to be able to implement its policies effectively it needs to be insulated from politics (Meier, 2000). Where an organisation is, open to political influence, its autonomy decreases and it is less likely to be able to serve its function (Nicholson–Crotty & Meier, 2003).

This is why Ashby (1965) observed that the colonial university needed to be insulated from the hot and cold winds of politics. Largely, African universities that are state-dominated can hardly fulfil the roles for which they were established because they have to serve political interests. The political culture in most African states treats universities with suspicion, as political dissent, thus academics have chosen to be silent. Saint (1992) suggests that moving African universities forward would require that the talents of local academics be taken on board in efforts to revitalise them.

Regarding university practices in Africa, Nyamnjoh (1999) reveals that the system does not value meritocracy. Rather, it accommodates loyal mediocre academics than those who are critical and talented. Hyden (1991: 8) points out that the anti-intellectual culture of African governments has created a situation where "intellectuals who took their profession seriously were forced into exile."

The malpractices that respondents cited meant that undeserving candidates easily found their way into the universities through fraudulent VCs. As a result, the state has created universities that are politically important but socially, morally and intellectually bankrupt. Universities have become sites of inequalities where some are rewarded for doing nothing good, while others are punished for doing nothing wrong.

8.2.7 Privileging published research

Some participants felt that the system of appointments and promotions was biased towards the humanities because it emphasised on publication. Thus, it did not accommodate applied sciences where specialists produced technical work. Participants also argued that there was a need for redefining the term 'research 'because the dominant understanding was rather too narrow and selective.

> In the sciences, if someone, an Architect comes up with a plan that can be implemented, I think that on its own, is a visible outcome of their research. What universities call research is just a published paper; they should redefine what they call research. I like a situation where the university respects academics for guiding students to come up with an operating system. This should be recognised in terms of promotions (Interview notes, participant 14; 8 July, 2016).

Academics involved in university management also wanted the promotions system to take into account more of the administrative services they provided to the university instead of emphasising on publications and teaching.

The emphasis on published scientific research as a major criterion for promotion has become a subject of contention in many countries (Chalmers, 2011; Archibong, Bassey & Effiom, 2010). In many African universities, research in peer-reviewed journals is a necessary condition for promotion (Mugenda & Mwangi, 2014). Achievement in academia is measured using quantitative indices such as the number of publications, frequency of citation, teaching evaluations, which are, expressed numerically (Winkler, 2000). Ultimately, published research has become the whole mark of good scholarship and is equally privileged at the expense of other areas of academic work such as service. The system does not reward academics who produce goods and services. The focus on publications and numbers does not accommodate the socio-economic value of research, which is more important than the numbers (Wilson, 2011).

It is true that administrative work robs academics of valuable time for research and publication, thus, should be given significant weighting in the promotions criteria. By insisting on published research, the universities are pushing academics into producing only what their constituencies demand (Muriisa, 2014). Ultimately, less emphasis is placed on innovation. There is a mismatch between the rhetoric of innovation and entrepreneurship espoused in the new

university framework, Universities 5.0, and the contents of the academic appointment and promotion ordinance. The ordinance lags behind the demands of the new university order, which the Minister propagates.

This suggests that the academic staff appointments, grading and promotions system needs revision for it to be able to cater to the current trends. The little attention paid to non-published work by the ordinance brings the whole question of the meritocracy of the academe into doubt. Academics wanted a system of promotion that recognised academic work beyond the printed and published page. Such a system would be inclusive of the different disciplines.

8.2.8 Time-bound policy frameworks and provisions for revision

Academics pointed out that the UZ Act that enacted following independence had overstayed and could hardly cater to changing circumstances and new demands. Academics also wanted the ordinance to be rewritten in ways that do not only reflect local realities but also for practical reasons. They expected a system of academic staff appointments, grading and promotions that was sensitive to the socio-economic climate wherein academics sponsored themselves in most of their research activities.

Some participants felt that the yardstick should be one that is developed within universities and should be sensitive to local realities in the country. Universities were finding it difficult to fund research activities, ultimately forcing individual lecturers to sponsor themselves out of their meagre resources. Academics felt that the Ordinance, having been crafted in 2002 needed to change to meet the current demands. They believed that it was not responsive to the ever-changing university field.

These observations were indicative of the outdated nature of the 2002 Ordinance. Saint (2009) reveals that the university Acts in much of Sub-Saharan Africa have been in existence for decades. Furthermore, there is a dearth in the literature on regulatory frameworks because academics lack interest in the area. In a survey of the legal instruments by Bloom, Canning and Chan (2006a), it emerged that these were over two decades old. These instruments can hardly sufficiently serve the demands of a university in the 21st century. One participant questioned the clarity of the word 'satisfactory', which is the language of evaluation used in the Ordinance.

The word satisfactory is what l might term as a fuzzy term; fuzzy in the sense that it might mean different things to different people and it is not very clear as to what we mean by satisfactory research (Interview notes, participant 9; 22 June, 2016).

The views pointed out by participants above suggest the need to re-examine the instruments in ways that make them more usable by academics who should benefit from them in terms of appointments, grading and promotions.

8.2.9 ZIMCHE does not cater to the needs of academics

Faculty members believed that a more workable arrangement in terms of academic staff appointments and promotions policy was one that solicited the participation of different University Associations, which are more in touch with, ground realities than ZIMCHE, which coordinates its functions from the capital. In addition, they wanted consultative meetings with ZIMCHE in which faculty members were involved in place of the current system in which only deans were involved.

The perception was that the involvement of members of the faculty would make the work of ZIMCHE more effective."ZIMCHE only consults deans of faculties who do not tell them the whole story" (Interview notes, participant 4; 13 June, 2016).

Faculty members felt that if ZIMCHE had consulted academics, there would be dialogue on issues such as those relating to how a book, book chapter, or paper should be rated and defined, what constitutes a good publication, satisfactory research, and which journals are accredited or not as was the case in some state universities.

These issues were never openly debated. In HUC, for instance, an arm of the university chosen by the administration to be responsible for quality assurance compiled a highly contested list of predatory and accredited journals, which academics criticised. One academic questioned, "If this list was not provided upon appointment into the university, how then can I be evaluated according to it on the day of promotion?" (Interview notes, Participant 9; 22 June 2016).

ZIMCHE recommended that universities should establish a list of credible journals with which academics were expected to publish with to avoid the risk of publishing in predatory journals. However, as I have argued before, issues of predatory journals are contestable and subjective there being no authoritative organisation universities use to judge the journals. The Bealles list,

of which the university had relied on, was already faulted and charged by the US Courts for being itself predatory, unauthoritative and biased. Apart from the lack of dialogue between ZIMCHE and academics, and the lack of uniformity in promotions criteria, academics were also worried about a dual system of promotion, which existed in public universities where the local system (the 2002 Ordinance) had its demands for promotions, which were different from those outlined in the ZIMCHE promotions criteria. Zimbabwe government adopted the buffer body; the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) in the 1990 is leading to the creation in 2006 of ZIMCHE through an Act of parliament. The mandate of ZIMCHE is defined as to:

> promote and coordinate education provided by institutions of higher education and to act as a regulator in the determination and maintenance of standards of teaching, examinations, academic qualifications and research in institutions of higher education" (ZIMCHE Act, 2006).

The purpose of the buffer body whose members are appointed by either the president or minister is to advise the government on policy matters regulate and guarantee educational quality among other functions (Saint, 2009). The minister appoints ZIMCHE members on a three-year term (Garwe, 2014). It can be argued that the nature of appointment of its officers largely incapacitates the buffer body. The fate of the university leadership also befalls it. ZIMCHE too had political interests to protect. Its modus operandi was also reported as top-down. Participants strongly believed that the people in ZIMCHE, Ministry, and university leadership comprised a system that worked in cohorts in defence of their collective interests. Thus, the majority were sceptical about the work of ZIMCHE.

Academics also believed that ZIMCHE had no relevance in public universities because it never appeared on the ground and tried to seek justification for why the academic staff was not being promoted.

> So far, it has not intervened in any situation to say that we look at your staff, why have you not promoted them. Why have you not looked at their documents and why has this not been done? (Interview notes with participant 1; 6 June, 2016).

Participants pointed out that ZIMCHE must monitor quality in public universities but then also observed that it does not have laws in place to deal with violators. Thus, it was a toothless bull. Participants also felt that ZIMCHE was conflicted in terms of interests thus could not monitor

standards in public universities since the council, ministry and VCs all constituted a system of patronage, which was self-sustaining.

In the section below, I discuss how academics affected by the malpractices of administration responded. I examine two forms of responses, which include latent and open resistance.

8.3 Responses of academics affected by the malpractices at universities

The section examines the extent and nature of academic responses to the machinations of university administration ranging from forms of resistance that are open to those, which are latent. Reminiscent of Foucault's (1980) conception of power, whereby power is not vertical but horizontal and coming from below rather than above, academics in public universities exercised their power to resist what they considered an unfair system that disadvantaged them. Just as power is ubiquitous from a Foucauldian perspective, so is resistance, which was evident in everyday practices of academics (Anderson, 2008; Foucault, 1990). The variety of responses mounted by academics demonstrate Foucault's argument that, wherever power is exercised, there is resistance; it produces effects (Foucault, 1982).

8.3.1 Latent resistance

Having the capacity to think critically, academics assessed how academic staff appointments, grading and promotions were managed, analysed and commented on the malpractices, which became the basis for formulating their responses. Often, their micro-resistances ranged from covert to more open forms to conflict. In the section below, I discuss the various forms of resistance that academics mounted.

8.3.1.1 Retreating

Academics in the two universities were generally unhappy with the way the Academic staff Appointments and Promotions Ordinance were being managed. As a result, they put up various forms of resistance that were not visible. Some became disinterested in institutional matters but retained one interest, earning their salaries. Others who had been denied promotion became more personally focused than their job. They emphasised that it was time to take the opportunity to pay more attention to activities, which they thought were more rewarding for them and their families.

These were mostly academics who had retreated. For them, the only thing that mattered was remaining on the university pay roll while they focused on other activities like running small agricultural projects, consultancy work and part-time teaching or even looking for a job abroad. The literature on academic resistance to managerialism, for example, has revealed that academics resist malpractices characterising the university systems passively and individually. Academics choose to engage in projects which they perceived as creative and more satisfying (Clegg, 2008).

It is a common practice among academics in African universities to turn to part-time teaching popularly known as moonlighting and other income-generating projects to augment their meagre salaries in times of difficulty (Olukoju, 2004). Academics also chose not to engage in collective forms of resistance such as strikes and boycotts which in Africa are likely to attract the attention of those in power especially the state that usually responds ruthlessly.

In Nigeria, like other parts of Africa, academics have faced dismissal due to strikes, which have often led to university closures (Albar & Onye 2016). In a study of academic resistance to managerialism in Australian universities, Anderson (2008) established that academics preferred non-explicit forms of resistance in place of the more obvious and collective forms. Such forms of resistance were important because they made daily life manageable. However, individual resistance was unlikely to change the situation. Halffman and Radder (2015) argue that university leadership can hear only collective forms of resistance. Thus, the individual efforts they engaged in were not likely to be effective.

8.3.2 Qualified compliance

According to Anderson (2008), qualified compliance denotes a situation where academics are not necessarily in support of the malpractices witnessed but comply with the requirements of management strategically and pragmatically. Some of the academics believed that leaving the institution was not a viable alternative because the job market was limited. Thus, they decided to comply with the requirements of the university administration for them to be promoted and as a way of securing their jobs.

> You just have to do what they want if you do not get the tenure or promotion. Some people had to postpone their applications until they met the required conditions. Because you want the job, what else can you do? (Interview notes, participant 4; 13 June, 2016).

The responses above have been described by scholars as symbolic compliance (Teelken, 2012), referring to academics who realised that they did not have many options at their disposal, and so chose to comply with the requirements set for them to be promoted. Similarly, in a study of academic promotions in a Taiwanese university, Liu (2017) found out that compliance was popular, such that once academics chose this route; they set themselves to publishing more work to meet the requirements.

Participant number 9 held the view that academics had shifted their attention from teaching and service to publication for their mobility. This finding contradicts research studies, which have demonstrated that promotion systems in African universities place more emphasis on teaching than publication (Yankholmes, 2014). In this instance, 'compliance by evasion' was not helpful for the academy and neither was it very useful for the participants because academics set themselves on a self-destructive path whereby they risked losing their jobs. After all, universities still expected them to teach and engage in service to be upwardly mobile.

Previous studies have also shown that increasing research productivity to be promoted was not a viable option because local gatekeepers still blocked promotions (Yankholmes, 2014). Compliance by academics was superficial, aimed at subverting the requirements of the university to achieve their objectives. Scott (1986: 8) cited in Anderson (2008: 254) reveals that quiet evasion, which is associated with everyday forms of resistance, is more effective than confrontational methods.

Participant number 19 revealed that it only made sense to engage in co-authorship even without authoring an article to 'up the game' in ways that left university administration with very little spaces for micropolitical manoeuvres. Such decisions by academics meant that they resorted to cheating the system just to get what they wanted. It has become common practice in African universities for academics to pay to get their work published (Okebukola, 2010). Others have even gone to the extent of creating journals based on nepotism and cronyism just to be published quickly and be promoted (Olukoju, 2004).

8.3.3 Partial compliance

Some academics believed that they would stay but meet the bare minimum required of them to be promoted and just to secure their jobs. It was a common response by academics to try to meet the minimum demands of the system. By pretending to be meeting the requirements of a system that they generally believed to be grossly unfair; academics were subverting it. Snow

(2004) would characterise this kind of micro-resistance as implicit non-compliance. In what may also be described as minimal compliance, some academics decided to stay in the university waiting for the VC's contract to end. "You are frustrated but you stay there because this is where your job is. At any rate, VCs come and go" (Interview notes, participant 12; 6 July, 2016).

Through the malpractices in academic staff appointments, grading and promotions, which they witnessed, academics developed forms of consciousness and less organised methods of resistance, which could even constitute a more serious challenge to the power of university leadership (Ewick & Silbey, 2003).

The recognition that one could allow the system to flow without doing much suggests that academics reconfigured their scholarly identities in ways that could not be accessed or monitored by top bureaucrats within the university system (Kidman & Chu, 2017). In this way, Foucault conceives academics asserted power from below as.

8.3.4 Silence as resistance

Some of the academics decided to go by the culture of the public universities and national political culture of silence (discussed elaborately in Chapter 6) as a way of staying out of trouble with university administration.

> It may not be easy to raise your point of view and people are likely to remain constant, without being promoted because it is not easy to tell people that we have to do things this way, it is part of our institutional culture (Interview notes, participant 8; 20 June, 2016).

Universities have institutional cultures that determine the way things are done within them. Writing in the context of transformation in South Africa, Lange (2014) revealed that each university is part of and is at ease with some undesirable behaviour whether by convention or political ethos.

The silence of academics did not mean that things were fine within the universities, neither did it suggest that they had chosen to be immune to the micropolitics of the university which Smith (2015) would characterise as the university's underbelly. The silence was a form of protest under an institutional and political culture in which they felt threatened. Both the institutional culture and the national political culture threatened to silence academics as independent critical actors (Hall, 2013). However, by keeping silent, they legitimised the malpractices. Their

silence is also an indication of their relative lack of power. In some sense, this contradicts Foucault's (1978) notion that power is everywhere and not in anybody's hands.

In a political system where critique and dissent are not tolerated, universities are likely to do the same because they are not different from the system that created them (Kidman & Chu, 2017). Although academics are allowed to make their contributions through various platforms such as the departmental board, faculty board or staff unions, as discussed in the previous chapter, these platforms may be mere symbols where the institutional elites do not create the opportunities for them to be significant mediums of participation.

8.3.5 Resilience

Indiscriminate of the circumstances that proved to be demotivating, some lecturers continued to work because they believed they were intrinsically motivated. They chose to be resilient rather than succumb to the demoralisation that the unfair implementation of the Academic Staff Appointments, Grading and Promotions Ordinance brought into their academic life.

> Even if the circumstances are demotivating both in terms of promotions and economic environment, we are working and producing results, we are committed to our job and that is the only reason why universities have continued to function otherwise they could have faded (Interview notes, participant 1; 6 June, 2016).

Resilience is important because it denotes "the ability of individuals… to learn from and adapt to shocks; to mitigate and respond to risks that are realised; to prepare solutions to problems and to recover from dislocations" (Hall, 2013: 187). Without choosing to be resilient, academics would probably throw in the towel leaving universities to collapse.

8.3.6 Open resistance

Some academics took the university to court when they felt that they had been unjustly treated over appointments, grading and promotions. In one instance involving promotion to the deanship, an academic took the battle to the courts alleging that the university elevated a candidate, who lacked the requirements (The Herald, 6 April, 2018). Participants also cited court cases relating to grading upon appointment as academic staff discussed in Chapter 7 section 7.4.5.

This was an unpopular form of resistance among academics in both universities. Those who took this route may have done so because, in Zimbabwe, there is no formal appeals committee to handle conflicts that arise from academic appointments, grading and promotions. The ordinance provided for appeals but academics chose not to take this route. Their decisions may have been guided by the limited trust they had in the formal processes. Other than bringing matters before the courts, academics also took the battle to the university through their staff unions, which they directed to lobby the university in academic staff appointments, grading and promotions issues.

In one instance at one university, academics compiled a litany of charges and called upon university leadership to account for the malpractices in academic staff appointments, grading and promotions. Reminiscent of Foucault's notion of power, academics used their power to hold their bosses to account. Indeed, Halffman and Radder (2015) stress those university leaders must be accountable to academics rather than the other way round. As opposed to the 'hidden transcript' which represents a critique of power by which the weak often speak at the back of those in power, academics used the 'public transcript' which denotes open forms of engaging with the powerful (Scott, 1990).

Arguing with the university was one route that others decided to take. However, this form of resistance was not without consequences.

> One dean was demoted for engaging the VC on matters relating to poor management, the VC would say; if you do not want to go by what is happening in this institution, leave my university (Interview notes, participant 12; 6 July, 2016).

At the TUZ, academics organised themselves through their staff representatives and confronted management to find out why promotions were not being processed. Engaging with university leadership still did not produce the desired results because it did not push them to action. Perhaps this was not the language leadership understood because it put them on their defence possibly indicating that the more covert forms of resistance that characterise the weapons of the weak (Scott, 1990) were more effective.

In ending this section, it is necessary to sketch the various impacts arising from the responses by aggrieved academics.

8. 4 Impacts of responses by academics to malpractices

Academic responses to the malpractices of top bureaucrats were not without consequences. They had implications for standards, teaching and research productivity. Indirectly, academics also suffered individual consequences in most cases. I discuss the impacts in the section below.

8.4.1 Decline in standards

Academic responses to the way academic staff appointments, grading and promotions were managed had consequences for the institution and scholarship in general. If academics chose to meet the bare minimum or sit and wait for their salaries as revealed in section 8.3, they were not likely to go far. For the institution, the consequences are dire, especially where universities are ranked according to the quality of their outputs.

Lowly ranked universities cannot attract talented academics with the capacity to develop an excellent university (Salmi, 2009). In Sub-Saharan Africa, the quality of a university is often associated with the value of academics within it (Bunting & Cloete, 2012). Academics are among the key professionals responsible for the execution of much of the business of public universities (Teffera & Altbach, 2003). Thus, academics without a full commitment to their work compromise the quality of their university. Without publishing, they too ran the risk of degeneration as revealed in the publish or perish mantra.

If indeed academics viewed themselves as members of the international community of scholars (Archer, 2017), it is doubtful whether demoralised, demotivated and disinterested professionals can still claim their space in the global knowledge arena.

8.4.2 Sub-standard teaching

From their responses to the way appointments, grading and promotions were managed, most academics who were not 'managerially inclined' (Sadiq, et.al. 2018) lost commitment to their work. If they decide to concentrate more on research and neglect teaching, the quality of teaching is equally affected which has implications for the quality of graduates that pass through their hands. Graduates are direct products of good or bad teaching. If academics renege on teaching, the purpose of the university is lost given that African universities are more teaching-focused than research-focused, having been established to produce skilled manpower to staff the bureaucracy and spearhead the process of national development (Atuahene, 2011).

If public universities in Zimbabwe fail to deliver on their key mandates stated in the various university acts, it brings to doubt the overall purpose of a university. Teaching has implications for the third mission of the university, where the focus is on improving the lives of the community and educating students to become socially responsible members of the community (Peric, 2016).

Thus, teaching is an integral part of the work of the African university. If academics become disinterested in teaching, students are short-changed as well as the country. Teaching is thus important because universities provide formal training and qualifications to future professionals (Altbach, 2007).

8.5 Chapter summary

In this chapter, I have made a leap from organisational interests, their effects on processes at the universities including policies and practices of academic staff appointments, grading and promotions to a discussion of how the academics were affected by the system, as they perceived it. In particular, I looked at how those dissatisfied by the processes responded. Further, I discussed how a general mood of discontent was slowly crippling in among the staff who felt they deserved better. Affected lecturers quit the process and some were no longer interested in arguing their case. These lecturers turned to part-time teaching and consultancy and other activities that were not related to their profession but which strategically improved their lives in ways that were not promised by the promotions route. Others chose to remain in the institution silently but their commitment to work was doubtful while some sought justice through the courts. The actions of academics had impacts on the work of the university and their scholarly enterprise. The next chapter, which is the last one, summarises and concludes the study. It also finishes by providing recommendations.

Chapter Nine

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

9.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the findings of the study, against each objective. Furthermore, it concludes the study, trying to make sense of what the study signifies for ongoing scholarship on micro and macropolitics in managing a university, how academics respond to these and the possible impact of these on university life in general. On a very specific level, the study has examined the impact of state control as seen through issues such as promotions and staffing. In these objectives, the study proceeds to make some basic recommendations on what needs to be done to enable the university to move away from what Julius Nyerere termed 'white elephant status' to one that functionally benefits those that labour under it, and the society that supports its being. In doing so, due care was taken to ensure that my positionality did not interfere with what can be considered more practical ways of taking the public university education system in Zimbabwe forward.

9.2 Summary of Findings

Concisely, the study was guided by specific objectives as indicated in Chapter 1, which are captured as, to:

- establish how colonial interests influenced the establishment and running of the universities.

- examine the influence of micro and macro-level interests in the appointments, grading and promotions of academics in public universities.

- evaluate how academics perceive and react to the manner in which academic staff appointments, grading and promotions decisions are made.

- analyse the implications of internally and externally induced malpractices on universities and society as a whole.

- suggest solutions to the problems arising from these processes to ensure that appointments and promotional procedures are meaningful, objective and effective to foster fairness and equality.

Based on the objectives as restated, the following summary of findings can be stated:

1. As regards to objective one, which is to establish how colonial interests influenced the establishment and running of universities, the findings were dual. It is observed from the review of the literature that colonial interests led to the establishment of universities across Anglophone Africa especially after World War 2. The interests related to the construction of particular and functional work force that would serve white society during and after colonisation. Thus, colonial education policies and university practices were geared at achieving the above objective as discussed in chapter 2. The predominant position in the literature is that, just like its colonial predecessor, the post-independence state has put measures in place to ensure that universities serve nationalist interests rather than those of society. What the Zimbabwean case indicates is that we are dealing with a university designed for a colonial project.

2. Concerning the second objective which sought to examine the influence of macro and micro-level interests in the appointments, grading and promotions of academics in public universities, as pointed out in chapter 6 from section 6.2 onwards, the ways through which the state controls universities are multiple and diverse. At one level, forms of control are legislative. In this connection, Acts are crafted to ensure that university managers are state appointees who inevitably echo the interests of the state. At another level, the forms of control are political. In this connection, academics are under the radar of the state, regularly monitored and followed to scare them to conformity. Finally, the forms of control are financial, wherein the state provides support on the condition of good political behaviour on the part of those who lead and work at the university. Thus, the post-colonial state mimics the colonial state in ensuring that the university is answerable to and reflects the interests of the current ruling elite. State interests are to control and regulate the nation-state in ways that privilege the governing elite. In particular, it means ensuring that the university does not produce a subversive knowledge and people that agitate for what has come to be called 'regime change' in Zimbabwe. The continuity of colonial trends where public universities are used to infuse monopoly

of state power to create citizens who are subject to the state but are not critical means that personnel that is appointed to lead public universities is loyal to the state.

In addition, the second objective also examined the influence of micro-level interests in the appointments, grading and promotions of academics at the two universities. It was observed from the two sites that, apart from the overwhelming influence of the state, micro-level interests were also powerful in their influence on policy implementation. As argued in chapter 7, top university bureaucrats have their fundamental interests, which colour the way particular institutional policies are both shaped and implemented. For example, VCs across universities fill university departments and faculties with people whose essence is to facilitate their control of the university than furthering its mandate as defined in law. Thus, bureaucratic and organisational politics are as much pervasive as state interests in giving direction to the running of the university. These issues are discussed in chapter 7. What the findings indicate is consistent with the initial position in the literature that post-independent states have not left universities to run independently. That the meritocratic ideology which universities claim to propagate is mere institutional talk. Interviews, documentary sources, and direct observation were used to get as much data as possible concerning state machinations and micropolitical activities of leadership in the two public universities. The purpose was to minimise bias by triangulating data sources and to obtain data of a sensitive nature, which proved effective.

3. With regards to the third objective, which is to evaluate, the perceptions and responses of academics to how academic appointments, grading and promotions are managed, an initial review of the literature indicated that studies focusing on academic perceptions on recruitment and promotion were scant. It emerged that academics used their critical thinking skills to mount a variety of responses against management. As revealed through interviews, it emerged that pervasive management of promotions produced particular perceptions and responses from those affected (chapter 8 section 8.3 onwards). Academics that felt unfairly treated resorted to what might be termed alternative legalities: forms of personal promotion that were not recognised by the university. Such people go on to hold multiple but private teaching jobs that provide them with emoluments that compete with those

for the denied post or grade. Other disgruntled lecturers quit or sought alternative employment elsewhere where they found dignity and satisfaction. Apart from covert responses, academics mounted open forms of resistance, which included taking the battle to the university and the courts to achieve what they wanted. Thus, malpractices at the two universities were generative of perceptions and responses that were at once detrimental to the university and the aggrieved candidates.

4. The fourth objective was to analyse the implications of internally and externally induced malpractices on the university and society. Thus, from the analysis of findings, literature and interviews, the finding here is that pervasive management of appointments, grading, and promotions has an impact on the university and society. Firstly, to paraphrase Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2016), micropolitics 'villagises' the university, in the sense of filling it through patronage networks rather than through properly qualified and competent people. This has the effect of lowering the standards of the university, making it more or less like a village institution. The people who remain in place and indeed are produced by the systems are hardly academics, unable to attract the confidence of society that not only looks up to the university to provide benefits but in some sense pays for their being. The literature has revealed that the malpractices of the university leadership have serious impacts on the university and society.

5. The objective on recommendations is presented in the coming section as it is based on what was observed and recommended by the participants and the literature.

9.3 Policy recommendations

The following policy recommendations are made for this study:

9.3.1 Deconcentration of university power to promote transparency

The central significance of the state and university leadership in the way the institutions are governed makes it difficult to suggest policy recommendations that do not involve power distribution. Promotions should be managed in such a way that power is not concentrated in the hands of VCs. Rather, it must be decentralised to some committees that have a formal representation of key stakeholders. These committees will then democratically make collective decisions. In this instance, the role of the VC will be one to summarise consensus from the

broad-based committees. In other words, the VC's role is crystallising public opinion rather than overriding it, as is the case now. For the AAB and the Promotions Committee to function independently, it is recommended that their membership be nominated not by the VCs but by a body that is independent and above the concerned university. What this body could be doing is difficult to say, but perhaps the council or some platform in the ministry of higher education could serve this purpose. However, if Ministry or councils are to be involved, this would require the creation of a powerful Ministry and Councils which are able to provide direction to VCs and the university in general as opposed to the current position where the relevant Minister is weak, being a political appointee. Councils are also weak given the nature of appointment of their members discussed in Chapter 6 of the thesis. To be effective, university councils should be comprised of members of the community who have interest in university business and are in some way connected to them. In the end, it is not important where this body is located, as long as it is sufficiently independent and powerful to dominate the university leadership.

9.3.2 Elimination of state capture

It is generally the responsibility of government to provide quality and affordable university education for citizens. However, the current situation where the state is the sole funder of state universities and thus creating a dependent relationship is not tenable given both the economic realities in the country and the possibility of abuse emanating from a dependent relationship. The Chancellor is simultaneously the President. It is recommended that universities be free from state capture. In South African context, state capture denotes a situation where outside agents usurp resource allocation, which is a major function of the government (Labuschagne, 2017). In this thesis, I use the concept to refer to a situation where powerful actors within the state appropriate the coordination of universities for purposes of protecting their political interests. Freeing public universities from state capture can be done at two levels. Firstly, it can be done by re-writing the parent Act governing universities. The study has in mind the revision of the Act, removing from it those tenets, which effectively make the university an appendage of the state. In this regard, some sort of return to the pre-independence era is envisaged; where despite the desire to control the university, the chancellor was not the president as is currently obtaining. Now, in some cases, the state can cancel or fire academics, especially those who are considered subversive without considering the regulations as happened in the case of a law lecturer who was deported unprocedurally (see chapter 7).

Secondly, it can be done by minimising dependency on the state for funding, especially for research and teaching. Financial autonomy provides the university with the major power to determine who is promoted or who can be engaged in the first place. Being the major funder of public universities, it is only fair that the state follows proceedings within them closely. So perhaps, universities must be able to generate funding strategies that ultimately free them from relying on the state. A new policy that allows private players to fund universities together with the government would also help reduce state dominance in public universities.

This is not to support the idea of commodifying knowledge or knowledge capitalism. This is not to say that the state should completely abandon universities because this will be tantamount to making education beyond the reach of the poor. Other ways can be adopted to evade state capture, but for illustration, these two measures suffice.

9.3.3 Limiting the tenure and power of VCs

The University Act should clearly define the tenure of the VCs. The present situation has no limits to the tenure of VCs who continue to head universities at the pleasure of the chancellor. This gives rise to patronage including making the VC run the university to please the state.

At the institutional level, unlimited tenure creates VCs who can run the university as cottage farms by hiring and promoting people of their interests. This is currently obtaining in Zimbabwe where everlasting VCs have filled departments and faculties with academics who are sympathetic to their pervasive cause. Ordinance 30 provides VCs with overwhelming power making them useful only for purposes of the state. Thus, to make universities spaces for critical engagement, the powers of the VCs need to be curtailed in conjunction with other measures suggested in this section.

9.3.4 Strengthening the regulatory framework

Presently VCs who flout the rules and promote undeserving individuals do so knowing that the referees are not watching. ZIMCHE, which is supposed to monitor standards and take a lead in ensuring that universities promote and hire deserving candidates, is under-resourced and is another toothless bull. Those who constitute its officers are in the main young and inexperienced and in some cases lack the confidence to tackle the grey-haired leadership in the universities. In addition, the appointment of the councillors is politically influenced thus they lack real power. The result is that deviations from established standards are done, and

undeserving candidates are promoted or appointed. Professionalising the regulator and re-routing them will go a long way to ensure a return to standards and mandates.

I also recommend the tightening up of the ordinances that regulate academic appointments, grading and promotions. Currently, the regulations are vague and leave quite a lot of leeway to the promotions committee to interpret them in diverse ways including those ways that support their needs. Presently, the regulatory body ZIMCHE is not taking an active role in tightening the ordinances so that uniform decisions can be expected across public universities.

In addition, there should be regulations that deal with offenders in ways that deter VCs from deviating from the stipulated standards in terms of academic staff appointments, grading and promotions. Currently, members that constitute ZIMCHE are not nominated transparently in consultation with the universities hence the need to do so.

9.3.5 Promotion of professionalism among academics

It is recommended that there should be a return to intellectualism where academics conduct themselves professionally in research, teaching and outreach. At present, academics are flouting rules regarding publication, using other people's works as the basis for their promotion. Some of the works published are sloppy and below standard. This eventually contributes to their promotion cases being dismissed. By returning to professionalism, the prospective candidates will make it very difficult for their cases to be dismissed without merit.

9.3.6 Depoliticising the appointment of university leadership

It is recommended to the state that the appointment of university leadership be removed from the political office to make it possible for them to increase accountability to society rather than politicians, as is currently the situation. If leadership has to serve political interests to secure their jobs, it may be difficult for universities to execute their traditional roles. The university space will be heavily politicised and thus not allow for institutional autonomy.

9.3.7 Decolonising the University

There is a need to decolonise that logic whereby those going through the university system do not in any way become subjects of the state but become critical. This may require that the state itself be decolonised under which transformation within the university may be expected to happen.

9.4 Conclusion

So what then is the key message of the study, when all findings are added together? It appears that the key conclusion is that the university is hardly left unattended, at whatever scale. First, the state, whether colonial or post-independent, descends to capture the university so that through means of academic staff appointments, grading and promotions, legislation, and political mechanisms, the university reflects its interests in the broader scheme of things. Secondly, bureaucrats, by which is meant the top layer of university leadership, kicks in from where the state leaves in terms of patronage to control the university so that their social and personal interests are advanced. The university is permitted to exist to the degree that it serves those that are in power at concerned scales. It is on this point that I would like to theorise.

Micropolitics and macropolitics interact with each other to shape university practice, merged with Foucault's reconceptualisation of power and discourse; these perspectives clearly show that institutions in society are the focus of domination by both the state and local level actors who implement policies to suit their particularistic objectives rather than those of the organisation and society in general. This way of looking at things is certainly one that is supported by this thesis. The data suggests the same obsession of control of institutions of education, in particular the university by the state and local elites who have vested interests to protect. So serious is their concern that they often run with this strategy even to the extent of compromising standards and mandates of the university, much to the alarm and anxiety of society. There is a need to do something to liberate the university from these interests. In the section below, I provide some useful ideas on how this might be done.

9.5 Directions for future research

It is recommended that further research should be done in the following areas:

1. Further research would be needed to establish whether there are divisions within the state concerning its dominance over universities. This is precisely important because, in this study, the state is treated as a homogenous entity, which in practice may not be the case. The state being made up of contesting individuals is likely to be comprised of more progressive actors who want functionality in the institutions. Research in this area can establish who these people are and what arguments they present. Their contributions may prove useful in forging ahead.

2. Further research is also needed to find out whether the disgruntled staff who fail to be promoted and in response use the university as the base from which to do consultancy work, part-time teaching, and running small enterprises, find satisfaction in doing these ventures. There is a likelihood that if they do not, they are doubly frustrated hence might not perform as expected in this manner bringing into jeopardy the work of the university and even those places where they moonlight. Research in this direction may unearth new insights to bring sanity to the universities.

3. It is not very clear how academics exercise their agency in response to the malpractices, which play themselves out at the local level. Thus, further research is needed to examine in depth the variety of strategies that they employ in seeking redress. It would also be important to understand the degree to which their strategies are effective in bringing about a new social order under which justice and dignity can be restored.

9.6 Reflexive Closure

In the course of the study, I was a full time practising academic with a sound knowledge of the macro and micro operations of public universities. Thus, from Bourdieu's (1988) notion, I had to break with the experience in which I was implicated. The very choice of the topic for the study was framed within my institutional location. Issues of promotion were of personal interest to me as a junior academic awaiting promotion. So often, I reflected on my own experiences. Thus, I was involved in a contradiction in which I had to criticise the same policies under which I expected to be promoted in seeking to explore the topic. In this regard, those who knew my position regarding the subject could easily interpret the study as covert activism.

As an insider to the system, I did not have to struggle to figure out who had power within the universities, the proscriptions to avoid, the scripts of the workplace, and how to negotiate and get the things I wanted. I knew the institutional culture and a good amount of hidden secrets. While this certainly put me at an advantage, it also presented serious challenges. I chose to leave out important data from some meetings because I was fully aware of the implications of revealing data, which I considered sensitive. I remained guided by professional codes of conduct such that in some cases questions considered too sensitive were avoided in an attempt to make participants remain comfortable with the interview situation. Owing to this familiarity

with the research setting, I could have left out important questions, which to me were obvious and thus did not warrant research, this could have compromised the depth of my findings.

In one site in which I was an employee, colleagues were already aware of my views regarding the way the academic appointments, grading and promotions ordinance was being implemented because these were issues that continuously came up for discussion within the workplace and during social gatherings. Thus, participants may have tailored their responses to give me what I wanted to hear, to avoid disappointing me, or for some other reasons. Thus, a self- fulfilling prophecy could have set in. Even those academics I did not have close connections with in terms of employment location may have lacked trust in me in a system where some of them play the role of ruling party agents and where surveillance is common. In this regard, some participants could have constructed reality with such sensitivities, which could mean that the data provided may have been exaggerated in some cases. Because of these challenges, triangulation was seen as important.

Some of the participants were people I knew, people I had worked with, and continued to work with. What I did not want was to either hurt them through pressurising them to provide information and at the same time being able to live with them even after the study. I exercised self-censorship in response to what I perceived as the risk to the people I worked with in addition to protecting my job.

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Appendix A : Ethics Clearance

UNIVERSITY
OF
JOHANNESBURG

ETHICS CLEARANCE

Dear R Mashava

Ethical Clearance Number: 2015-034

Exploring Dilemmas in University Policy and Practice in Zimbabwe: A case of the Academic Staff Appointments, Grading and Promotions System. Ethical clearance for this study is granted subject to the following conditions:

If there are major revisions to the research proposal based on recommendations from the Faculty Higher Degrees Committee, a new application for ethical clearance must be submitted.

If the research question changes significantly so as to alter the nature of the study, it remains the duty of the student to submit a new application.

It remains the student's responsibility to ensure that all ethical forms and documents related to the research are kept in a safe and secure facility and are available on demand.

Please quote the reference number above in all future communications and documents.

The Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee has decided to

Grant ethical clearance for the proposed research. Provisionally grant ethical clearance for the proposed research

Recommend revision and resubmission of the ethical clearance documents

All official communications should be addressed to:
"The Secretary for Higher & Tertiary Education
Telephones: 795891-5, 796441-9, 730055-9
Fax Numbers: 792109, 728730, 703957
E-mail: thesecretary@mhet.ac.zw
Telegraphic address: "EDUCATION"

Reference:

MINISTRY OF HIGHER AND TERTIARY EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT
P. BAG CY 7732
CAUSEWAY

ZIMBABWE

3 July 2015

Stand 17796
Mcilwane Crescent
Belvedere

Dear Ms R. Mashava,

APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT PHD STUDIES ON "DILEMMAS IN POLICY AND PRACTICE IN ZIMBABWEAN UNIVERSITIES: THE CASE OF THE APPOINTMENT, GRADING AND PROMOTIONS SYSTEM".

Reference is made to your letter, in which you request for permission to carry out an educational research on *"DILEMMAS IN POLICY AND PRACTICE IN ZIMBABWEAN UNIVERSITIES: THE CASE OF THE APPOINTMENT, GRADING AND PROMOTIONS SYSTEM".*

Accordingly, be advised that the head of ministry has granted permission for you to carry out the research *within the Ministry's institutions.*

It is hoped that your research will benefit the Ministry. Accordingly, it would be appreciated if you could supply the office of the permanent secretary with a final copy of your study, as the findings would be relevant to the Ministry's strategic planning process.

M.J Chirapa (Ms)
For: PERMANENT SECRETARY

Appendix C: Interview Guide for Academics

1. What are your views concerning the policy that there should be state University in each province?

2. Universities are in Africa are state controlled, do you see this as a hindrance to policy implementation?

3. Do you think that state universities in Zimbabwe are able to perform the roles for which they were established in terms of teaching, research and service?

4. To what extent are you as an academic able to fulfil the expectations of your job in terms of research, teaching and publication?

5. Some say currently in Zimbabwean universities, there is a wide gap between policy and practice. What are your views?

6. Others claim that the problems facing public universities in Zimbabwe have to do with governance at the national and institutional levels. What are your views?

7. To what extent is the system of academic appointments, Grading and Promotions in your university transparent and fair?

8. How effective are committees involved in academic appointments grading and promotions?

9. Some have argued that the problems that beset state universities in Zimbabwe have to do with the way policies are implemented by university administration. What are your views?

10. To what extent are academics involved in policy development at the institutional and national levels?

11a) Are there any cases where academics have been denied promotion? Why?

b) Are there any cases where academics have been appointed or promoted without following due procedure?

12. How have academics responded in each of the cases?

13. What do you think can be done to make the system of appointments, grading and promotions to work more effectively?

Appendix D: Interview Guide for Politicians

1.How did the University Act come into being?

2. At Independence, what purpose did the university of Zimbabwe serve?

3. How is the choice of a Vice Chancellor arrived at?

4. How are Vice Chancellors, Pro-Vice Chancellors and other top university leadership selected?

5. What interests does the government have in state universities?

6. How does government protect its interests?

7. Do you think that Vice Chancellors are largely guided by university policies in their day to day bussiness within the univeristy?

8. How does government influence policy processes within state universities and why?

Appendix E: The University of Zimbabwe Act

The Chancellor

(1) The President of Zimbabwe shall be the Chancellor of the University.

(2) The Chancellor shall be the chief officer of the University who shall have the right—

(a) to preside over any assembly or meeting held by or under the authority

of the University; and

(b) on the recommendation of the Council and the Senate, to confer degrees, diplomas and other awards and distinctions of the University and to withdraw or restore any such awards.

The Vice-Chancellor

(1) The Vice-Chancellor shall be appointed by the Chancellor after consultation with the Minister and the Council, and shall hold office for such period as is provided in his contract of appointment.

(2) Subject to the general control of the Council, the Vice-Chancellor shall be the chief academic, administrative and disciplinary officer of the University, with general responsibility for maintaining and promoting the efficiency, effectiveness and goodorder of the University.

(3) Subject to subsections (4) and (5), the Vice-Chancellor may—

(a) suspend from duty any member of staff of the University;

(b) subject to section five, prohibit the admission of a student or any person to the University;

(c) prohibit, indefinitely or for such period as he may specify, any student or group of students from attending any class or classes;

(d) prohibit any student or group of students or person or group of persons from entering or remaining on such part or parts of the University campus as he may specify;

(e) expel or suspend, indefinitely or for such period as he may specify, any student or group of students;

(f) dissolve or suspend, indefinitely or for such period as he may specify, the Students' Union or any of its committees or organs, or prohibit or suspend, indefinitely or for such period as he may specify, any activity or function of the Students' Union or any of its committees or organs;

(g) impose any other penalty or give any other order in respect of—

(i) a member of staff, which is recommended by the Staff Disciplinary Committee in terms of subsection (6) of section twenty-two; or

(ii) a student, which is recommended by the Student Disciplinary

Committee in terms of subsection (6) of section twenty-three.

(4) The Vice-Chancellor shall not expel a student for misconduct unless the student

has been found guilty of that misconduct by the Student Disciplinary Committee in

terms of section twenty-three.

(5) Any action taken by the Vice-Chancellor in terms of subsection (3) shall be subject to ratification by the Council.

The Pro-Vice-Chancellors

(1) One or more Pro-Vice-Chancellors may be appointed by the Council, with the

approval of the Minister, and shall hold office subject to section ten for such period as the Statutes may prescribe.

(2) The Pro-Vice-Chancellors shall have such of the powers and duties of the ViceChancellor as he shall delegate to them.

10 Present Principal and Vice-Principals to become Vice-Chancellor and ProVice-Chancellors

The Principal and Vice-Principals holding office on the 14th January, 1983, shall

continue to hold office as provided in subsection (2) of section twenty but from such day shall be known as the Vice-Chancellor and Pro-Vice-Chancellors respectively.

The Council

(1) Subject to this Act and any general direction as to policy given by the Minister,

the government and executive authority of the University shall be vested in the

Council, which shall consist of—

 (a) the Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor and the Pro-Vice-Chancellors, who shall be ex officio members; and

 (b) sixteen persons appointed by the Minister; and

 (c) nine persons who are members of the academic staff appointed by the Senate, other than the Vice-Chancellor and the Pro-Vice-Chancellors; and

 (d) the President of the Students' Union, who shall be an ex officio

member; and

 (e) one person who is a distinguished academic appointed by the Council on the recommendation of the Senate; and

 (f) one woman appointed by the Minister to represent women's interests; and

 (g) one person approved by the Vice-Chancellor and elected by the nonSenate members of the academic staff from among themselves; and

 (h) one person approved by the Vice-Chancellor and elected by the administrative staff from among themselves; and

 (i) one person approved by the Vice-Chancellor and elected by the workers' committee of the University; and

 (j) one person appointed by the Minister from a list of names submitted by the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions or, if that organization ceases to exist, by

such other organization as the Minister, after consultation with the Minister to whom the administration of the Labour Relations Act [Chapter 28:01] has been assigned, recognizes as its successor for the purposes of this paragraph; and

 (k) one person appointed by the Minister from a list of names submitted by such organization representing teachers and additionally, or alternatively, lecturers, as the Minister recognizes for the purposes of this paragraph.